

## HOW TO SURVIVE AS A MANIC DEPRESSIVE

There are many things we can do or learn which can enable us to live a purposeful, successful life as a manic depressive. They include the following :

(1) **Medication.** Grapple as hard as you like with your psychiatrist, but having once reached agreement on your dosage stick to it until you see him/her again.

(2) **Support Group.** One by one assemble a support team whom you trust and who know you well. The list will vary from person to person; yours may include

- Family
- Friends (good listeners)
- Psychiatrist
- GP
- Nurse
- Psychotherapist / counsellor
- Chemist (homoeopathic?)
- Someone at work (colleague? manager? company doctor?)
- Samaritan (The Samaritans give their services free and will talk to anyone, not only potential suicides; you can find them in the telephone book)
- Church minister
- Spiritual director

When you are well, share with them as much as you can of yourself.  
When you need a safety net, they will be there.

(3) **Creativity.** Seek to explore your creative gifts when you are well. Can you

- write poetry?
- music?
- letters?
- articles?
- a book?
- computer software?
- make models?
- toys?
- clothes?
- create collections of stamps?
  - coins?
  - books?
- do woodwork?
- metalwork?
- upholstery?
- draw?
- paint?
- sculpt?
- take photographs?
- mend things?
- arrange flowers?
- knit?
- garden?

There must be many more. Whatever you choose, keep on lovingly polishing and refining your creation until you are wholly satisfied with it. The idea is to surround yourself with a world of beautiful things of your own making. When you are depressed they will lift you up. If you manage to sell, publish or market your products to someone else, you will discover a double bonus.

(4) **Structure.** Seek to build into your life patterns of regularity - routines, things you do or enjoy frequently, often at particular times, which require no special mental effort. For instance



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"Pendulum", Autumn 1995.