

Don't waste your depression, leverage it to become a greater person and enjoy a more meaningful, impactful life



[Alex Steinberg 方澤昂](#)

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A universal phenomenon with many negative consequences

Depression and mental health problems have grown at an alarming rate. Some healthcare practitioners describe those issues as already epidemic problem in our society. It puts a huge burden on healthcare systems costing trillions (!) of dollars worldwide each year. Many organizations have also recognized its negative impact on their business: Loss of high-quality professionals, increased absenteeism, productivity & innovation loss, bad/ catastrophic decisions, less quality work, less business outcome, negatively affected customers...

Individual and family tragedies

Hundreds of millions of people suffer of depression and mental health issues. They are increasingly negatively affected in their abilities to enjoy life and work productively. As people usually do not live in a vacuum, they also negatively affect numerous people around them (immediate family members, relatives, friends, coworkers, neighbors, etc.). Especially, children suffer as a result. Children are dependent on the love, care, support and role modeling that their struggling parents often cannot (fully) provide.

Mental health and depression are often wrongly associated with shame and fear

Many people do not openly talk about their mental health and depression issues. People are afraid that it could negatively affect how other people think about them. They tend to fear that other people may reject or belittle them. They afraid about negative impacts on their career or relationships.

When people break a bone or need surgery, they are likely to openly talk about it. Unfortunately, when it comes to our brain and mental health, we often take a completely different approach: Silence, withdrawal, "hiding", "acting", deception. People often associate the brain as their identify and self-worth.

Ignoring the struggles, does not help. It only increases the problems

Most people try to simply ignore the issues as long as possible. The negative consequence: The situation is most often getting worse. People will build neurosis over neurosis that are not beneficial. Neurosis can build into psychosis when the person cannot control behavior under certain circumstances.

Self-treatment often makes the situation worse

Many people try also a range of unhelpful ways that may worsen their situation: Excessive daydreaming, pornography & masturbation, drug and alcohol abuse, promiscuous lifestyle, overeating, unhealthy entertainments, and other wise to escape reality (temporarily).

Most people tend to hide their struggles until they cannot longer upkeep their façade. By then, their issues have typically grown to massive problems that may require years of treatment. It is like cancer that has spread across and entire body and causes different organ failures.

A proper perspective on depression and mental health issues

Treat the mind with same standard and care like the rest of the body! A stomach problem, for example, may indicate wrong/ excessive food intake with a clear suggestion to change the behavior. In this case the body shows a healthy defense mechanism providing helpful feedback that a certain action is good for the body.

Similar with mental health: A person may live an unhealthy lifestyle that negatively affect the nervous system. The

subconscious mind tries to get the attention of the brain to make better choices, lead a better life. If the person ignores or willingly rejects these signals, the subconscious mind may trigger different reactions in the person's physiology or in relations with other people. Like a child screaming when ignored too long, the nervous system and subconscious will increase the pressure on the person to modify his/ her behavior. If the person continues to ignore or numb the messages (through substances, unhealthy behaviors and wrong decisions), the problems will grow to a point where the person will get very sick, suffer a tragedy or experiences or attract other negative circumstances that force the person to evaluate current life style.

Be vigilant and address issues before they become big

People naturally would seek medical treatment for body wounds. Most would agree that it would be very careless to let wounds get infected to the point requiring surgery or amputation. Likewise, we should take decisive actions when we see mental health issues in ourselves.

Leverage mental health and depression issues as an opportunity to grow and experience a better life

This may sound rather counterintuitive and non-sensical. However, you can use the depression or mental health issue as helpful feedback that your current way of life is currently not as it should be. By identifying the root causes and making changes you may experience a much better, more enjoyable, and productive life. And this will not only benefit you, but also the people in your immediate environment (family, coworkers, neighbors, etc.)

What can you do when experiencing mental health issues or depression?

Follow this check & action list in sequential order:

1) Check your health basics

Guiding Questions: Are you getting enough sleep? Do you eat properly balanced diet, enough protein, vitamin, healthy food, proper quantity? Are there any substances that you need to eliminate (sugar, salt, caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, preservatives, other substances you are allergic to, unnecessary prescription drugs, illegal drugs, etc.)? Do you get enough physical exercise?

Action: Some depression issues may be cured by making simple changes. Consider a doctor or other specialist to develop a proper diet, exercise, rest plan.

2) Check your sensory perception

Guiding questions: Do you observe and interpret things in rather negative ways? Do you tend to turn small issues into big problems? Can you appreciate the good sides of yourself and others? Or, do you tend to criticize yourself and other people.

Action: Examine yourself. Make a deliberate decision to focus on the good things and develop a grateful, appreciative outlook on life. Train your eyes and how you gather information. Read good, inspiring content every morning. Eliminate negative news and information.

3) Check your attitude and thoughts:

Guiding questions: Are you a good friend to yourself supporting and cheering yourself up? Or are you your own worst critic pulling you constantly down? How do you think about and act toward others?

Action: Monitor your thoughts and self-talk. Identify the areas where you want to improve. Get support through good materials and helpful people.

4) Check your lifestyle

Guiding questions: Which people are negatively affecting you? Which are activities that put much stress on you?

Action: Be bold to make tough and smart choices: Change your friends. Limit time with difficult/ negative relatives, neighbors and co-workers.

5) Check your work situation

Guiding questions: To what extent are you able to use your strengths and talents on the job? Do you have the necessary resources and empowerment to do your work well? Is your workspace reasonable comfortable and supportive to your work and personal wellbeing?

Action: Explore possible improvement with your line manager and HR. Seek constructive modification to your role and work situation that creates a win-win for you and your organization.

6) Check your family and intimate relationship(s)

Guiding questions: How would you describe your marriage or close relationship(s) on a scale of 1 through 10? How

do you value these people? What can you do to improve these relationships? Where do you want to grow to be a better spouse/ friend? What should your reasonably expect from the other person(s)? What changes do you need to make?

Action: Be proactive and talk with your spouse/ friend(s) to make the relationship(s) more meaning and valuable for each person involved. Seek professional counseling as helpful.

7) Check your spiritual situation

Guiding questions: Do you only live a materialistic life? Do you only believe what you can see or measure? How fulfilling is the world view to you? Assuming there is God, would it not make sense to find out what gifts and talents he has given you and to what purpose? Could you benefit from his guidance and support? If you believe in God, how would you describe your relationship with God? Could it be that God has been trying to get your attention for a long time and wants you to speak to Him right now?

Scientific view: Mathematician have long proved that there are more than the three visible dimensions where our bodies move. By limiting us to only three dimensions we unscientifically limit us to only a much smaller world and unnecessary reject possible benefits of higher dimensions.

Action: Millions of people have found much strengths and even miracles through Jesus Christ. Get and read the New Testament of the Bible (most published book in the world). Pray and talk to Jesus. He may also help you...

8) Check your joy of being alive/ Suicidal thoughts & intentions

Guiding questions: How happy are you in life? Have you wondered what it would be like if you did not wake up again?

Action: If you have contemplated to committing suicide, take that very serious! This not a small thing (regardless what other people may tell you). This may be one of your last warnings from your subconsciousness! You can worry and think yourself sick. Illness and mental health issues proceed death.

If you contemplating whether or how to talk your own life, there is a different option. You can commit suicide and die. Continue to live a life dwelling on death, which is very negative. Or you can take the third option. Exchange your current life for a new life.

Millions of people have found a new life in Jesus. The Bible in the Gospel of John, Chapter 3:1-8) shares a story where Jesus offered a person a new life. Jesus explained how a person could experience a new life (and spend eternity in heaven later). In the Gospel of John 10:10 Jesus offers an abundant life, who wants it. In other passages Jesus offers to guide, take care of, and help every person, who trusts him.

Yes, your life situation may be hopeless from a human perspective. But Jesus is in the miracle business He has healed people against all medical science understanding, raised people from the death and helped people escape the consequences of the wrong doings. Jesus continues to do miracles! Millions of people around the world will testify to that! Your situation is not hopeless until you stop breathing. Put your trust in Jesus!

If you are not contemplating suicide, good. So please, help others. Statistically there will be at least three people who you have met who are in danger of taking their lives. Please help others! Think which people you could encourage!

9) Check your purpose and meaning in life

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Summary:

This article is about a topic that few people feel comfortable to talk about. The author felt compelled to address it to help people. **This article may save human lives. Share the article as you deem helpful!**

We all carry mental wounds and “baggage” from the past. Nobody is fully mentally healthy.

Depression has been affecting a large part of our society around the world. It is an illness that can be treated!

This article explained related issues and offered clear action steps.

Every person has the responsibility to address his/ her mental health issues and play a decisive active role regaining mental health.

Your current mental health issues/ depression may be an indication that you need to change/ improve certain things in your life.

Embrace this situation as an opportunity to find a more suitable way of life and increasingly grow into the person that

you were/ are meant to be. Do not do this just for yourself, but for other people around you who also need help. Your life can become a living testimony and inspiration for many other in needs.

Your friend, Alex

PS: If you found this article helpful and/or it triggered thoughts, feel free to share your insights as a commentary. It may also benefit other readers.

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This article presents the sole opinion of the author. It does not claim to represent the views or values of any current/ former client, employer, or other entity.

About the Author:

Alex Steinberg has worked for and advised dozens of multi-national companies and government organizations around the world. He has developed, directed and/ or supported large projects across key industries that have earned awards, CEO praise or other recognition. Alex has translated his hands-on expertise into training and speeches that have benefited hundreds of thousands of people in business and private settings.

In his free time Alex serves people in a wide range humanitarian projects serving a wide range of people groups; often in difficult environments. To better reach/ serve people Alex has learned and communicated in eight world languages. Alex personal mission is to positively impact 700+ million people in his lifetime.

You can contract Alex Steinberg as expert & advisor for your projects & company or book one of Alex' workshops and seminars to empower your leadership team/ organization for greater outcome.

Connect with the Author:

You may connect with Alex by LinkedIn or send him a personal email to alexwsteinberg@hotmail.com