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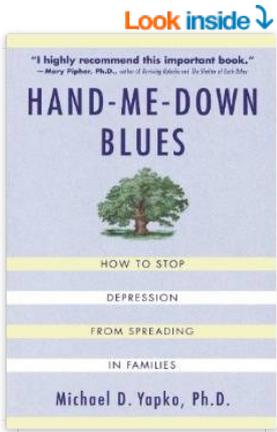
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# Hand-ME-down Blues: How to Stop Depression from Spreading in Families

Paperback – Jul 2000  
by Michael D. Yapko (Author)

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## Product Description

### From the Publisher

#### **A powerful approach that goes way beyond Prozac**

Many people have been led to believe that depression is caused simply by a chemical imbalance in the brain, and as a result they look to science for convenient answers, hoping that "a capsule a day will keep depression away." Dr. Michael Yapko points out that unfortunately this narrow focus on biology and the use of medications has often led people to overlook other important influences, such as how our family can affect emotional health in powerful ways.

In *Hand-Me-Down Blues*, Dr. Yapko carefully describes how the family can play a crucial role in the development of depression. Parents introduce their children to various life experiences and inevitably reveal their own values, perspectives, and biases. Children typically learn to interpret life events in the same way their parents do, and their interpretations can be a basis for depression. Once depression strikes, it distorts family relationships, splintering families as it spreads from one person to another like a virus. Thus, children can "inherit" depression less from their parents' genes and more from their parents' attitudes and behaviors.

*Hand-Me-Down Blues* describes the family as a powerful agent not only in the development of depression but also in its resolution. Without blame, it shows how families can deal effectively with depression, armed with much more than a prescription. *Hand-Me-Down Blues* shows how learning effective problem-solving and relationship skills can reduce and even prevent depression—something no medication can ever do.

#### Advance praise for *Hand-Me-Down Blues*

"In *Hand-Me-Down Blues*, Dr. Michael Yapko combines current psychological research with good common sense. He explores how family members can help each other fight depression. Yapko is a sophisticated professional, but it's obvious he has been around ordinary families. His writing reflects both kinds of experiences. I highly recommend this important book." —Mary Pipher, Ph.D., author of *Reviving Ophelia* and *The Shelter of Each Other*

"A rigid family of beliefs posits that the proper treatment of depression is 'better living through biochemistry.' Dr. Michael Yapko, an internationally renowned expert, brilliantly argues for a broader view: Living better in families provides the real chemistry for happiness. Read this book and catalyze enduring change." —Jeffrey K. Zeig, Ph.D., director, The Milton H. Erickson Foundation, and president, Zeig, Tucker & Company Publishers

"I highly recommend *Hand-Me-Down Blues* to everyone who yearns for more happiness, freedom, and fulfillment both in their lives and the lives of their families. Dr. Michael Yapko helps us to understand the family chemistry of depression and inspires us to recognize that families are potentially the most powerful antidepressant of all. His humanity, clarity of thought, wisdom, and experience are evident throughout." —Brian Alman, Ph.D., author of *The Six Steps to Freedom*

"*Hand-Me-Down Blues* is an exceptionally kind, calm, sensible, and optimistic book about depression. Dr. Michael Yapko not only understands depression clearly, he explains it clearly. I find myself not only recommending it, but using it in my practice and in my life. I don't know a more useful book about depression. Reading it made me feel a lot better." —Frank Pittman, M.D., author of *Grow Up!*, *Man Enough*, and *Private Lies* "Anyone who has experienced the bewildering and frustrating effects of having a depressed spouse, parent, or other family member can use this book. *Hand-Me-Down Blues* offers a new, sensible view of depression, and, more important, easy-to-use, practical suggestions for coping with and changing depression." —Bill O'Hanlon, co-author of *Love is a Verb*, *Rewriting Love Stories*, and *A Brief Guide to Brief Therapy*

"This is the most astute and comprehensive book that has yet been written on depression, and it holds out the greatest hopes for depressed persons and their families. Dr. Yapko cuts through the confusion and mystification surrounding depression and places it where it belongs—in the realm of human experience, complex and varied as all human experience is. Most important of all, he provides useful information and guidelines for an antidepressant way of thinking that can be incorporated into daily living. Bravo! Every leap forward in mental health comes from individuals like Dr. Yapko who have the courage to challenge the prevailing ideas and popular myths of the time and to speak with a different voice. We owe him a debt of gratitude for his invaluable contribution to the understanding, treatment, and prevention of this devastating condition." —Peggy Papp, director, Depression Project, Ackerman Institute for the Family

"Dr. Michael Yapko is one of the nation's leading experts on the treatment of depression. His thoughtful review avoids simple 'one size fits all' notions that are popular in current American culture, such as 'It's all in your genes,' or 'It's all in your brain.' Along the way, the reader is exposed to a comprehensive and holistic approach for shedding even the most difficult hand-me-down blues." —Scott D. Miller, Ph.D., co-director, Institute for the Study of Therapeutic Change

"*Hand-Me-Down Blues* is a refreshing, balanced, and sensible guide for professionals and non-professionals alike. Dr. Yapko is realistic about the seemingly conspiratorial quality of today's culture that can disable one's innate problem-solving capacities. He challenges and inspires us to believe we have the power to generate depression-resistant patterns of living and relating, especially within the sanctum of the family." —Kate Burns, M.S., clinical co-ordinator, Sharp Vista Pacifica Hospital, San Diego, California

"*Hand-Me-Down Blues* is a very helpful book for both laypeople and professionals. I am especially impressed with Michael Yapko's ability to synthesize the huge literature on depression in readable fashion, and his attempts to bust the many myths about depression that prevent people from understanding this complex problem." —Susan Nolen-Hoeksema, Ph.D., author of *Sex Differences in Depression*

"Dr. Yapko represents a powerful paradigm shift in the treatment of depression in *Hand-Me-Down Blues*. It will help readers open their hearts and minds to developing new ways of coping with life's difficulties. More important, readers will discover many helpful ways to create the kinds of healthy relationships within the family that can help reduce and even prevent depression." —Consuelo Casula, Ph.D., psychologist, Milan, Italy

"In *Hand-Me-Down Blues*, Michael Yapko thoughtfully and clearly reviews the challenges to the notion of depression as an inevitable family legacy. He provides effective tools of thinking and action which can allow us to create a different—and more hopeful—life story for ourselves and our families. With respect for the reader and without minimizing the very real pain that sometimes exists in life, *Hand-Me-Down Blues* succeeds in illuminating paths to resilience. I expect to frequently utilize this book as a tool that can widen the lens through which problems—and solutions—are viewed." —Miriam Iosupovici, MSW, Psychological and Counseling Services, University of California, San Diego --*This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.*

### From the Author

#### **Families can do more to help depression than Prozac.**

Depression is contagious! It runs in families... but not for the reasons you might assume... Families share more than their genes. Consider

these questions: Why is depression rising in every age group? Why is **someone born since 1945 likely to be up to 10 times more depressed than their grandparents**? Why are adolescents the fastest growing age group of depression sufferers? Why is a child born to depressed parents 3 times more likely to be depressed? The answers to these questions make it clear that depression involves much more than just a chemical imbalance in the brain, the popular but less than accurate belief many people hold. Drugs are not the ultimate solution to the rising rates of depression, because depression is about more than just biology. The drug companies spend \$5 billion a year to advertise drugs as the solution. There is no advertising counterpart for the value of families. If you or a loved one are dealing with depression, you already know how depression can hurt the quality of your interactions. This book focuses on relationships and the family, and more important, what to do to minimize family distress. One of the most optimistic aspects of the book is the emphasis on prevention. The fact that there are proven

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**This wonderful book empowers families to beat depression.**

By A Customer on 29 Mar. 1999

Format: Hardcover

The many endorsements from his colleagues enticed me to buy Dr. Yapko's book. It lived up to and even surpassed the high expectations! It was easy to read and totally engrossed me as I finally came to understand how my family created the environment in which I learned what Dr. Yapko would probably call "faulty patterns" of thinking and relating. I've been depressed, and I've been treated with antidepressants, and I now understand much more about why the drugs never improved my ability to handle my family better. I learned a lot from the many stories he provides that illustrate his key points, and I often felt he was talking directly to me. There's no doubt he knows what depression is about, and he inspires the confidence to learn to do things differently. I give this book my highest recommendation!

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Below average book on depression. Yapko poses as one of the world's great experts on depression. I am unconvinced.

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By [Loopylou](#) on 18 Oct. 2014

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35 of 36 people found the following review helpful

**This wonderful book empowers families to beat depression.** 29 Mar. 1999

By A Customer - **Published on Amazon.com**

Format: Hardcover

The many endorsements from his colleagues enticed me to buy Dr. Yapko's book. It lived up to and even surpassed the high expectations! It was easy to read and totally engrossed me as I finally came to understand how my family created the environment in which I learned what Dr. Yapko would probably call "faulty patterns" of thinking and relating. I've been depressed, and I've been treated with antidepressants, and I now understand much more about why the drugs never improved my ability to handle my family better. I learned a lot from the many stories he provides that illustrate his key points, and I often felt he was talking directly to me. There's no doubt he knows what depression is about, and he inspires the confidence to learn to do things differently. I give this book my highest recommendation!

16 of 17 people found the following review helpful

**Depression is about families, not just individuals** 11 Feb. 2004

By A Customer - **Published on Amazon.com**

Format: Paperback

What impressed me the most about this book was Dr. Yapko's consideration of how depression is much more than something that hurts only individuals. It hurts families, too. My husband had been depressed for a long time, and refused to get any help, thinking it would "just go away." It didn't. I didn't know how to cope with him, and neither did our kids. We just got frustrated and angry, which didn't help. The book helped me get a much better understanding of what my husband has been going through and how I can cope with his way of doing things. But even better than that, I have a positive way of talking with the kids and our friends and relatives about his issues and how they affect us. My husband is doing better lately, and I think that's due to some of the suggestions in the book that have helped us be smarter in the way we deal with him. As Dr. Yapko points out, when we change some of what we do, others will change, too. This book has really helped our family alot, for which I am grateful to Dr. Yapko.

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful

**So that's what's wrong with my family!** 4 Jan. 2003

By A Customer - **Published on Amazon.com**

Format: Paperback

As they say, you can't judge a book by its cover but when I saw the title, I had to read it. As I was checking it out of my local library, the woman in line behind me saw the cover and was disappointed that I was taking it out instead of returning it. This all speaks volumes about the need for someone to explain how some families get so dysfunctional in the first place and more importantly how to counteract their negative influence and hopefully recover from it. I've known for years that the root of my depression was in the family dysfunction I grew up with but I couldn't quite explain how. We didn't become dysfunctional by the classic things like alcoholism or drug abuse but by something more insidious. Reading this book helped me at least start to unravel the tangled mess of my depressive family relationships. It's not a cure-all but it's a great start!

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful

**hand me down blues** 18 Jan. 2007

By M. D. Miller - **Published on Amazon.com**

Format: Paperback **Verified Purchase**

My family has a history of depression and I am now pregnant so I was looking for a book to help me prevent it from passing to my child. This book was not as helpful as I had hoped. The majority of it seemed to be trying to convince the reader why family aspects are important to this disorder. I already agreed with most of what he was saying there so I felt it was a little bit of a waste of time. The second to last chapter actually gave some direct tips and advice which is what I wanted. The last chapter just seemed to promote family therapy. I'm sure there are more books out there that could offer more advice than this one does, but it is a decent start.

12 of 15 people found the following review helpful

**Invaluable. A must read** 2 Mar. 2000By R G Whiteside - **Published on Amazon.com**

Format: Hardcover

Dr. Michael Yapko, a leading expert on depression, has written a book on depression that offers sound advice for people who are depressed and their families. If you, or a loved one, is depressed, this book is must reading. Yapko surveys the myths of depression and offers solutions on how families can help one another. This book should be must reading for any family that is experiencing depression

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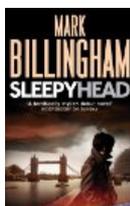
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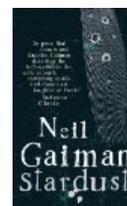
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