

# Depressed? Try Therapy Without the Therapist

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## *The New York Times:*

Elle is a mess. She's actually talented, attractive and good at her job, but she feels like a fraud — convinced that today's the day she'll flunk a test, lose a job, mess up a relationship. Her colleague Moody also sabotages himself. He's a hardworking, nice person, but loses friends because he's grumpy, oversensitive and gets angry for no reason.

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The success of cognitive behavioral therapy is well known; many people consider it the most effective therapy for depression. What is not widely known, at least in the United States, is that you don't need a therapist to do it. Scores of studies have found that online C.B.T. works as well as conventional face-to-face cognitive behavioral therapy — as long as there is occasional human support or coaching. "For common mental disorders like anxiety and depression, there is no evidence Internet-based treatment is less effective than face-to-face therapy," said Pim Cuijpers, professor of clinical psychology at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and a leading researcher on computer C.B.T.

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Ricardo Muñoz, a professor of clinical psychology at Palo Alto University, sees online C.B.T. as a tool for preventing depression. "We know that if a person develops a major depressive episode, the likelihood of another one goes to 50 percent, up from 17 percent," he said. "After that, the likelihood of another goes to 70 and then 90 percent. Obviously, we need to be preventing the first one."

Read the whole story: [The New York Times](#)