

the Depressing ONE

by Guru Mani H

“I’m living, but all I want to do is die...to sleep and never wake up.”

“I beg someone to switch on the light, only to be told it’s already on.”

“I don’t even have the hope of hope.”

“I wake, and the whole dark cycle repeats itself.”

“It’s like I’ve died, but am still stuck here in my body.”

“Relief only comes when I sleep, so I do that; a lot.”

“It swallows me, whole and alive.”

“There’s empty, and then there’s me.”

“I think of the end. I dream of the end. I visualize the end.”

“The world around me is in 3D colour. I’m in 1D black and white.”

“No-one knows how I really feel.”

“My emotions aren’t down, just not there at all. My soul is an empty space.”

“I stare vacantly, for hours on end.”

“Nothing excites me any more.”

“I’m not OK; not at all. I smile an empty smile, but I’m most definitely not OK.”

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“I can’t relate to any of this stuff. Sure, I have my down days, but I bounce back. I think people need to just snap out of it. Anything is possible with your will power. I think those with depression are weak and give up too easily, or just sponge off other people; emotionally and in every other way. Again, just snap out of it; it’s not that hard.”

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“Just when I thought I’d finally stopped falling and my life had a foundation on a small but welcome piece rock, a trap door opened up without any warning, and like sand in

a fragile glass timer I was free-falling, out of control, with nothing firm to stand on. I sat and stared for ages every day, and when I had to do something or go somewhere [after all, life continued for those I was close to], then I'd do it, but was just a hollow shell. I saw the hurt I was causing those who were close to me, and as days walked into weeks, and weeks ran into months, I felt powerless to make myself into anything different, so the pain I caused them continued. Whether I was alone or with someone else, Depression was still my unwelcome friend. Whether I was here or there, Depression was my constant companion. Nothing felt good; ever. Everyday things had no meaning. I used to cry. It helped to release things, but the tears just wouldn't flow any more. The well had run dry. My emotions were numb, empty, like staring into the vast void of outer space. Things I did to try and excite me, to jump start me into feeling something, anything, they did nothing; changed nothing. I smiled; my outer world a success. I smiled again; my inner world as dark as a winter's night. No moon, no stars, no hope, yet I simply smiled another smile. Every waking second felt like a day; every day felt like an eternity. I longed for sleep. Oh, that sleep would cover me like a warm blanket. Sleep was my only safe place. Oh, how I longed for sleep; permanent sleep. I'm writing this from the other side, not of Depression, but of life. I'm permanently on the other side, and whilst ending it early has brought me relief from the black [the white is so welcome], I didn't know I'd be able to glimpse back into the mortal world and see my family. *My* relief has become *their* pain. The lifting of *my* burden has put a weight so heavy upon *them* that they'll drag it around their whole lives. My *single answer* has left them with a *multitude of questions*. I'm free from *my* depression, but have added to *theirs*. No matter how intense my pain was, I'd rather *that* than *this*. *That* may one day have changed, *this* can't be changed; ever. Bugger."

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"The *fantasy* is that you can help lift someone with depression out of their pit, but the *reality* is that no matter what you do or say, or for how long, absolutely nothing can make them happy. For years I poured my heart and soul into trying to get rid of their

depression, but it was stronger than me and, in the end, I simply gave in, because I could no longer cope. It was dragging me down as well, and making me unwell.”

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“Drugs was the only thing that went anywhere to *helping* lift my mood, of giving me moments of normality and even at times short bursts of joy.”

“They *helped* at the start, but I found that I needed more and more pills just to get the same relief, so I became totally addicted.”

“Anti-depressants have definitely *helped* with the symptoms, but I’m worried that they haven’t really dealt with the root of the problem. They’ve pushed the problem down, but it scares me what will happen when it comes back up.”

“They tell me that I have severe depression, a chemical imbalance in the brain. I’m told that medication can *help* me, but I’m not sure I want to live the rest of my life in a fog of almost permanent sleepiness. So, I’m fucked either way.”

“Some people say that traditional therapies *helped*. Good for them, but I’ve found so much more light in alternative therapy.”

“I won’t talk to anyone about it, not because I don’t want to, but because I’m too numb to know myself. I can’t call for *help* because Depression has stolen my voice.”

“I had a good friend who just sat and listened, many times. It didn’t cure me from depression, but it certainly *helped* me feel less alone.”

“I hate these ‘steps out of depression’ self-*help* therapies. I’m a unique person, not some robot. I hate that people make a profit out of my pain. It stinks.”

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There is no shame in asking for or receiving *help*, no matter what form it takes.

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“I found my *hope* in God. Without him I’d be dead. No question. When I was at my lowest and it was pitch black, he gave me the hope of the hope of hope. I didn’t give up on him, even though I couldn’t feel him anywhere at all.”

“He’s the one that’s allowed all my pain. He’s nowhere. I don’t know if he even exists, but if he does, then I hate him for what he’s done to me. Faith is simply *hopeless*.”

“There was no instant miracle. No flashing light in the sky. No immediate exchange of depression for *hope*. There was however a slow [very slow] exchanging of dark for light [or at least grey]. That [I believe] was down to God, not me.”

“There is no god. We’re on our own. Those who *hope* in him are deluded, and will end their days in more darkness than they are now.”

“My children needed me to be stable and secure, and somewhere deep down that gave me something to *hope* for in the future, that I would be the parent [and grandparent] that they needed me to be.”

“It’s pointless and *hopeless* to put your faith in a person. Eventually they all leave you and let you down.”

“There was one relationship that gave me something to live for, someone to cling hold to in my darkest days. Just one, but it was enough. It gave me the *hope* of a future when I felt like there was none at all.”

“There was a special someone who gave me the *hope* of a life together, but no more. All hope ended when that ended.”

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Find someone or something to put your *hope* in, for without hope the soul gets [and stays] sick.

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“In the occasional moment of light, I had just enough within me to identify one of the roots of my depression, a current circumstance that IF [a very big ‘if’] I could change, maybe [no guarantee] I could break a hole into the current wall of darkness surrounding me on all sides. So, like a dying person gasping for a last breath, I used the few moments of energy I had each day to change the life I was now in. I never *felt* like it, but I knew

for a *fact* it was the right thing to do, that it was the only thing that might have a chance of saving my life; literally. Every day I clung onto any flicker of the hope of change. If things hadn't changed then I wouldn't be able to write this, but they did, and I can. I'm still close to the edge, but am no longer hanging over it holding on by my fingertips. I know that I'll never be fully free from depression, but the days when the sun shines and the sky is blue, I embrace; because not every day is like that. I've also come to understand that when the dark night of the soul covers me, it's not the end, rather a tunnel which is dark for a length of time which I can't control, but eventually leads to light. I've accepted that I'll always walk with a limp, and that whilst I'll never be completely free, I can put into my life things that, on their own are too weak, but together are strong enough to form a safety net to catch me when I again start to fall."

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Help: cry out for it until someone hears you, really hears you.

Hope: find it; then cling hold of it for dear life.

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"Depression doesn't follow a nice neat pattern. It doesn't obey the rules."

"It hits you when you're already down. It doesn't play fair."