

The SURVIVING
DEPRESSION
Journal

A Catholic Approach

*a companion
through tough times*

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Contents

Introduction	1
CHAPTER 1	
What Does Depression Look Like?	3
CHAPTER 2	
“If Only You Tried Harder”	13
CHAPTER 3	
“Why Doesn’t God Heal Me?”	23
CHAPTER 4	
“How Do I Start?”	33
CHAPTER 5	
“I Just Want to Feel Better”	43
CHAPTER 6	
“I Can’t Stop Crying”	53
CHAPTER 7	
“I’m Going Crazy!”	63

CHAPTER 8

Start Humming in the Darkness 73

CHAPTER 9

“Don’t Look the Other Way” 83

CHAPTER 10

Healings Are Not “Success Stories” 93

Appendix 103

Some Symptoms of Depression. 103

Suggestions for Support 104

Basics for Surviving Depression 104

Breath Prayers 105

A Prayer to Jesus, My Inmost Counselor 106

Notes. 107



CHAPTER 5

“I Just Want to Feel Better”

Spiritual Directions

From my journal:

“Scared. What is it? I’ve felt so good lately—focus, attention, performance, creativity.... Then like a spaceship hurtling through bombs, problems and projects, I’m breaking up and falling apart. I can’t stand still. I can’t sit still. I can’t pray. I can’t do anything. Someone please help me. I don’t know what to do. The world is racing by and no one cares. I’m bad. I’ve lost everything. There is no one to help me. Please, someone, please help me. I’m so tired. So very tired.”

Do you have a journal entry that captures one of your lowest moments?

Copy this phrase below: *The Lord is my Shepherd. He takes care of me.*

Moment of Contemplation

Picture yourself at one of your lowest moments. How has someone reached out to you? Or how do you need someone to show you they care? What would it be like not being alone with your pain?

Sit quietly. Rest. Wait. Journal your thoughts, feelings, desires.

Holy Darkness

As the legend goes, *She-who-flies-swiftly* was known by all in the forest for her swift flight, and the magnificent color of her feathers made her the joy of all the animals that watched her fly above the trees. One day she broke her wing, and she found safety underneath a tree. The Creator visited her, picked her up, passed his hand over her wing, and placed her gently back under the tree. *She-who-flies-swiftly* began to sing in her sorrow until her song, which ushered from her broken heart, filled the forest with its hauntingly beautiful melody. *She-who-flies-swiftly* never flew again, but the healing touch of the Creator had given her the miracle of song and a new direction in life. Healing comes in many different ways.

What would you like to say to God?

Humming on the Journey

Personal Pages Between God and You

God says, “I will be gracious to you when you call out, and I will answer you quickly. I will give you the bread you are hungry for and the water you are thirsting for. I will not hide myself from you any longer but with your own eyes you will see me, your Teacher. And you will hear from behind you my voice which will say, ‘This is the way; walk in it.’ On that day I will heal all your wounds.”

(cf. Is 30:19ff.)

Sometimes we grade God’s love for us by how we feel about ourselves. When we are depressed we can feel lousy—even if we pray a lot for some kind of miracle. God proves his love for us by his fidelity to us: that no matter how alone, sick, or crazy we feel we are, God still breathes us into life. We might think this to be a cruel love—God should let us die and end it all—but I have found that depression yields most beautiful pearls if we have help to walk through the night. Becoming “better” probably is your code word for becoming as you were before your depression. Instead, God dreams something more for you.

Do you know of someone who has developed new qualities of character after an illness? What are some qualities you desire to develop in yourself?

What is a new path God may be pointing out to you?

doodles · hopes · fears · lights · prayers · mercies · words · dreams · tears · joys

joys · tears · dreams · words · mercies · prayers · lights · fears · hopes · doodles