



Unstuck: Your Guide to the Seven-Stage Journey Out of Depression

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A groundbreaking, inspiring, and practical guide to healing depression without the use of antidepressants, from world-renowned, Harvard trained psychiatrist Dr. James S. Gordon

Each year, as many as twenty million Americans are diagnosed with clinical depression. Tens of millions more have low energy or feel unhappy and dissatisfied with their lives. And each year, American doctors write 189 million prescriptions for antidepressant drugs for these people. Dr. James Gordon, a Harvard Medical School-educated psychiatrist who founded and directs The Center for Mind-Body Medicine in Washington, D.C., has been helping his patients find their way out of the darkness of depression for the past forty years. He has worked with everyone from high-powered Washington politicians to Hurricane Katrina victims, from overstressed doctors, lawyers, and stay-at-home moms to orphans from war-ravaged Kosovo and Gaza. Each one of Dr. Gordon's patients is unique, but all suffer from some level of depression, and none are getting relief from the antidepressant drugs their doctors keep prescribing or the psychotherapy they've been receiving.

One of our country's most distinguished psychiatrists and a pioneer in integrative medicine, Dr. Gordon believes that depression is not an end point, a disease over which we have no control. It is a sign that our lives are out of balance, that we're stuck. It's a wake-up call and the start of a journey that can help us become whole and happy, one that can change and transform our lives. *Unstuck* is a practical, easy-to-use guide explaining the seven stages of Dr. Gordon's approach and the steps we can take to exert control over our own lives and find hope and happiness. *Unstuck* is designed for anyone who is suffering from depression, from mild subclinical depression ("the blues") to its severest forms.

Dr. Gordon shows us how doctors and patients alike have come to depend on antidepressants, and how these drugs have disappointed so many. He then carefully links each of his seven stages to helpful suggestions for relieving depression's symptoms. Using dramatic and inspiring examples from the patients he has worked with over the years, he explains the useful, mood-healing benefits of: food and nutritional supplements; Chinese medicine; movement, exercise, and dance; psychotherapy, meditation and guided imagery; and spiritual practice and prayer. He concludes each chapter with a carefully designed Prescription for Self-Care, guidelines to help each person play an active, effective role in their own healing. The result is *Unstuck*, an incredibly thoughtful, practical, and meditative guide to the difficult but rewarding journey out of depression.

James

Unstuck: Your Guide to the Seven-Stage Journey Out of Depression Details

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
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From Reader Review Unstuck: Your Guide to the Seven-Stage Journey Out of Depression for online ebook

Jake says

My professor who is known for giving great book recommendations suggested this book. I liked it and now respect James' passion for healing and development. I think Unstuck reflects well on Gordon's intentions and concern for humanity. Throughout the reading I had a real sense that the author is wise, experienced, and very well educated. His intervention is intense and if followed I'd expect there would be measurable and meaningful results. If you're one of the many struggling with depression (bless your heart), then you may find value in Gordon's work. If, however, you're not interested in trying out an intensive program, or too depressed to try, then I'd suggest giving Acceptance and Commitment Therapy a look. It's in a similar vein in regards to acceptance and mindful awareness.

It's worth noting that I was surprised by his inclusion of Chinese Medicine. Nothing against the tool, I'm just unfamiliar with its efficacy as treatment for depression and have never seen it recommended.

Sarah says

My doctor recommended this because of the mind-gut connection. Since the health of your gut can affect your mental state, her theory seems to be that it can work both ways. That just seems like a mind-over-matter hope to me, and meditation and journaling have so far had no effect on my "non-textbook illness."

I would **never** recommend this book, particularly to anyone dealing with legitimate depression or other mental health concerns. While multiple therapies can (and should?) be used in conjunction with medication, this author disparages the use of medications in treating mental illness. Like other self-help books, all his methods are presented as being easy and having quick, clear results. His examples of former patients always include a particular therapy (deep breathing, dance, exercise) as his first suggestion; the patient goes away, does the therapy religiously, and sees noticeable improvement by the time of the next office visit.

Like many self-help books, including several of the health books I've read this year, there's a certain implied responsibility on the reader, a certain level of "you deserve this" and "if you'd only try hard enough, you'd be well." It's one thing to be a little irresponsible flirting with dairy if you're lactose intolerant; it seems like another class entirely to put the onus on the patient when it comes to depression and related mental illness. Oh, still feeling a bit sad? You obviously didn't [journal/breathe/run/swim/chat/meditate/yoga/etc.etc.etc.] hard enough. All you have to do is get up and move, regardless that depression makes it nearly impossible to get out of bed. Shame on you for not feeling like dancing.

It was also difficult to follow some of the author's ideas, since he co-opted religious terminology but assigned his own meanings.

JaneLundin says

An excellent book with practical tips for helping yourself out of a depression. Some of the ideas seem a little "out there", but I think all of them would be helpful to someone.

Amanda Fiore says

I found this book helpful. I've read a few books on depression and am looking more into things that are recommended consistently in each book (diet and supplements, etc); however, I felt some supplements/herbs were recommended without discussing side effects. Anything one might consider taking should be researched. St. John's wort for example could end up causing other health issues, and I'm not interested in trading problems for problems. I think these things really need to be worked out with a nutritionist who knows how these will affect you and what is actually beneficial for you. Overall, I was motivated to look further into solutions and feel hopeful that antidepressants aren't the only option.

Gary says

Gordon's MBSR prescription is based on his experience and a series of evidence-based confirmations of elements of MBSR. He offers no evidence for the effectiveness of his 7-stage method. His scientific rigor is completely absent when he advocates for Chinese medicine. This isolated but telling collapse of his credibility affected my view of his book.

Erika says

This book actually kind of pissed me off. I guess I'm in the (apparently minuscule) percentage of people who don't get relief from their depression without heavy medication, and Dr. Gordon doesn't believe I exist.

Instead, he "prescribes" rest, relaxation, and alternative medicine. (He actually talks about St John's Wort and says that it's a safe and effective herb, but tell that to the dysmenorrhea it triggered in me to the point where I became anemic.)

Bottom line: His exercises, while helpful for someone with mild or maybe even moderate depression, *are not* going to get someone out of a severe suicidal depression. He barely recommends medication, I'm willing to bet he thinks going inpatient is idiotic. And sometimes that's what you need.

If you need a calm, helping hand, his book has great advice about finding a therapist and changing your lifestyle to mitigate your depression. If you need something more, please look elsewhere.

Joshua Grisetti says

I think everyone's journey with depression is so different that no singular book is probably ever going to be a cure-all. That said, I found this book extremely helpful in some of my darkest hours, and I think it's a great one to have in your arsenal of self-help lit. Dr. Gordon covers many different approaches to dealing with acute depression -- from diet, exercise and supplements, to mental/emotional cataloging, expression and exercises, to mediation and, of course, counseling. It's filled with relatable anecdotes from years of treating patients. All of which helps to add context and clarity to what you may be experiencing in your own life.

Whatever you're facing right now that's led you to inquire about this book, it's a safe bet that UNSTUCK will help you. You're not alone. You're not hopeless. You're not crazy. You're just a little stuck. (And that's ok. It happens to the best of us!) Now you just need to get UNSTUCK.

See what I did there. ;) Haha. You got this. Sending you peace and love.

Stephanie Harchar says

As someone who has known depression this book is like a beam of hope. Dr. Gordon is correct when saying that it is just a runt and you need to turn it around. The seven steps (although not always easy) are the right ones. You don't have to have depression to read it you just have to be human.

Carole Davis says

This is the book for anyone that is serious about taking charge of their emotional and mental well-being. Beginning with many well defined suggestions for self care and ending in richly descriptive examples of successful cases, it's a manual for navigating the depressive's rough and uncertain landscape.

Janet says

Love the tone of this book, the author felt like a good listening friend.

Dana Evans says

I didn't quite finish this book because the chapter on Spirituality was a little too broad for me, promoting religions and philosophies that I know firsthand that have been oppressive to many people, rather than helping them get "unstuck". Overall I think this book has some very helpful suggestions and if nothing else it helped me adopt a "go with the flow" attitude about life that has helped me find where I need to be rather than fight against where I am too often, and draining my energy.

laurie says

This is a really useful book. If you deal with depression at all, especially if you'd like to check out of Anti-Depressant Nation or come up with some alternatives at the same time, I'd read Dr. Gordon's book. I used to shelve self-help at Borders and after years as a counselor can smell b.s. This man is sincere. And if he's not, I can't tell, so good for him.

The beginning is a little long on exposition ("I will teach you," "I will tell you," etc.) for my taste, but then again, MY ANXIETY makes me impatient! ;) Once he gets cooking, he's cooking with fire. I like a lot of what he has to say about mind-body stuff, meditation, exercise - nothing too radical, just common-sense, actually pretty cool ways to take care of yourself.

I don't like to treat depression like this alien thing, and neither does Dr. Gordon. I wish more people wrote about it in such a non-hokey way.

Jeanne says

Ugh! Anti-meds and too much religion ("spirituality"). Feels too much like snake oil. No thanks.

Cassia says

Great common sense. As I'm reading this book I'm thinking the following thoughts. After years of being prescribed an antidepressant for everything from esophageal ulcer to back pain, I've found something that makes sense. When I was prescribed Prozac for the first time, I had been stressed out of my mind for so long. I felt like a miracle had happened it was so effective in getting me back out there dealing with it all. Since then it seems that doctors assume that's all I need. Yes, there are times when I have anxiety and depression and I'm way overdue in addressing the reasons for ending up that way to begin with. I have a normal brain that does what any brain is designed to do. When I've had so much stress I'm about to explode, my brain prevents it by causing me to implode. Next thing I know I'm in the fetal position not wanting to get dressed. Duh! Do the steps and quit bearing the load of an oxen. Take care of your precious self first.

Shannon (Mrsreadsbooks) says

This is one of the worst books I have ever read in regards to treating and living with depression. Depression is biological in nature, as are most mental illnesses. Anyone who has ever truly suffered from depression know that's cutting out dairy and gluten is not the answer.

The only positive thing I found about this book is that it does mention Vitamin D. My vitamin D was extremely low earlier this year, "bottomed-out" low because of other chronic health problems. After several months of daily vitamin supplementation and exposure to the sun when possible (I live in Michigan) it was up to an "acceptable" number. However, during those months I slowly saw improvement in my depression. Certainly not a cure, but it certainly helped. So there is a correlation between low Vitamin D and depression and fatigue. In my opinion, the rest of this book is terrible and frankly pissed me off. Medication isn't for everyone and doesn't help everyone. Just like meditation and relaxation doesn't help everyone. Please try telling someone with chronic depression and anxiety to meditate because it will cure their mental illness and see how they react. This book is terrible, do not waste your time reading it.
