

# The Antidepressant Lifestyle: How to Become and Remain Well

Simple choices, made day by day, consciously or unconsciously, influence mood. Learn to choose wisely!

<u>HOW TO BE DEPRESSED</u>	<u>HOW TO CHOOSE JOY INSTEAD</u>
<p><b><u>Dimension 1: Thoughts</u></b></p> <p>- <b><u>Focus on the negative:</u></b> disappointments, losses, deprivations, injustices, etc.</p> <p>- <b><u>All-or-nothing thinking:</u></b> Eg., “If I’m not perfect, I’m worthless.” Even more effectively destructive with <b><u>labeling</u></b> (“dumb, failure,” etc.)</p> <p>- <b><u>Always/never thinking:</u></b> build broad, permanent, negative interpretations from brief, specific events or circumstances.</p> <p>- <b><u>Blame yourself or others:</u></b> Inappropriately and excessively - “It’s all my fault” or “It’s all their fault.”</p> <p>- <b><u>Let the critical inner voice chatter:</u></b> unperceived, uninterrupted, unchallenged. Internalize and act on that negative input.</p>	<p><b><u>Dimension 1: Thoughts</u></b></p> <p>*<b><u>Focus on the positive:</u></b> uplifting; funny; lessons learned; compensatory blessings.</p> <p>*<b><u>Continuum thinking:</u></b> Give yourself and others credit for the good you all do - even if it’s not completely perfect or flawless.</p> <p>*<b><u>Think specific:</u></b> regard setbacks and disappointments as temporary, specific, and surmountable.</p> <p>*<b><u>Share responsibility and accountability:</u></b> Which part is mine, which is yours? Correct your part; let them be in charge of their part.</p> <p>*<b><u>Keep track of your thoughts</u></b> on paper; notice patterns. Consciously find satisfying replacements for negative items.</p>
<p><b><u>Dimension 2: Behavior</u></b></p> <p>- <b><u>Act badly:</u></b> Say and do things you know are wrong, that you know you’ll regret later. Hurt yourself and others, go against your values.</p> <p>- <b><u>Be defensive and stubborn:</u></b> esp. about damaging behavior and its impact.</p> <p>- <b><u>Stay stuck</u></b> in old, destructive, or ineffective ways of doing things (parenting, housework, communication, socializing, etc.)</p> <p>- <b><u>Act depressed:</u></b> Withdraw, isolate yourself, do nothing. This will push others even farther away, and leave you even more depressed.</p> <p>- <b><u>Ingest poison and avoid nourishment:</u></b> to body, mind, and spirit. (junk food - esp. sugar; junk TV; negative music/books/websites; etc.)</p> <p>- <b><u>Ignore your physical needs:</u></b> for food, water, rest, exercise, sunlight, fresh air.</p> <p>- <b><u>Neglect your living space:</u></b> Let junk, dishes, and clutter collect; allow things to fall into disorder/disrepair. This will depress anyone!</p> <p>- <b><u>Try to do everything perfectly:</u></b> This almost guarantees procrastination &amp; despair.</p>	<p><b><u>Dimension 2: Behavior</u></b></p> <p>*<b><u>Act well:</u></b> Say and do positive, kind things that can bring satisfaction later - even if you “don’t feel like it” now.</p> <p>*<b><u>Be humble and repentant:</u></b> willing to change and grow with feedback.</p> <p>*<b><u>Learn and apply new skills</u></b> to replace old patterns. Read, attend classes or therapy, seek counsel from friends, family, leaders.</p> <p>*<b><u>Act “as if”:</u></b> Do things you normally enjoy doing, or know you should do. Act “as if” you weren’t depressed (mastery and pleasure ex.)</p> <p>*<b><u>Ingest nourishment and avoid poison:</u></b> to body, mind, and spirit. (Positive, wholesome food, input, entertainment.)</p> <p>*<b><u>Meet your physical needs</u></b> in an effective and consistent way.</p> <p>*<b><u>Dejunk, clean, and organize</u></b> your living space. This effort will return far more energy to you than you put into it!</p> <p>*<b><u>Do a little at a time:</u></b> Rather than everything or nothing, just do “something” meaningful.</p>

**Source: Carrie Maxwell Wrigley, LCSW.** This model is informed by cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), Interpersonal Therapy (IPT), Assertiveness Training, and Positive Psychology. See, for example, Michael Yapko’s Breaking the Patterns of Depression, and David Burns’ The Feeling Good Handbook.

<p><b><u>Dimension 3: Spirituality</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b><u>Stop praying:</u></b> Or just pray prettily, superficially, w/o really opening your heart to God.</li> <li>- <b><u>Avoid the words of Christ:</u></b> scriptures, words of the prophets, spiritual talks/lessons, etc.</li> <li>- <b><u>Offend and repel the Spirit:</u></b> through negative thinking and behavior, leaving yourself alone and vulnerable to attack.</li> <li>- <b><u>Don't believe Christ:</u></b> Find reasons to suppose that the Gospel and the Atonement don't relate to you and your challenges. Don't believe that He can heal you.</li> <li>- <b><u>Stop going to the temple:</u></b> Even better, lose your temple recommend. Best of all, go instead to places of worldly "comforts."</li> <li>- <b><u>Focus on yourself and your problems:</u></b> (self-pity.) Or - try to fix others instead of yourself (codependence.) Get out of balance.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Dimension 3: Spirituality</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*<b><u>Pray always:</u></b> over everything, including (especially!) your trials and afflictions.</li> <li>*<b><u>Feast on the words of Christ:</u></b> If needed, also request a blessing, or take a personal retreat.</li> <li>*<b><u>Invite and follow the Spirit:</u></b> So you have a constant companion, guide, and teacher, through everything you experience.</li> <li>*<b><u>Believe Christ:</u></b> Trust and apply His atonement to your challenges. Know that He understands and accompanies you through everything, and can and will heal your pains.</li> <li>*<b><u>Immerse yourself in temple worship:</u></b> Drink in the healing, comforting, sanctifying, revelatory impact of the holy temple.</li> <li>*<b><u>Find meaningful ways to serve and comfort others,</u></b> while still meeting your own basic needs. "Love thy neighbor <i>as</i> thyself."</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Dimension 4: Relationships</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b><u>Have media on constantly:</u></b> especially negative TV music, movies, etc. Crowd out opportunities for meaningful interaction.</li> <li>- <b><u>Trust too little, or too much:</u></b> Guard and close your heart to everyone; or throw it wide open to everyone, inviting betrayal &amp; abuse.</li> <li>- <b><u>Have too-thick or too-thin boundaries:</u></b> Apply the same rules to everyone.</li> <li>- <b><u>Be too dependent or too independent:</u></b> Cling; or find ways not to need anyone.</li> <li>- <b><u>Complain and criticize:</u></b> This drives others from you faster than almost anything else.</li> <li>- <b><u>Be selfish, or self-effacing:</u></b> Care too much - or too little - for yourself.</li> <li>- <b><u>Hold on to old hurts, mistakes, and grudges.</u></b> Stay stuck in the past; focus on the negative.</li> <li>- <b><u>Demand or passively wait for change</u></b> (aggressiveness or passivity).</li> <li>- <b><u>Try to be someone you're not.</u></b> Spend your time in environments/activities that go against your natural grain; compare w/others.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Dimension 3: Relationships</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*<b><u>Minimize your media use:</u></b> Give your focus to real relationships with real people. Make careful, positive choices when you use media.</li> <li>*<b><u>Build incremental trust:</u></b> Open your heart to people to the extent that they have proven themselves trustworthy over time.</li> <li>*<b><u>Have appropriate boundaries,</u></b> balancing intimacy with independence.</li> <li>*<b><u>Be interdependent.</u></b> Use your own good gifts in effective cooperation with others.</li> <li>*<b><u>Appreciate and praise:</u></b> Sending out positive energy draws others to you.</li> <li>*<b><u>Love thy neighbor as thyself:</u></b> Balance your needs and desires with those of others.</li> <li>*<b><u>Forgive and move on:</u></b> Free yourself from old pain, to embrace a happy present &amp; future.</li> <li>*<b><u>Clearly and kindly express your needs,</u></b> and work positively for change (assertiveness).</li> <li>*<b><u>Develop a clear sense of identity:</u></b> Then structure a meaningful life and mission around it, and don't compare yourself with others.</li> </ul>

For additional handouts and a talk recording on this topic, see <http://covenant-lds.com/wrigley.htm>.  
For a video introduction to this approach, see <http://byubwmv.byu.edu/edweek/2005/CWrigley05.wmv>.