



## **Ten Ways to Cope with Depression After Brain Injury**

This list is very accurate and was found on this UK website: [Headway](#) The information provided here is not intended to replace medical advice, so if you are experiencing symptoms of depression always speak to your GP or other healthcare professional.

### **Top 10 Tips**

#### **Talk**

Try to talk to your family or friends about how you're feeling and why you may appear to be distant. If you find it difficult to speak about how you feel, try to find other ways of communicating such as writing a letter. Consider talking to your employer about depression if you feel that it's affecting your work performance.

#### **Avoid Isolation**

Try to avoid becoming socially isolated. It's important to spend at least some time socialising with people on a face-to-face basis. If you struggle in crowds, try to arrange meeting a friend at a quiet location. Alternatively, consider finding a local support or activity group that you can attend, such as a local Headway group or branch.



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### **Engage**

Engage in activities that you enjoy doing, such as listening to uplifting music, creating art or reading a book. Research indicates that these activities can be useful ways of coping with depression. And don't be afraid to try something new!

### **Educate Yourself**

Educate yourself on the effects of brain injury. Understanding your injury may be the first step towards accepting it, which might help with managing depression. The Headway website is a good place to start.

### **Exercise**

Try to exercise for a few minutes every day. This may be difficult if you experience fatigue or have limited mobility. However, exercise is a proven method of improving low mood. Try to set yourself a routine, for example taking a short walk around the neighbourhood in the morning, or doing some gentle stretches for five minutes every afternoon.

### **Seek Support**

Seek support from other services such as the Headway helpline or your local Headway support group or branch. There are also depression-specific support groups, where people can get peer support from others who are also affected by depression, although these tend to be non-brain injury specific.



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### **Identify Causes**

Identify and seek help for specific issues in your life that may be causing or contributing to depression, for example financial or relationship problems. Speak to your doctor about your general health, including any potential hormonal imbalances that can arise after brain injury.

### **Make a 'Soothe Box'**

Consider putting together a 'soothe box'. This is a box that contains personal items that may make you feel better and help you to cope when you are feeling depressed. You could put things in it such as photos or letters, or things that soothe your senses such as perfumes or soft fabrics.

### **Use Wellbeing Techniques**

Consider wellbeing techniques such as mindfulness, yoga, meditation or other relaxation methods. Although there is limited research to prove their effectiveness, brain injury survivors often report benefiting from them. Speak to a therapist if you are considering trying any of these, as they may be able to guide you through learning how to effectively use them.

### **Be Healthy**

Maintain a healthy lifestyle. This involves enjoying a healthy diet, drinking plenty of water, avoiding alcohol and trying to ensure that you have a good night's sleep.

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