

## Useful Stuff

**The next section includes information that is helpful for teens dealing with depression.**

**There is information about:**

- 🗨️ Reasons to change
- 🗨️ Dealing with relapse
- 🗨️ Drugs, alcohol and depression
- 🗨️ Diet, exercise and depression

### Reasons to change

Change is difficult, even when it is change to something better like a new home, a new sport or a new friendship. Why? Because it means doing things that are less familiar, getting new information and skills, and having experiences you haven't had before. When you are feeling stressed or down, it is particularly hard to

change because you don't feel you have the energy or ability to try new things.

For this reason it is important to give yourself a pep talk, to remind yourself why change is worth the effort.

### Change allows you new experiences

Not doing anything or doing what you have always done won't make you feel any different. And this can be boring. New experiences are a bit strange at first, but they are also exciting, interesting and fun. You deserve these things.

### Change helps you to learn new skills

Doing things the same old way, especially if it isn't working, makes it hard to learn anything new. It makes you feel like you don't have choices and things will always be the same. Trying something new gives you choices. Remember when you learned a new video game, sport or subject in school. It may have been awkward or hard as you were learning but it became easier with practice.

**Sometimes you can't do much to change a problem, but you can change how you think about it and in this way you can change how you feel...**

*The Dalai Lama*

## Change gives you power

Not doing anything often comes from feeling that a situation or problem is someone else's responsibility or fault. This makes you feel powerless and helpless. But you have choices in what you think and do. Working to change takes back your control and makes you stronger.



**Okay, so you agree, change is worth it but it's still hard. So here are a couple of tips to help you get started:**

### **Get the information you need**

You've already begun by reading this far! Keep going and figure out what you need to know to make changes. Some of the information may come from guides like this; some may come from the Internet, from books or magazines, or from other people. Remember to get good information – if you aren't sure about some information you've found, check it out with a teacher, parent, or someone else you trust. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

### **Get useful support**

Talk to friends, siblings, parents or other trusted adults. Remember that you are looking for people you trust who will support you in making changes. They can help you think of new strategies, give you helpful feedback and cheer you on for your efforts. People who don't listen, who just agree with you that a situation is lousy, or who tell you to 'get over it' aren't likely to be helpful and could make you feel worse.

### **Be patient with yourself**

Don't expect things to be different overnight. Set realistic goals and allow time. Give yourself credit for trying something new. Remember that things don't always work the first time and learn from mistakes.

### **If you want things to be different, do something**

The difference between deciding and doing is, well, doing. Once you take a small step you have changed from inaction to action – and then things are already a bit different. You've taken a step by reading this far; now see if you can make that difference bigger.