

activity,” says the book’s creator, Jon Cousins. “On less-good days they’d be encouraged to take some more gently appropriate action.”

Cousins started working in the mental health field to beat depression he’d suffered for three decades. He has been innovating in emotional well-being after a successful career in advertising in Britain and is now respected as a credible pioneer by healthcare professionals in both the UK and USA.

When the British government recently called for new ideas for health apps to help patients make informed decisions about their care it received more than

Why you could be better off opening the one on the right than the one on the left.

Could a new type of self-help book treat depression as effectively as antidepressants? **TONY ROCCA** investigates.

Overcoming depression remains one of healthcare’s greatest challenges, with no magic bullet in sight for a condition affecting 350 million people globally, according to the World Health Organization. Therefore anything approaching a new, effective, treatment is to be welcomed – especially one not linked to medication.

Such a prospect now exists. A breakthrough idea has brought remarkable improvements to sufferers on a par with the best they might expect from taking antidepressants. Tests made over a 30-day period using exactly the same techniques as those monitoring the effectiveness of drugs show:

- Recovery began immediately whereas it commonly takes up to six

weeks with medication.

- The most seriously depressed experienced the biggest lift of all.

Participants in a pilot study followed a new self-help book that takes an ingenious approach to the age-old problem. Each day over 30 days they tested their

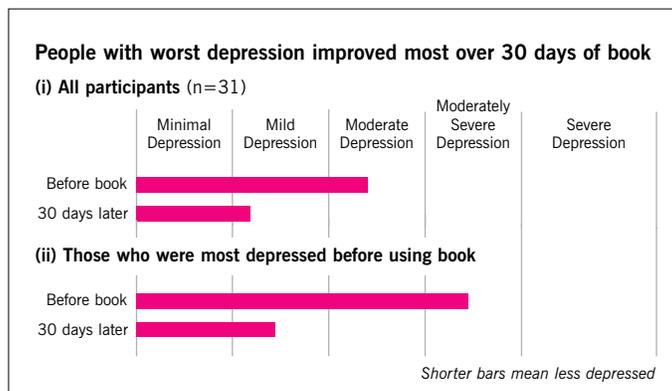
500 nominations.

The standout winner was an online service he invented, Moodscope, that has over 30,000 users today.

Following these early tests the world can only wish him the same success for his recently published book, *Nudge Your Way To Happiness*.

Cousins is not of course suggesting that someone with serious depression shouldn’t consult a professional.

But doesn’t it make sense to at least try an immediate self-administered fix?



own sense of well-being, tracking progress on a graph.

They were then directed to a specific mood “nudge” to match their feelings (one of three immediate actions based on proven psychology, offered daily). “So, on days when they might be feeling pretty good, their nudge would suggest a relatively ambitious mood-building

Sunday Times &
Daily Mail journalist
Tony Rocca



Nudge Your Way to Happiness by Jon Cousins is available from Amazon.com and all good bookstores priced \$14.95
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