



**Making Everything Easier!™**

# Overcoming Depression

FOR  
**DUMMIES®**

## **Learn to:**

- Recognise the symptoms of depression
- Put cognitive therapy to good use
- Choose the treatment that will work best for you
- Find the right professional help

**Elaine Iljon Foreman, MSc, AFPBSs**  
*Consultant Chartered Clinical Psychologist*

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# Overcoming Depression For Dummies®

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***Overcoming Depression  
For Dummies***<sup>®</sup>

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**Foreword by Professor  
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Elaine's professional views are regularly sought by TV and radio in recognition of her innovative clinical research into anxieties and phobias, international conference presentations, workshops, and published material in her specialist field. Her most recent publications are *Overcoming Anxiety For Dummies*, co-authored with Charles Elliott and Laura Smith and *Fly Away Fear, A Self-Help Guide to Overcoming Fear of Flying* co-authored with Lucas Van Gerwen, and published by Karnac in May 2008.

Further information on the Freedom to Flyä organisation can be found by visiting [www.freedomtofly.biz](http://www.freedomtofly.biz). The Service Brochure detailing the range of services including workshops and psychological therapy can be obtained by emailing [elaine@freedomtofly.biz](mailto:elaine@freedomtofly.biz).

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## Dedication

From Elaine: This book is dedicated to Helga and Nickie Iljon, and to Miriam Skelker, for always being there for me.

From Laura and Charles: We dedicate this book to our family: Alli, Brian, Nathan, Sara, and Trevor. And to our parents: William Thomas Smith (1914-1999), Edna Louise Smith, Joe Bond Elliott, and Suzanne Wieder Elliott.

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Working with Depression brings to mind elements of the fight of Good against Evil, reminiscent of J.K. Rowling's view. Seeing depression as the loss of hope, she tells how its been her enemy. Depressions revealed as the underlying basis for her depiction of the Dementors, who suck all the joy and hope out of those they attack. Imagine a future in which you will never, ever be happy again. No hope. Emotionally destroyed and dead. An evil time, indeed.

Some very special people in my world have been key players in the fight of Good against Evil - Sharon, Sandy, Zhenya, Graham, Michele, Gill, Jake, Tony, Zenobia, Martin, Corinne, Diz, and Charles. With people like you in the world, Good can only triumph.

**Laura and Charles:** Okay, we broke our promise and wrote another book. We may have to join Authors Anonymous! We thank our family and friends for putting up with our moans and complaints. We send our heartfelt appreciation to the Rodriguez family, especially Melodie

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# Foreword

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Have you ever had a tune playing over in your mind that you couldn't get rid of? No matter how hard you tried, it kept coming back? Now imagine that what's going round and round in your head is not a tune, but a thought such as: I'm no good, I'm a failure; people would be better off without me. Very soon, you'd feel under attack, exhausted by trying to fight it off. You'd find you couldn't concentrate on anything else. You'd feel guilty and totally defeated, uninterested in life, and unresponsive to your family and friends' attempts to get you to feel better.

If you have felt like this, you'll know the agony of such mental pain. You're not alone. This is depression, and it affects 5 per cent of the population at any one time. It seems to be becoming more common. Fifty years ago, people were most likely to suffer their first major episode of depression in late middle age. Now we find serious depression can strike much earlier: in late teenage and early adulthood. What is more, once a person has been depressed once, there is a risk of the depression returning in the next few months or years, even after a period when it seems to have gone away for good.

What can we do about it? Years ago, it was thought that there were only two approaches to dealing with depression: antidepressant pills, or long-term analytic psychotherapy. But over the last thirty years things have changed.

First, there is a larger range of medication available to choose from, and the pills have become kinder, with fewer side-effects.