

YogaFit for Balancing Moods

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Depression Questionnaire: 3 Archetypes of Depression

Questionnaires are limited in their ability to fully assess the depth and breadth of a multi-dimensional health issue like depression, especially given the fact that each of us has a unique physiology and life experience. Questionnaires can be helpful, however, in increasing our self-awareness and pointing us in a general direction.

The following questions may be helpful in identifying what archetype of depression your clients may be experiencing:

1. When you experience depression, what are your predominant secondary emotions?

- a. Fear and anxiety
- b. Anger and resentment
- c. Emotional numbness

2. When you experience depression, what is your driving internal perception?

- a. Feelings of being overwhelmed or out of control
- b. Feelings of frustration and the sense that my ability to move forward is being blocked by others
- c. Feeling stuck and powerless to change

3. When you experience depression, how is your sleep pattern affected?

- a. I have difficulty falling asleep
- b. My sleep is prematurely interrupted
- c. I sleep too much

4. When you experience depression, how is your desire for food affected?

- a. I have no desire for food
- b. My desire for food is not affected
- c. I desire foods that comfort me

5. When you experience depression, how do you relate to others?

- a. I feel insecure in relationships
- b. I tend to want to control my relationships
- c. I either get clingy or tend to withdraw

6. In general, what is your first response to feeling emotionally hurt?

- a. I cry
- b. I respond with sarcasm and biting remarks
- c. I tend to keep my feelings to myself

7. How would you describe yourself when you are not depressed?

- a. I tend to be enthusiastic and lively
- b. I tend to be dynamic and intense
- c. I tend to be good-natured and easygoing

8. How do you communicate with others when you are not depressed?

- a. I tend to be a better talker than a listener
- b. I am easily annoyed by people who talk too much
- c. I am a good and patient listener

9. How would you describe your energy level when you are not depressed?

- a. Physical energy comes to me in bursts
- b. I have a lot of energy and stamina
- c. I use my energy slowly and steadily

10. When you think back on how you became depressed, which of the following would you say was a significant contributing factor?

- a. Lack of stability in life patterns
- b. Approaching life with extreme intensity and a pattern of overdoing
- c. Difficulty overcoming inertia

If you have answered mostly A's, then you are likely experiencing an airy depression, if B's, a burning depression, and if C's, an early depression. If your answers are fairly balanced among all three choices, you most likely have a mixed pattern of depression.

YogaFit for Balancing Moods - Sample Class

Themes: self-regulation, self-awareness, self-efficacy, trust in themselves- PROMOTE AN ENVIRONMENT OF TRUSTING THEMSELVES....so give opportunities for creativity any chance you get!

Beginning in ANY Posture of Comfort (remind students that this is a great way to meet all students where they are at on the mat today. Regardless if burning, earthy, airy depression- all students have choice where to begin). This also instills the idea that you (the instructor) trust the student to make the decision that is the best decision for them! When choosing posture- one that offers steadiness, comfort, and sweetness (sukha)- and allows you to concentrate on developing conscious, rhythmic breath pattern.

Seated- Alternate Nostril Breath

Cat/Cow

Spinal Balance

Child's/Plank Flow

Downward Dog

Mountain

Chair Flow

Mountain Pose- This is significant part of the class! Get their attention to the importance of this ritual of stepping on the mat. This is not just another thing to check off the list- this is a sacred practice. Possibly time to set an intention. Something they want to manifest through their efforts on the mat today. Dedicating efforts without attachment to any specific outcome or result- trusting that all decisions we make on the mat today are in support of and to maintain that thing we want to manifest- whatever it is- peace, grace, etc.

Sun Salutations

Lunge, low twisted lung, Warrior 1, Warrior 2, Reverse, Triangle, Reverse, Side Angle, Reverse, Low Lunge, Warrior 1, pyramid, revolved triangle
Repeat on Other side

Mountain

LOTS OF BALANCE POSES! Trust, Trust, Trust

Tree, Eagle,

Choice of balance pose

Now choose a pose to do that scares you the most

Lesson: Often we avoid the things that scare us- which robs us an opportunity to grow....and look- we survived the pose that scared us most!

Modified Camel
Seated Twist
Supine one leg Knee to chest
Restorative Bridge
½ Happy Baby
Twist

Continue to use cues on the development of somatic awareness and the difference between discomfort and pain...discomfort is an opportunity for growth- pain is our body's message that it is being compromised. When we learn to sit in the face of discomfort in a yoga pose and breathe through it, we learn that (off the mat) we can face challenges (depression, anxiety) and instead of fleeing or engaging in some maladaptive coping mechanism, we can breathe through it.

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