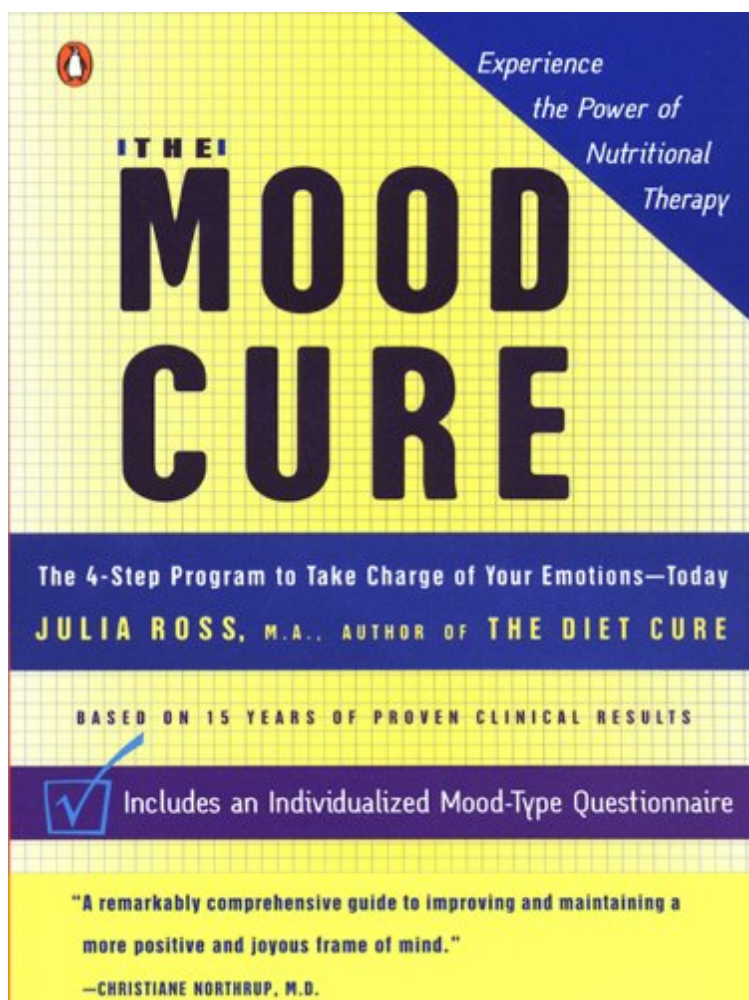


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The Mood Cure: The 4-Step Program to Take Charge of Your Emotions--Today



Par Julia Ross
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Description : Description du produit Were in a bad mood epidemic, but Julia Rosss plan provides a natural cure. Drawing on thirty years of experience, she presents breakthrough solutions to overcoming depression, anxiety, irritability, stress, and other negative emotional states that are diminishing the quality of our lives. Her comprehensive program is based on the use of four mood- building amino acids and other surprisingly potent nutrient supplements, plus a diet rich in good-mood foods such as protein, healthy fat, and certain key vegetables. Including an individualized mood-type questionnaire, The Mood Cure has all the tools to help you get started today and feel better tomorrow.

Prsentation de l'diteurAre you a part of the bad mood epidemic? Here are the answers you've been looking for! Julia Rosss plan provides a natural cure for your mood. Drawing on thirty years of experience, she presents breakthrough solutions to overcoming depression, anxiety, irritability, stress, and other negative emotional states that are diminishing the quality of our lives. Her comprehensive program is based on the

use of four mood-building amino acids and other surprisingly potent nutrient supplements, plus a diet rich in good-mood foods such as protein, healthy fat, and certain key vegetables. Including an individualized mood-type questionnaire, *The Mood Cure* has all the tools to help you get started today and feel better tomorrow. From the Trade Paperback edition. Excerpt

If you're often feeling depressed, anxious, or stressed, you're not alone. We're in a bad-mood epidemic, a hundred times more likely to have significant mood problems than people born a hundred years ago.¹ And these problems are on the rise. Adult rates of depression and anxiety have tripled since 1990,^{2,3} and over 80 percent of those who consult medical doctors today complain of excessive stress.⁴ Even our children are in trouble, with at least one in ten suffering from significant mood disorders.⁵ Our mood problems are increasing so fast that, by 2020, they will outrank AIDS, accidents, and violence as the primary causes of early death and disability.⁶ It's clear that our moods are deteriorating at unprecedented rates. What isn't so clear is why. What is this tidal wave of emotional malaise all about? Are our lives so much more unhappy than they were one hundred years ago, or even ten years ago? It's true that we're facing some unprecedented adversity in the twenty-first century. But even if it is the high pressure, or the absence of family support, or the terrorist threat, for example, why are we now so unresponsive to traditionally reliable remedies like long vacations, psychotherapy, and spiritual counsel? Why are we forced to turn more and more to medication for solace?

In this book, I'm proposing that much of our increasing emotional distress stems from easily correctable malfunctions in our brain and body chemistry—malfunctions that are primarily the result of critical, unmet nutritional needs. More important, I am proposing a complete yet easy-to-implement nutritional repair plan that can actually start to eliminate what I call our "false moods" in twenty-four hours.

True Emotions Vs. False Moods Some negative feelings are unavoidable and even beneficial. They're what I call "true emotions." These true, genuine responses to the real difficulties we encounter in life can be hard to take. They can even be unbearable at times, depending on the kinds of ordeals we face. But they can also be vitally important. True grief moves us through our losses, true fear warns us of danger, true anger can defend us from abuse, and true shame can teach us to grow and change. These true emotions typically pass, or diminish naturally, and even when they get repressed or misdirected, they can usually be relieved through counseling. But when we suffer for no justifiable reason; when the pain of a broken heart doesn't mend like a broken bone; when rest, psychotherapy, prayer, and meditation can make little impact—then we must suspect the emotional impostor, the meaningless biochemical error—the "false mood." Figuring out the difference between false moods and true emotions is the first step in your *Mood Cure*. Once you've mastered that, you can move on to eliminate the fraudulent feelings, such as depression, anxiety, sadness, and irritability, that are interfering with your natural capacity to enjoy life.

Learning to Spot a False Mood When your boss cancels a long-scheduled vacation, you may get justifiably angry, and the next day you won't have any trouble remembering what triggered your anger. At other times, you just seem to "snap" when your child forgets to take out the garbage. Later you say, "I don't know what got into me." The first case is a genuine emotion, the second is a definite counterfeit.* Thinking of a loved one who has died may make you teary, but if every sentimental TV commercial brings you to tears, you're in the grip of false pain.* PMS is notorious for its bad moods. If you're reasonably even-tempered the rest of the month, but become teary and nasty before your period, you're experiencing a clear-cut case of hormonally disrupted emotional balance—a false mood.* We all make mistakes and beat ourselves up from time to time. But if you are finding fault with your behavior or appearance almost every day, it's likely that false feelings of low self-esteem are responsible. You shouldn't have to live with these kinds of distorted moods on a regular basis. It's like having an engine that sputters, preventing you from having a smooth emotional ride. When your brain's emotional equipment needs a tune-up, you get clues: you don't sleep well, you worry too much, you start feeling overwhelmed, you lose your enthusiasm or your ability to concentrate. You might also start depending on chocolate, wine, or marijuana to get some relief. If you experience these kinds of symptoms frequently, you may have just come to accept them, assuming them simply to be unfortunate features of your basic personality. But chances are you're wrong. Now you have an opportunity to discover your true emotional nature.

The Primary Cause of Your False Moods Your brain is responsible for most of your feelings, both true and false. In concert with some surprisingly brainlike areas of your heart and gut, it transmits your feelings through four highly specialized and potent kinds of mood molecules. If it has plenty of all four, it keeps you as happy as you can possibly be, given your particular life circumstances. But if your brain runs low on these mood transmitters—whether because of a minor genetic miscue, because it's used them up coping with too much stress, or because you aren't eating the specific foods it needs—it stops producing normal emotions on a consistent basis. Instead, it starts hitting false

emotional notes, like a piano out of tune. After more than thirty years of intensive, worldwide investigation, most of the false moods and their causes have been identified by one of the fastest-growing fields of science—neuroscience, the field that studies the workings and effects of the brain. Drug companies have been using this information to create products that can give our emotional equipment a quick charge. But that's not the same thing as a real repair job. Fortunately, the emotional tune-up that we need so badly now is readily available. In fact, the repair tools we need for this crucial effort are shockingly simple. They're specific foods and nutrient supplements that are so exactly what the brain needs that they can begin to correct emotional malfunctions in just twenty-four hours.

How I Discovered the Mood Cure I am the director of a clinic that's been doing nutritional mood repair for over fifteen years, but I've actually been a professional dealing with emotional disorders and mood problems since 1975. Early in my career I worked in residential psychiatric settings; later I worked with individuals and families, led intensive therapy groups and workshops, and ran treatment programs for adults and adolescents with addictions and eating disorders. Now I run my own clinic, Recovery Systems, in Mill Valley, California, just across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco. In 1980, as director of my first counseling program, I began to suspect that poor nutrition was playing a role in the cases that did not respond to our intensive programs of psychotherapy and spiritual support. Our less successful clients were often "emotional eaters." They either consumed lots of cookies, ice cream, chips, and fast food or skipped meals altogether and drank lots of coffee and caffeinated sodas. I started hiring nutritionists to explore the possibility of a food-mood connection, and we soon realized that we were on the brink of a powerful breakthrough. Clients who could be persuaded to eat plenty of protein and fresh vegetables three times a day and avoid caffeine, sweets, and refined starches, like white bread and pasta, felt much better emotionally (as well as physically). When they ate well, even those who had major psychological work to do were able to make steady advances in counseling with much less anguish and backsliding. However, the clients who did not make the nutritional changes—despite new communication skills, exercise, long vacations, and moderate work hours—did not do nearly as well. I was encouraged by these results, but I also had to admit that it took the clients who were able to stick with it about ten weeks to fully withdraw from their bad-mood junk foods. For most of them, this was ten weeks of food cravings, fatigue, headaches, and only very slowly diminishing mood swings. More important, too many of our clients just couldn't wait it out and went back to their old junk foods and debilitating moods. We needed something more.

The Amazing Aminos Around this time, in the mid-1980s, I read about the work of neuroscientist Kenneth Blum, Ph.D., at the University of North Texas. A prolific researcher, Dr. Blum was studying the brain chemistry of alcoholics and drug addicts. In the course of this work, he'd identified a few genes that could hardwire the brain to underproduce its most potent "feel good" brain chemicals and instead produce the "feel bad" mood chemistry that made his subjects so vulnerable to addiction. His research explained the perplexing feelings of anxiety, anger, and depression, the chronic insomnia, and the lack of a sense of well-being that plagued so many addicts even in recovery. He called it the "reward deficiency syndrome." This finding was fascinating all by itself, but Dr. Blum made another, even more remarkable discovery. He found that he could override the "bad-mood genes" by giving his research subjects a few supplemental nutrients. These brain foods, called amino acids, are concentrates of common proteins found in food. They were able to jump-start the addicts' genetically misprogrammed brain chemistry and radically improve their moods. The bottom line: The addicts who took the amino acids were able to stay away from drugs and alcohol. Those who took no aminos had four times higher relapse rates!

I was very excited after reviewing Dr. Blum's studies. I had a sense that the amino acids were the missing ingredients in my fledgling nutritional therapy program. Since these supplements were identical to nutrients found in food and, unlike drugs, not foreign to the human body, my nutritionists and I felt comfortable recommending them. It was certainly worth a try.

Combining Nutritherapy with Psychotherapy Early on, I decided to give the aminos to three women struggling with bulimia, an eating disorder that is normally very difficult to treat. When they came to our clinic, all of them had been working hard in psychotherapy for some time with no improvement. Like most bulimics, they were depressed, obsessive, and self-critical. All were professionally well established, though, and all were married. One was a happily married 26-year-old, one was 35 and very unhappily married, and the third, at 48, needed marital help, but she and her husband were both determined to work things out. In addition to taking the aminos, these women committed themselves to following our standard program of protein-and-vegetable-rich, reduced-carbohydrate foods and psychotherapy. I was astonished at how the aminos accelerated each client's progress. Mood improvements that would normally have taken months to achieve began for these women in days. In two weeks on the aminos, all three women had freed

themselves of their obsessions with food and most of their associated mood problems. And it kept getting better. After a few months on aminos, the happily married woman, having met all of her goals, graduated from therapy free of both bulimia and mood swings. The unhappily married woman began to do deep and productive therapy after years of being too weakened by her bulimia to use psychotherapy constructively. After her nutritional overhaul, she was able to work through her fears, leave her husband, and establish a happy life for herself. The third woman no longer felt much need for individual therapy (she'd been at it for years) but started couples therapy with good results. All three women were still making excellent progress six months later and starting to go off their aminos. Their psychotherapist was dumbfounded, and so were we. More than fifteen years and several thousand clients later, the amino acids are still our most effective weapons for fighting false moods. We have consistently found that they not only improve mood almost instantly, but speed up psychotherapy as well. A well-nourished person who has had a brain chemistry tune-up with amino acids gets beyond psychological and emotional obstacles faster, deeper, and more successfully. Not only have our brain-tuned clients had quicker access to critical memories, but they've coped better with those memories, no longer paralyzed by biochemically exaggerated feelings of fear, guilt, or pain. The effects of nutritionally stabilized moods on our clients' relationships have also been extraordinary. I'll never forget the first family that we treated with both psychotherapy and nutritherapy. A father and mother came to see us, concerned about their 14-year-old son, who was having attention problems and depression plus headache pain so severe that it often kept him at home from school. It soon became clear that Dad had some serious problems, too. He was obsessively controlling and verbally abusive. Though they had received family counseling many times in the past, nothing had ever improved. When it became clear, after a few sessions, that Dad was actually deeply devoted to his family but simply unable to control his critical, angry feelings, I suggested that he meet with the same staff nutritionist who was seeing his son. He agreed because he could see that his son's headaches were responding to dietary changes and that his mood and ability to concentrate were improving on the amino acids. When Dad began taking amino acids himself, the change was immediate and powerful: his obsessive, explosive behavior evaporated entirely, much to the amazement and relief of his wife and son. Family therapy proceeded very constructively, since all family members were finally able to listen and respond to one another free of their false moods. Interestingly, Dad also needed some private psychotherapy to adjust to his new emotional style, especially in the business world, where his abrasive personality had become his trademark. In 1995, our staff began suggesting that our clients try potentially helpful aminos right in the office, during their initial assessments. As a result, we've actually been present as the amino acids have taken effect, typically within fifteen minutes. We've watched and cheered as hundreds of clients shed their false feelings of tension, lethargy, irritability, and emotional pain right before our eyes. The word that our clients always use to describe this experience is "amazing." What's more, our clients typically need to take the aminos for only three to twelve months. After that, their mood chemistry repairs are usually complete if they continue eating plenty of protein, vegetables, and other fresh whole foods and taking their basic vitamin, mineral, and fatty acid supplements. How Do the Aminos Eliminate False Moods and Revive True Emotion? This is the secret: There are twenty-two different kinds of amino acids in high-protein foods like chicken, fish, beef, eggs, and cheese. You may have heard them referred to as the building blocks of protein. Each amino has its own name and unique duties to perform, but only a few very special aminos can serve as fuels for the brain's four mood engines. Just five or six of these amino acids, taken as supplements, can effectively reverse all four of the brain deficiencies that cause false moods. Each of the four mood engines in your brain needs a different amino acid fuel. The lower your access to amino fuel, the more false mood symptoms you can develop. The question is how much "gas" do you have in each of your engines? How do you know when you've run too low? How can you fill 'em up? Which amino brain fuels do you need? Where can you get them? How long will it take? You'll soon learn what the best brain foods are for you and how to find and use the amino acid supplements that will jump-start all of your emotional engines and keep them fired up. The four emotion generators in your brain are called "neurotransmitters." Some of their specific names will probably be familiar to you: serotonin, catecholamines, GABA, and endorphin. Each of these four neurotransmitters has a distinctly different effect on your mood depending largely on the supply of its particular amino acid fuel available. A well-stocked brain produces true emotions: depending on your life circumstances, you'll generally feel emotionally positive if your key neurotransmitter levels are high. A poorly stocked brain produces false moods: If you drop too low in any of the key neurotransmitters, you'll tend to develop a specific set of defective moods as a result. Once any of the false moods evolve, their standard symptoms may come and go, become more or less

intense, or remain constant. Whatever the case, the appropriate amino acid fuels, taken as supplements, can reliably, safely, and quickly dispel every vestige of all four false mood types by raising the levels of all four vital neurotransmitters. Fortunately, every amino acid you'll need can be easily found at your neighborhood health food store or drugstore or by phone or on-line. Why Are Your Mood Engines Running on Empty? Did You Inherit False Moods? Some of us tolerate the same adverse circumstances with much more serenity than others. My mother endured fifty years of marital stress, polio, cancer, heart disease, gallbladder disease, thyroid disease, and more with relish, grit, high comedy, courage, and selflessness. She was rarely depressed, irritable, or fearful. What was her secret? She had two-she'd inherited her own mother's nicely balanced brain chemistry, and she always ate lots of the protein that maintained it. Did you inherit good-mood genes? Many of us didn't. Over the years, numerous clients have brought in parents, spouses, and children with false mood symptoms very similar to their own. A brief tune-up with amino acids and a dietary "adjustment" was often all that was required to set them right. These experiences taught me how often false moods run in families. Did you think that your father was hard to be around on purpose or that your mother cried at any upset because she was so weak? These are the kinds of questions that I have learned to ask when exploring the types of negative moods that run in families. My clients have often found the answers to be unexpectedly liberating: Although Anna hated to compare her irritability with her father's rages, when she realized that they shared a common brain chemistry deficiency, she ended up having new compassion for him and less of a hurtful sense that his abusiveness had been personal to her. We all know families in which everyone is laid-back and others where no one can slow down; outgoing, cheery families and shy, quiet families; worried, perfectionistic, neatnik families and sloppy, low-energy families. Ask yourself as you go through this book, "Do my family members share any of my mood traits?" "Are we the same false mood type?" But you won't need to worry about being a stick-in-the-mood. Although we used to think that genetic traits were intractable, when it comes to moods, even genetic programming can be reprogrammed remarkably easily by amino acids and other nutrients. Is It Your Diet? Regardless of your genes, but especially if your mood-programming genes are inefficient, good nutrition is essential. It's no coincidence that our grandparents' generation had a more cheerful disposition than ours, although they certainly had their share of wars, depressions, diseases, and other hardships to deal with. The fact is that their diets were better. They were lucky enough to grow up before the junk food invasion and before low-calorie dieting had become a way of life. They ate "three squares" a day, including plenty of protein-rich foods like beef, chicken, fish, eggs, and cheese. Why are these particular foods so important? Because our four neurotransmitters can be made only out of the amino acids found in high-protein foods. But protein is not all we need. We also need a good supply of vitamins and minerals to make this magic happen. They're found in fresh fruits and vegetables, which your grandparents ate in abundance but which are lacking in the standard American diet. And there's something else that you may be shocked to learn. If we don't eat enough of the right kinds of fats, we will not be able to use those natural mood-boosting amino fuels. Our grandparents ate gobs of the fats we're no longer eating, like butter, and they had much less heart disease, cancer, and depression than we have. (More on this intriguing story in chapter 8.) Then there's the junk food factor. Commercial food processing strips food of the vital nutrients needed to make and operate your brain's neurotransmitters. These bad-mood foods-including white bread and pasta, sugar-laden cereals and snacks, fried and hydrogenated fats, caffeine, and even the artificial sweeteners in diet soda-can actually interfere with your brain's efforts to create good moods. You can't pour sugar or any of these other stressful substances into your mood tanks and expect a smooth emotional ride. Is It Your Lifestyle? Our modern lifestyle must share some of the blame for our epidemic of mood imbalance. Too much stress-particularly of the unique twenty-first-century variety-can deplete the brain of its "feel good" neurotransmitters, literally wearing it out. A good night's sleep, adequate relaxation, and appropriate "down time" are critical to restoring optimal levels of good-mood chemicals, but these simple restorative remedies are getting lost in our "go till you drop" culture. Is It Your Hormones? At our clinic, we've continued to learn new ways to improve false moods as we've bumped into new mood problems that have stumped us. Our biggest lessons, beyond how to fuel the brain's four emotion-generating neurotransmitters, have been the lessons we've learned about hormones. Whether it's the two thyroid hormones, the thirty-plus adrenal hormones, or the three sex hormones-estrogen, testosterone, and progesterone-their effects on your mood can be powerful. Without enough of all these hormones operating in concert, the neurotransmitters can be stymied. Liberating your brain's emotional chemistry may require you to launch into a hormone-balancing campaign to eliminate whatever may be holding up the mood show. But don't be intimidated; I'll show you how. Will the Mood

Cure Really Work for You? On November 13, 2000, I made a presentation to a scientific conference held in San Francisco on mood and the brain.⁸ My staff and I had been asked to review the files of one hundred randomly selected clients who had come to our clinic with significant mood problems. Of the one hundred, ninety-eight had reported major improvements in mood within two weeks, most within twenty-four to forty-eight hours, using the amino acids, the basic nutrient supplements, and the good-mood foods that you'll be reading about in this book. Twelve weeks later, eighty-three had sustained or exceeded those improvements.

The depression, anxiety, oversensitivity, and stress that had brought them to us in the first place had disappeared. You can expect to experience the same kind of relief from your own false moods, just as quickly. After all, you'll be using the same techniques. As you've seen, many of the nutritional strategies I've discovered were developed while I was directing treatment programs for people with addictions and eating disorders. As a result, they've been honed on some very serious false moods. If the Mood Cure worked for them, it's very likely to work for you. But the Mood Cure is not for everyone. I would love to be able to say that at our clinic we've learned how to eliminate all false mood problems, but I can't. We do not specialize in, and have very little experience with, severe false mood states such as autism, psychosis, bipolar disorder, violent rage, or paranoia—the biochemical imbalances commonly referred to as mental illnesses. Other clinicians have had experience treating these conditions with natural therapies, sometimes very successfully.

Suggestions on finding practitioners, clinics, books, and Web sites that can advise you on how to deal naturally with mood disturbances that The Mood Cure does not address can be found in the "Resource Tool Kit," page 289. If you have such problems, please do not use the supplements suggested in this book without expert guidance. They could actually make your particular biochemical imbalances worse. Moving into Your

Own Mood Cure The first step in your Mood Cure, like the first step in any successful repair job, is to identify what needs fixing. In the next chapter, you can start getting down to the particulars by filling out the Four-Part Mood-Type Questionnaire. After you've completed this false mood profiling, you can move on to the specific repair chapters and the excitement and relief of experiencing your own personal Mood

Cure. Once you've actually shed your false moods for good, you'll be able to use psychotherapy for any remaining true emotional problems stemming from your early life or from more current difficulties. You'll certainly be much better equipped to do effective work if you do decide to go into counseling. You'll also find it much easier to pray and meditate and to exercise, rest, and relax. With this full array of emotional, spiritual, and physical resources available to you, you'll be able to face whatever lies ahead with strength, serenity, and a sense of humor. From Publishers Weekly Ross, author of *The Diet Cure*, here offers a prescriptive plan designed to relieve a variety of ailments from seasonal disorders, stress, irritability and depression. Ross believes that many of these annoying and, in some cases, severely disabling disorders can be relieved through a change in diet and nutritional supplements. Readers are asked to first determine which of four "false moods" they suffer from: a dark cloud, blahs, stress or too much sensitivity. The survey is simple and the questions will immediately resonate with readers: for example, someone who is suffering from the blahs is likely to have difficulty focusing or require a great deal of sleep. Armed with their survey scores, readers can then turn to the appropriate chapter to learn which diets and supplements will be most helpful. Particularly reassuring are the author's detailed explanations of why she advises a particular strategy.

While Ross is an advocate for nutritional supplements, she provides a sound overview for all her recommendations. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.