



# Depression as Metamorphosis

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*During depression the world disappears. Language itself.  
One has nothing to say. Nothing.* -- Kate Millet

*We turn to God for help when our foundations are shaking, only to learn that it is God  
who is shaking them.* -- Charles West

*When I am going into a depression, it feels like being stalked from the inside...it is as if  
all of my emotional skin has been removed and there is nothing to protect me from my  
own negative thoughts. ...breathing takes just too much effort. ... I begin to lose my  
ability to think clearly.* -- Kim Luedtke

**Attitude: The Dark Night of the Soul is a Journey of Discovery** (with historical examples)

Depression can be a positive growth experience. Our soul compels us to enter the darkness where we are dead to life's pleasures in order to rebirth our authentic selves. In the process of taking care of others or working to please others, we have neglected to take care of our self and lost our authenticity. The deadening cocoon of depression gives us an opportunity to listen to the still small voice calling inside us that we have not found time to listen to.

Depressed friends and colleagues may have such great drains on their life force that they lose the ability to restore themselves. When they are in a descending spiral of hopelessness, the greatest gift we can give is to simply be there for them, witnessing their struggle and offering gentle encouragement and support. Only the depressed person knows how to pull their spirit back from wherever it has gone. We have to accept that we cannot rescue or heal them. We can believe that they have chosen this path, albeit unconsciously, for their highest good and that "This too shall pass."

**Management Techniques** (with accompanying stories)

- Be egocentric and make space in your life for "me."
- Practice metacognition. Think about your thoughts. Weed out negativity. Focus on gratitude.
- Ignore your misery and do something nice for someone else.
- Dive into your feelings: Vomit negativity, cry a river, rail against the unfairness of the universe, sing the blues, clean house or pull weeds with a vengeance.
- Let your intuition guide you to do something unorthodox that "feels right."
- Do activities that get blood flowing to the brain: yoga, walking, jogging, biking, dancing.
- For a part of each day pretend you are not depressed and act accordingly.

**Recommended Reading:**

*Depression is a Choice: Winning the Battle without Drugs*, A.B.Curtiss

*Healing the Soul in the Age of the Brain*, Elio Frattaroli, M.D.

*When Your Body Gets the Blues*, Marie-Annette Brown, Ph.D., R.N., and Jo Robinson