



Depression and Me

L. M. Homan

Depression... and *me*.

This book is to help you think about and help cope with depression. It is not written with lots of words... but the secret to begin recovering from depression is in here.... so read and re-read....

It will help if you also read my other booklets on 'Being *me*' , 'Self-talk and *me*' and 'Anxiety and *me*'.

All are free to download.

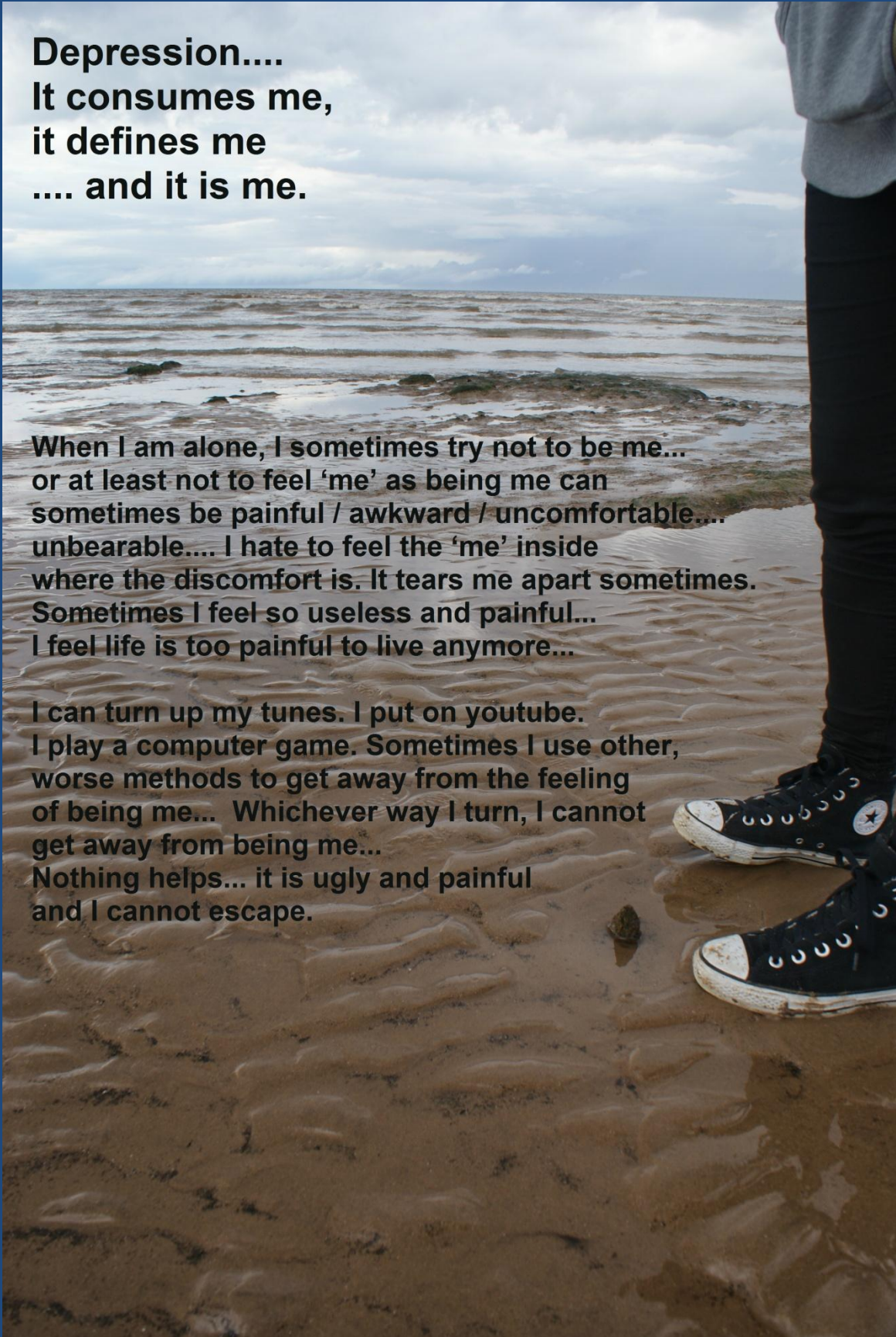
I have written these booklets with the help of young suffers to help give you *now* some of what it can take years to find.

I am me... I am all I really have.
My sense of self is inside me.
It is made within me.



I can see that I am
a distinct person,
separate from
my family...
and friends...

I feel isolated though...
separated by the pain I have.
Unreal....
In another world to those around me.

A photograph of a person standing on a beach, looking out at a stormy sea under a cloudy sky. The person is wearing a grey hoodie, black pants, and black Converse sneakers. The text is overlaid on the image.

**Depression....
It consumes me,
it defines me
.... and it is me.**

**When I am alone, I sometimes try not to be me...
or at least not to feel 'me' as being me can
sometimes be painful / awkward / uncomfortable....
unbearable.... I hate to feel the 'me' inside
where the discomfort is. It tears me apart sometimes.
Sometimes I feel so useless and painful...
I feel life is too painful to live anymore...**

**I can turn up my tunes. I put on youtube.
I play a computer game. Sometimes I use other,
worse methods to get away from the feeling
of being me... Whichever way I turn, I cannot
get away from being me...
Nothing helps... it is ugly and painful
and I cannot escape.**

If life becomes too awful being 'me' ... or for you... being 'you'.... we will try and sever that connection.. the one to our true self... we begin to take on all sorts of behaviours, habits, distracts... we try and be like someone else.. coz if we are like that someone else, then we might just seem OK to everyone else... they won't like 'me' but they do like 'them' so at least I stand a chance..... Some people spend years trying to sever the connection and the pain that goes with it. Sometimes we can hardly remember who or what we were or what we were like.

You are unique... there is not another 'you' anywhere in the world..

You are important and you matter...

You are not alone in the negative pain you are going through right now...

On the next few pages, others who have been through similar pain have shared their thoughts, and then towards the end of this booklet, their advice

... the way that they have found to recover....

I am conscious of 'me' and yet I am overwhelmed by my thoughts and feelings. When I realise that thoughts trigger feelings... I begin to understand...

If I fear the dentist- just the thought of going to the dentist can stir powerful feelings... and so it is important right 'now' not to let my thoughts trigger feelings which will take control of me...

Like the tide the feeling of despair rises and threatens to drown me...

Part of me wants to run off... put the noise on, distract myself from 'now'...

What is life all about anyway?
What matters? What goals should there be? I know what school told me... I know what my family think... but what do I really think? Why do I try so hard not to think!

Depression... not a low feeling-less mood... no... not today.. today it is a huge clamping jaw gripping my body like some strange toothless force has come to crush me. I can hardly breathe and the pain is excruciating. When will it stop? Pain permeates everything... my guts twist now. Twist and spread acid throughout my body... self hating – self loathing acid... my thoughts turn to self hate... worthless – useless. The thoughts bombard me.... the thoughts add to the mountain of pain....



I cannot 'snap out of it'...

I cannot 'get a grip'....

I cannot just 'be' someone else... I am stuck and it is killing me....

But today...
the cold stark day...
Today
...something dawns...
a small feeling...
So small it is almost
a shadow in my soul...
and yet... I have a new feeling
One that makes me feel me...
just a tiny bit...
Just a tiny bit of feeling...
just a tiny bit of me...
And it grows as I let the normal
feeling sit there...
I let it breathe and do not
suffocate it with negative thoughts...



In a cold and empty corner
called the silence of my mind
above seas of relentless emotion
filled with aching pain I find-
that the source to still the waters
and the balm to heal the pain
is recovering the 'me' I thought
I would never see again...



**I sense deep within me that I can recover...
Today in the cold stark day...
... the tiny shoot breaks through the concrete of my soul...
Today I know I am alive and I can make it...**

**I am determined to nurture this like a tiny bird fallen
from a nest all blind and bare...
I will not let anyone disturb the spring that has broken
through my winter...**



The road to recovery....

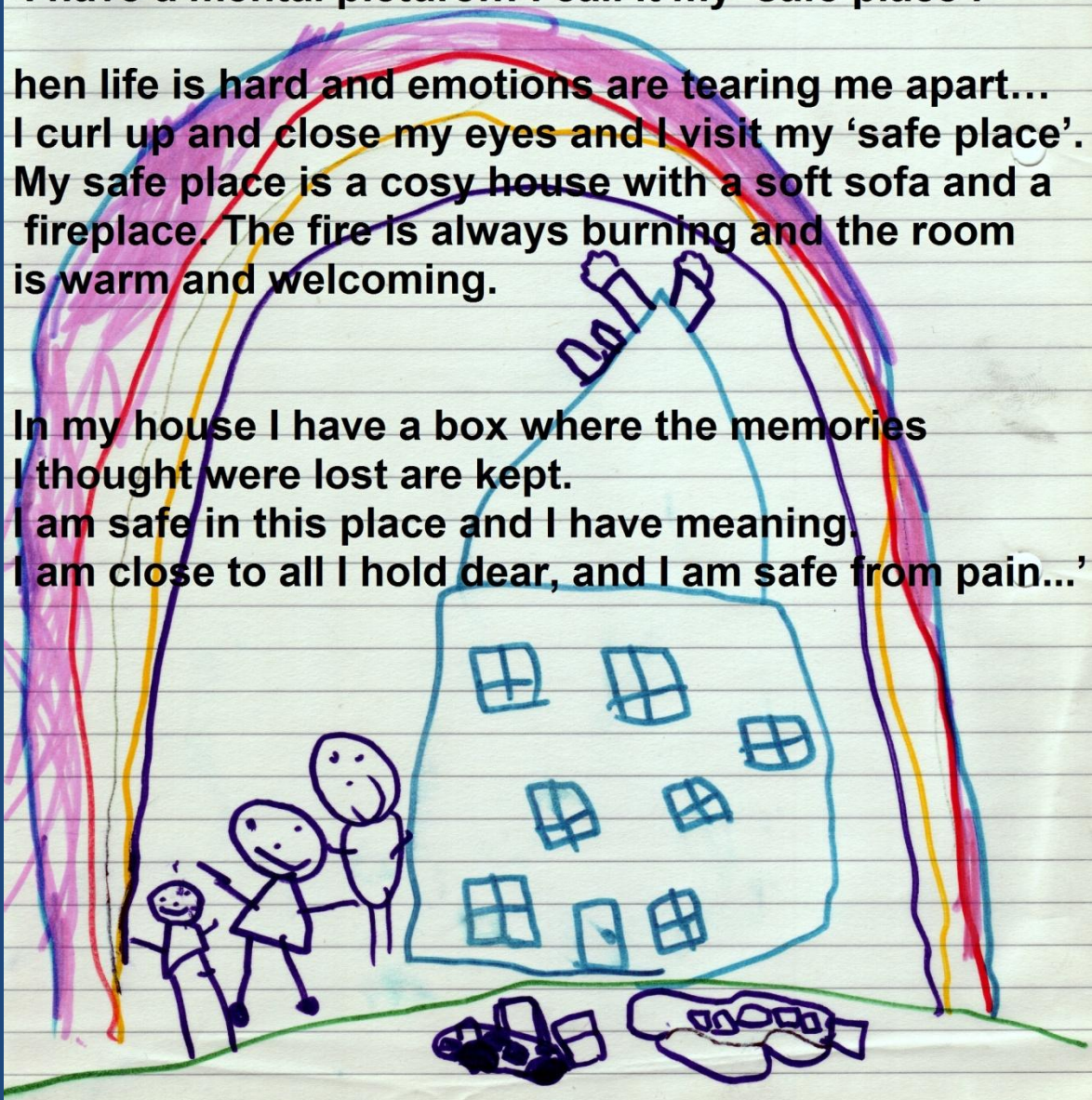
For some people having a mental picture of a safe place helps....



'I have a mental picture... I call it my 'safe place'.

When life is hard and emotions are tearing me apart... I curl up and close my eyes and I visit my 'safe place'. My safe place is a cosy house with a soft sofa and a fireplace. The fire is always burning and the room is warm and welcoming.

In my house I have a box where the memories I thought were lost are kept. I am safe in this place and I have meaning. I am close to all I hold dear, and I am safe from pain...'



The road to recovery is tough, it is hard work... it winds in and out and up and down, but one day at a time you will get there...

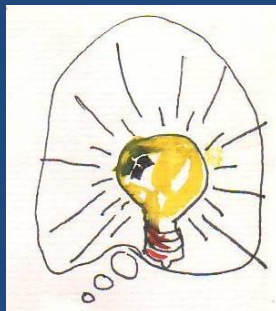
This is not a hopeless journey.

There is hope.

There is a way – just take it one day at a time and remember your survival kit:

The 6 step depression survival kit:

1. You are going through hell... *be kind to yourself!*
2. Do **NOT** let negative thoughts have any space in your mind!
3. Find a *positive* depression pain tactic- when the pain is so bad- find a *positive* action which works for you that you can do until the pain eases. This can be anything *positive*. Here are some suggestions: going to sleep; going for a walk/run; put on a film which inspires you; listen to songs which get you motivated; play a computer game which takes all of your attention; have a sweet hot drink (hot chocolate); paint or draw; call a friend and talk positive; list all of the good things in your life from your nice cosy bed... friends, family, skills you have, your lovely eyes, etc.; play a drum or musical instrument.
4. Spend the pain of today researching on line a new skill you can learn to help you... such as Yoga, meditation, Mindfulness, the gym / hard physical work out. Whichever and whatever will best suit you... and use the pain as your energy to do this.
5. Remember this is an illness, and right now is a bad episode. Look after yourself and do not expect a lot from yourself until it dulls down and you are able to once more. *Now* is not a waste of time. *Now* is survival.
6. Call for help... you are not alone... The Samaritans on 116 123, or your local mental health trust will have a 24/7 helpline... google it and call them.



Finally- in your heart... stir up hope....



HOPE

Lift your eyes

And struggle to see

Lift your head

And endeavour to try

Lift your arms

And begin to make a start

Lift your soul

And your spirit, and your heart

Cambridge Chronicles

This book has been published as part of a self-help series for young people and adults. In the series, words, pictures and poems have been put together to lead the reader into a place where they are able to acknowledge and recognise the thoughts and feeling which may be holding them back from reaching their full potential.

In this series:

Being 'Me'

Anxiety and 'me'

Depression and 'me'

Self Talk and 'me'

Loneliness and 'me'

About the author:

L.M. Homan is a qualified Youth and Community worker, Social Worker and mental health professional. Having spent many years working with young people and homeless people, she became a Mental Health Professional. Through personal experience of mental health distress, and helping others, she decided to write this *easy read* series.

Young people have been involved in producing the photographs and drawings. Particular thanks go to Holly, Tasha, Paul and Deryn.



Cambridge Chronicles is pleased to announce the publication of an exciting *pilgrim's progress* e-novel by L.M. Homan. This adventure novel *Journeys in Souldeloom* is available at:

www.souldeloom.com

More information available at: www.cambridge-chronicles.org.uk