

## THE DEPRESSION PORTAL Social Media: Instagram Posts

*The Depression Portal is a non-profit organization educating the public about depression. They wanted their Instagram writing to be direct—yet creative—with universal appeal as depression can affect anyone.*

### Welcome to Fabulous Depressionville

For some people, being depressed is all they know, and they cling to depression for fear of losing themselves. Elizabeth Wurtzel, famed writer of the memoir, *Prozac Nation*, confesses: “In a strange way, I had fallen in love with my depression.... I loved it because I thought it was all I had. I thought depression was the part of my character that made me worthwhile. I thought so little of myself, felt that I had such scant offerings to give to the world, that the one thing that justified my existence at all was my agony.”

If you are depressed and find yourself making excuses for not taking your medication, not seeking therapy, not exercising, not socializing, not eating right...it's time to take a good, hard look at why you're keeping yourself from getting better. Being scared of what will fill the void of depression is NOT a good excuse. Start taking care of yourself, starting now. And instead of lamenting over what you'll lose without depression running your life, think about what you'll gain....more time, more energy, more self-esteem, more positivity. The multitude of pros far outweigh the scant amount of cons.

You may struggle with depression for the rest of your life. But it doesn't need to define you. And it doesn't need to own you. 🙌

➡️ TDP Dialogue: What do you do to keep depression from defining you? 🤔

### The Dating Law of F\*ck Yes

Does navigating through the dating world make you depressed? Mark Manson, author of “Everything is Fucked: A Book About Hope,” suggests a dating rule to abide by: The Law of Fuck Yes or No.

“The Law of Fuck Yes or No is quite simple. The Law states that, in dating and relationships, both parties must be a ‘fuck yes’ about each other. Why? Because attractive, non-needy, high self-worth people don't have time for people who they are not excited to be with and who are not excited to be with them,” states Manson.

How does this translate to your first date? If there isn't a “fuck yes” for seeing each other again, then that's a “fuck no.” If you're going through a rough patch with someone, but “you're both a ‘fuck yes’ for working on it,” then move forward with confidence. Wondering if you should marry your partner? If you're not a ‘fuck yes’ for being in each other's future, then that's a “fuck no.”

If you keep the Law in play, you won't have any apprehensions about being “the one” for each other. “The point is that you find yourselves saying “fuck yes” together for each step in the relationship despite the apprehensions you might have.”

The bottom line according to Mason is that “Non-needy people who take care of themselves and communicate honestly don't have time for people who play games or are wishy-washy about being with them. They have too much self-respect and don't care about what wishy-washy people think of them.”

Depression is hard enough without a subpar relationship bringing you down. So say “fuck no” to your lackluster partner. You deserve the best version of yourself unapologetically and without shame. 🥰

→ TDP Dialogue: Would you say “fuck yes” or “fuck no” to your current relationship? 🤔

### Need a Friend?

Loneliness and depression go hand in hand. Being lonely starts out gradually. According to psychologist, Guy Winch, Ph.D., “One friend moves away, another has a child, a third works a seventy hour work week, and before we know it the social circle that had sustained us in the past ceases to exist and we find ourselves spending most of our weekends alone.”\* Sound familiar?

Loneliness can be difficult to escape and lend itself to the following mindsets and judgements:

Lonely people tend to view their existing relationships more negatively — They assume people aren’t interested in their company. They take little initiative to reach out and turn down invitations when received.

Lonely people create a self-fulfilling prophecy — Lonely people create a distance between themselves and their loved ones. Since they “remain blind” to their part in creating the distance, they see their loved ones’ withdrawal as confirmation of their fears and become even more convinced there is no one in their life who cares.

Loneliness is hard to mask — Lonely people are more likely to be labeled as “less interesting and less appealing” socially. “This stigma, combined with the negativity and suspicion (they) might project in social situations makes it challenging for (them) to establish new social and romantic connections.”

Loneliness is contagious — Studies have shown that lonely people can ‘infect’ their inner circle, causing their loved ones to be lonely as well.

Lonely people’s social muscles atrophy over time — After being isolated, social skills often weaken, which can cause social engagements to go badly. And when the “failure or rejection” occurs, lonely people view it as further proof of their “fundamental undesirability.”

Stay tuned for our next post, which deals with how to break free of loneliness. 👫

→ TDP Dialogue: How do you feed your loneliness? 🌹

\*“Why Loneliness Is a Trap,” Psychology Today, by Guy Winch, PhD., 10/19/13

### How to Cure Loneliness

46% of U.S. adults report that they “sometimes or always” feel lonely with Generation Z (ages 18-22) being the loneliest generation. Studies have shown that loneliness contributes to health issues such as depression, diabetes, and heart disease. It can be responsible for substance abuse and affect overall quality of life. Loneliness and social isolation may even cause early death.\*

With such staggering stats, it’s crucial we take loneliness on.

In our last post, we covered some of the negative thinking associated with loneliness. In this post, we’re going to suggest ways to break free of loneliness:

Take initiative — Enlist in doing group activities that you enjoy, which you can find through online services like Meetup.com. Make a list of your Facebook and Instagram contacts and reach out to one person a

day whom you haven't seen or spoken to for awhile. Suggest an activity to do instead of solely messaging. Put out a positive, inviting vibe as opposed to being overly cautious. Be enthusiastic to reconnect.

Don't be swayed by perceived rejection — Be mindful of people who are jaded, mistrusting, or negative towards connecting. Don't take it personally, and keep reaching out.

Practice optimism — It's hard to be positive when you're lonely. But if you can balance your negative thoughts with optimistic ones, you're more likely to attract other positive people whom you'll enjoy spending time with.

Reach out to social butterflies — Get together with someone who's highly social. It's likely that you will benefit from their well-honed social and relatedness skills. Added bonus? Their friends may become your friends. 🙌

➡ TDP Dialogue: What are some things you do to combat loneliness? 🤔

\*"Many Americans are Lonely," CBS News, 5/3/18

## Anxiety

"Anxiety is the new depression," according to Dr. Gregory Jantz, mental health expert and best-selling author of 37 books. "The co-occurrence of anxiety and depression produces some very unpleasant realities. Each can exacerbate the effects of the other and make the possibility of either or both becoming chronic more likely."\*

The facts on anxiety in America are stark. It is the most common mental health disorder and the leading cause of disability in the U.S. More than 18% of Americans suffer from an anxiety disorder, and 60-70% of those who suffer from depression also have anxiety. While both issues are treatable, less than a third of those suffering seek the help they need.

When an individual deals with both anxiety and depression, extra pressure is put on their "relationships, work performance, physical health and happiness." Their risk of suicide increases as well.

There are two types of treatment for anxiety which are the most successful: psychotherapy ("talk therapy") and medications. Three forms of therapy work well for anxiety — CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy), DBT (Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, and ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy). Benzodiazepines (e.g., Xanax and Valium for short-term usage), anti-depressants (e.g., SSRIs and SNRIs for long-term usage), and beta-blockers are the go-to medications that doctors prescribe for anxiety.

Self-help techniques also make anxiety treatment more effective. Managing stress through meditation, support groups, diet, and exercise is helpful, as is enlisting help from family and friends — you're only as strong as the support network you create. 🤝

➡ TDP Dialogue: What are some things you do to combat anxiety? 🤔

For help finding therapists who specialize in anxiety treatment, go to Psychology Today's referral network: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists>

\*"Anxiety Is The New Depression", ThriveGlobal.com, by Dr. Gregory Jantz, 6/15/19

## What's Your Drug?

Treating depression is a multi-faceted approach. Standard go-tos are anti-depressants, therapy, diet, exercise, and meditation. We're going to briefly cover a few newer treatments in this post. Google any of them for more information....

Ketamine is an anesthetic that doctors have used for decades. Recently ketamine has been shown to have anti-depressive effects. Its advocates have claimed ketamine to be "the biggest breakthrough in depression treatment in 50 years."\* Since ketamine hasn't been FDA-approved for depression yet, it needs to be used with caution. Ketamine is currently being administered in ketamine-specific clinics, nationwide.

Researchers are on a fast track to developing a treatment for depression using the psychedelic compound psilocybin, best known as the active ingredient in so-called "magic mushrooms." "The effect has been described as psilocybin shaking the brain up like a snow globe, or rebooting the brain, providing new connections and deactivating connections that might have caused depression," says Tracy Cheung, communications director for COMPASS Pathways, the life sciences company that received FDA support for psilocybin research.\*\*

GABAA is a chemical messenger in the brain, believed to play a key role in depression and during the postpartum period. Companies are developing steroids, administered through infusion, to target the brain's GABAA receptors. In studies, these drugs provided immediate relief from postpartum depression.

According to Dr. Kenneth Duckworth, a Harvard University professor and medical director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), "We need to look more creatively for medications to treat depression and welcome thoughtful research on drugs that might be considered nontraditional. Look at the suicide rate in this country. We have a deep need for better treatment."

A recent non-drug related treatment for depression is transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS). TMS is a noninvasive procedure that uses magnetic fields to stimulate nerve cells in the brain to improve depression. A electromagnetic coil is placed against the patient's scalp and painlessly delivers a magnetic pulse that stimulates nerve cells in the regions of the brain that have decreased activity due to depression. The stimulation appears to impact how the brain is working, which in turn seems to ease depression symptoms and improve mood. 😊

➡ TDP Dialogue: Do you have a treatment of choice that works for your depression? 🧑

\* "A Brighter Future: Rethinking how depression is treated could help millions of people worldwide", Washington Post's Brand Studio, by T. Rowe Price., February 16, 2019

\*\* "FDA Puts 'Magic Mushroom' Ingredient on Fast Track for Depression Treatment", Healthline, November 7, 2018.