

Used alongside formal treatments and self-help activities complementary therapies can help you to manage and overcome depression.

Complementary therapies can improve sleep and general wellbeing but they are not an alternative to formal treatment.

Going for a complementary therapy means giving yourself some time and space, which can raise self-esteem.

You can do some complementary therapies yourself.

Journeys is the only organisation in Wales whose sole purpose is to offer support and understanding to people affected by depression, their friends, families and carers.

Journeys takes a holistic approach to overcoming depression through guided self-help and the development of skills and strategies. We help people to find their own route to recovery, building the foundations for sustainable and long-term wellbeing.

We facilitate a network of self-help groups where people can share experiences and coping strategies; offer information and advice; provide a unique range of publications and practical resources covering many depression related topics; run training courses to help people understand, manage and recover from depression; and co-ordinate mutual support services. We also offer a free information pack.

design by /imagineantangerine.co.uk



Complementary Therapies

Complementary therapies may help you on your road to recovery from depression.

To request a free information pack or to find out more please contact us.

Call 029 2069 2891

Email info@journeysonline.org.uk

www.journeysonline.org.uk

Registered charity 1108411. A Company Limited by Guarantee (5181571)

Registered office: 120-122 Broadway, Roath, Cardiff CF24 1NJ

Copyright ©2008 Journeys

This leaflet is printed on recycled paper



What is depression?

Everyone feels sad or upset sometimes, it is a normal response to difficult or distressing experiences. Depression is different. It is a serious condition that involves symptoms that are so intense that they interfere with day to day living over a prolonged period of time.

This includes feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, low self-esteem, sleep disorders and physical aches and pains. In recent years, more and more people have been turning to complementary therapies to help them overcome depression.

What is a complementary therapy?

A complementary therapy is an approach to promoting health and healing that can be safely used alongside formal treatments that you would receive from your doctor. Examples include:

- ⇔ Aromatherapy
- ⇔ Acupuncture
- ⇔ Massage
- ⇔ Reflexology
- ⇔ Reiki
- ⇔ Shiatsu

Complementary therapies should not be confused with alternative medicines. Alternative medicines are often marketed as a substitute for formal treatment rather than for use alongside it. This is especially true of herbal remedies, which can be dangerous if used with medicines.

You should talk to your doctor before using any complementary therapy or alternative medicine to check whether they are safe and compatible with any formal treatment you are receiving.

Do complementary therapies work?

There is considerable anecdotal evidence that complementary therapies can help in the management of depression. However, the evidence does not come up to the standard that we would expect for a medical treatment.

This does not mean that complementary therapies do not help, but it does mean that you should be cautious about any medical claims that are made.

How would a complementary therapy help?

Depression is not a straightforward illness. It has psychological and social dimensions, and is made worse by stress and disturbed sleep. Complementary therapies can address these wider dimensions in a way that conventional medicine is often unable to do. This is because:

- ⇔ The therapist can spend time with you, providing a sympathetic ear
- ⇔ Therapies involving “hands-on” approaches provide a degree of human contact that is often lacking in day-to-day life
- ⇔ Most complementary therapies result in profound relaxation, particularly when used regularly
- ⇔ In taking the time to experience a complementary therapy, you are telling yourself you deserve it, and you are being kind to yourself

Avoiding harm

If you decide to use a complementary therapy, it is important to choose your therapist wisely. Personal recommendation can be the best way, as this will give an insight into the way the therapist practices.

Alternatively, you should look for a therapist that belongs to a professional association that regulates its members, insists on professional qualifications, and operates a transparent complaint and redress service. Ideally, you should try to find a therapist who is personally recommended and belongs to a professional association.