

Depression Timeline Vision Board

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Printable fill-in version: write your answers on the lines. The interactive board, its charts and your saved entries stay in the app.

Depression Timeline Vision Board

Mapping the landscape of depression — from its earliest shadows to the light you're building now.

Depression isn't just sadness — it's a weight, a fog, a narrowing of the world. This tool invites you to externalize your depression story through imagery and words, placing each chapter on a timeline so you can see it from the outside.

A Note Before You Begin

This tool asks you to revisit difficult experiences. Go at your own pace. If strong emotions come up, that's normal — it means the work is real. Consider working through this with a therapist, sponsor, or trusted support person.

● Guided Journey

☐ ☐ View Timeline ☐ ☐ Free Entry

☐ Patterns & Insights

10 Chapters of Your Depression Story

☐ ● When the Light First Dimmed ☐ ☐ Childhood Shadows ☐ ☐ The Weight of Growing Up ☐ ☐ Loss, Grief & the Deep Wells ☐ ☐ Depression in Relationships ☐ ☐ The Mask — Functioning While Drowning ☐ ☐ Depression & Substance Use — The Cycle ☐ ● The Darkest Chapters ☐ ☐ Depression Without the Numbing ☐ ☐ Where the Light Gets In

The Recovery Files · Embrace, Empower & Evolve

Your Depression Journey

Each chapter explores a different facet of how depression has moved through your life.

Clinical Note

Depression is not a character flaw — it's a condition. Mapping its history helps you separate who you are from what you've been carrying. If it becomes too much, pause and return later.

Chapter 1 of 10

When the Light First Dimmed

When do you first remember feeling that heavy sadness, that loss of color? Not just a bad day — but something deeper settling in.

How old were you when you first noticed it?

What was happening in your life or family at the time?

Did anyone around you seem to notice?

How did you explain it to yourself back then?

What image represents what it felt like — the heaviness, the grayness, the withdrawal?

Chapter 2 of 10

Childhood Shadows

Depression in childhood often hides behind other masks — anger, quietness, stomachaches, being labeled 'the sensitive one.' What was yours?

Were you a quiet child, an angry child, or a child who tried too hard to be okay?

Were there losses, instability, or sadness in your family that you absorbed?

Did adults in your life model hopelessness, helplessness, or emotional shutdown?

Where did you go — physically or mentally — when the sadness got heavy?

What image captures how depression lived in your childhood?

Chapter 3 of 10

The Weight of Growing Up

Adolescence adds pressure to an already heavy load — identity, belonging, the gap between who you are and who you think you should be.

How did depression show up in your teen years — isolation, rage, numbness, or something else?

Did you start pulling away from people or activities you once enjoyed?

Were there thoughts of worthlessness, being a burden, or not wanting to be here?

What did you do to survive those feelings?

What image represents the weight of adolescence for you?

Chapter 4 of 10

Loss, Grief & the Deep Wells

Depression often takes root in loss — a death, a relationship, a version of yourself, a future you believed in. Some losses are obvious; others are invisible.

What losses have you carried — visible or invisible?

Were there griefs you weren't allowed or able to process?

How did unresolved grief become the soil depression grew in?

What did you need at that time that you didn't get?

What image captures the grief or loss that deepened your depression?

Chapter 5 of 10

Depression in Relationships

Depression doesn't just happen inside you — it shows up between you and others. Withdrawal, people-pleasing, conflict avoidance, feeling like a burden.

How has depression affected your closest relationships?

Have you pushed people away or hidden what you were feeling?

Do you notice patterns — choosing unavailable people, tolerating mistreatment, isolating?

What does depression tell you about your worthiness of love?

What image captures how depression lives in your relationships?

Chapter 6 of 10

The Mask — Functioning While Drowning

Many people with depression are 'high-functioning' — going to work, showing up, smiling — while dying inside. The mask is exhausting and isolating.

How long have you worn the 'I'm fine' mask?

What did it cost you to keep performing normalcy?

Who, if anyone, got to see behind the mask?

What were the moments when the mask almost slipped?

What image represents your public self versus your private experience?

Chapter 7 of 10

Depression & Substance Use — The Cycle

Depression and substance use feed each other. You use to escape the numbness or pain; the using deepens the depression. The cycle becomes its own prison.

When did substances become your antidepressant?

What did substances give you that nothing else could — energy, numbness, connection, sleep?

How did active addiction make the depression worse over time?

Looking back, how intertwined were your depression and substance use?

What image captures this cycle for you?

Chapter 8 of 10

The Darkest Chapters

Some chapters were darker than others — times when depression reached its most severe. Naming these moments is not about reliving them. It's about honoring that you survived them.

What was happening during your darkest period?

What did depression take from you during that time?

What kept you here — even if barely?

Was there a turning point, or did it lift gradually?

What image honors the fact that you survived?

Chapter 9 of 10

Depression Without the Numbing

Early recovery means feeling everything without the buffer. Depression doesn't disappear when substances do. What does it feel like to sit with it now?

What has depression felt like in recovery — different or the same?

What emotions are surfacing now that substances aren't blocking them?

What new tools or supports are you developing?

What small moments of lightness have surprised you?

What image represents your current relationship with depression?

Chapter 10 of 10

Where the Light Gets In

Recovery doesn't mean depression vanishes — it means you build a life where light can get in.

What does that look like for you? What are you reaching toward?

What does a good day look like now compared to before?

What activities, people, or practices bring moments of lightness?

What would your life look like if depression didn't run it?

What are you doing today that the depressed version of you couldn't imagine?

What image represents the light you're building toward?

Chapter Title

Time Period

Age Range

Upload an Image

Choose an image that represents this chapter — a photo, painting, symbol, or anything that captures the feeling. Gray skies, empty rooms, fading light — there's no wrong answer.

 Tap to upload an imageJPG, PNG, GIF — Max 5MB

Depression Depth

How deep did the depression feel during this chapter? Think of it as depth of water — the deeper, the harder to move.

Low mood Heavy Immobilizing

Heavy

What Was Happening in Your Life?

Describe this chapter — what was going on externally and internally? What did your days look like?

Guided Reflections

How Did Depression Show Up in Your Body?

Head / Brain fog

☐ Eyes / Heaviness or crying ☐ Chest / Emptiness or aching ☐ Stomach / Loss of appetite or overeating ☐ Whole body / Fatigue or heaviness ☐ Limbs / Lead-like weight ☐ Jaw / Clenching or tension ☐ Skin / Numbness or crawling ☐ Sleep / Too much or too little

Depression Themes Present

☐ Worthlessness ☐ Hopelessness ☐ Guilt & shame ☐ Emptiness / numbness ☐ Fatigue & low energy ☐ Loss of interest (anhedonia) ☐ Social withdrawal ☐ Self-blame & self-criticism ☐ Feeling like a burden ☐ Sleep disturbance ☐ Appetite changes ☐ Difficulty concentrating ☐ Indecisiveness ☐ Grief & loss ☐ Functional depression (high-masking) ☐ Anger turned inward

What Did Depression Take From You During This Time?

Relationships, opportunities, energy, time, joy, connection...

How Did You Cope at the Time?

Sleeping, substances, isolation, overworking, masking, eating — no judgment here.

What Kept You Going?

Even in the darkest chapters, something kept you here. A person, a pet, a stubborn refusal, a tiny thread of hope.

What was the thread that held?

What Do You Understand Now That You Didn't Then?

With the perspective of recovery, what do you see differently about this chapter?

Your Depression Timeline

Begin adding chapters to see your story take shape.

Your timeline is waiting. Start by following the guided journey or create a free entry.

Free Entry

Create a custom chapter for your depression timeline.

Your Depression Timeline

1 chapter of your story

☐ Timeline ☐ Gallery ☐ Depth Map

Untitled

☐ 5/10 — Heavy

Patterns & Insights

What your depression timeline reveals — themes, body patterns, and threads of resilience.

Add chapters to your timeline to discover patterns and insights.