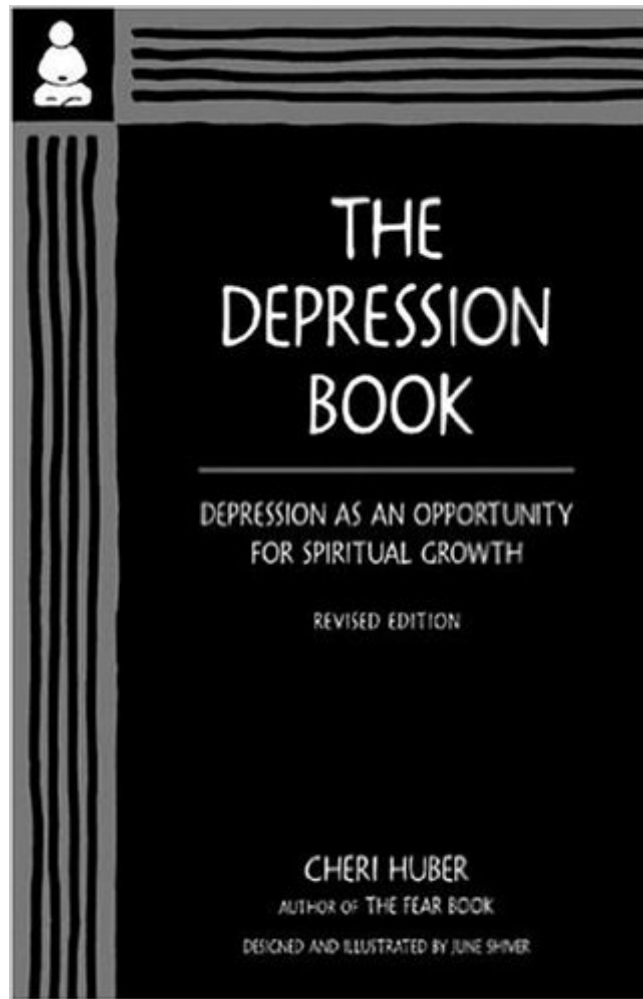


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The Depression Book: Depression As An Opportunity For Spiritual Growth



Synopsis

This Zen guide to utilizing depression as an opportunity for spiritual growth and personal acceptance includes personal accounts, written exercises, and meditation instructions.

Book Information

Paperback: 168 pages

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Customer Reviews

This is a book on using depression as fodder for your spiritual practice. It is handwritten, with cute illustrations, and the style is conversational and down-to-earth. It is not mainly about how to get less depressed but, rather, about how to suffer less and have more compassion for yourself in the midst of depression, and in the midst of all states of being. While you're very depressed, this book may just scare you and/or piss you off (that was my reaction when I first flipped through it in a bookstore), but I highly recommend it for when you're on the upswing. Cheri Huber is a Zen teacher, and her approach may especially appeal to folks who practice Zen or a similar form of meditation, but I don't think the words "Zen" or "Buddhism" appear anywhere in the text. The last few pages give instructions in a simple form of meditation involving attention to the breathing. I also recommend John & Andrea Nelson's "Sacred Sorrows," a collection of essays on a wide variety of approaches to depression, including ways of healing depression and also ways of embracing depression and finding meaning in it. And if you're interested in Zen, you might want to take a look at Philip Martin's "The Zen Path through Depression," which mixes together insights about using Zen to alleviate depression and using Zen to suffer less in the midst of depression.

This is one of those books that, after you read it, you're glad you ordered it - and glad you read it (instead of putting in that "I'll get to it later" pile)... "The Depression Book" offers a "new" way for those who suffer from depression to deal with it - I placed the word "new" in quotes because, apparently, the approach offered is one that has been practiced in certain spiritual groups (namely Zen Buddhism) for a very long time. This approach may seem a bit radical at first, but it makes a lot of sense. The idea is that the depression we feel is based on something else - something underneath the feelings of depression. It's also based on the idea that we tend to beat ourselves up for being depressed - we are not nearly as compassionate to ourselves as we would be to our loved ones... And this "beating up" process leads us to stay in a place of depression far longer than we have to. One of the ideas that I found especially helpful is that it's okay to be depressed. We have been told, and have come to believe, that depression is somehow "wrong", and we judge ourselves harshly for allowing ourselves to have that experience - yet many times we learn the most about ourselves during times of pain - and depression can be one of those times. As in Cheri's other books, it all boils down to compassion - the best thing we can do for ourselves is to love ourselves as we love others - to be just as compassionate to ourselves, as we would be to a friend or family member that was depressed. There are many great ideas on how we can look at depression differently, as well as what we can do when we are in the midst of it. Overall, this is an excellent book for anyone who suffers from depression (whether it's frequent or not), as well as those who have loved ones who tend to have this experience. It's easy to read, and filled with a wealth of wisdom - and you can't beat the price!

I came across this book in a New Age store, and when I went back to get another copy for a friend, they were already out of it. As a resource for dealing with depression, this book is unique and invaluable. Instead of feeling like there is something wrong with you or you should just "snap out of it," this book encourages the reader to accept the feelings of depression and helplessness and then move beyond it. This book is creative and fun; reading it will make you start to feel better, or at least not feel bad about feeling depressed.

I see various reviews that don't like that it is hand written with doodles and other pictures, I found it especially appealing as I am an artist. I believe that if you are looking for a 'fix' the book won't 'fix' you any more than any other type of mental cognitive approach. If you find yourself in that boat, I strongly recommend seeing a psychiatrist and seeing if an anti-depressant will help. Read in conjunction with medical supervision and an anti-depressant might create enough space to really

get in touch with yourself and allow the healing to begin. This book is exceptional for people who are tired of depression and willing to take a serious look at themselves and his/her own mind. Once I stopped cognitively fighting depression, that is having depression parties and celebrating the feelings as an excuse to watch movies and just be with the feelings, they passed. I've been depression free for many many years, now I just feel pain and let it come up and just be with it in a compassionate environment. That said: what works for one, doesn't work for all and Truth is a Pathless land.-chris

This book changed the way I think about depression. I had been trying to stop being depressed by trying to force myself to do what was expected of me. This book helped me to understand that I was depressed for a reason, and that by learning about myself through my depression I allowed that reason to come to the surface. Cheri does use examples that relate better with less severe depression (such as renting a movie and making a cake) but the meat of what she is saying is applicable for severe depression as well as the blues. Allow yourself to be what you are (without beating yourself up for it) and observe yourself as you're being. While obviously this book (and no book) can be a substitute for professional treatment for depression, the information can be helpful for anyone who suffers from this disease, you just may have to come up with your own examples of what you need to do for yourself when you're depressed.

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