



Beacon

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“There are wounds that never show on the body that are deeper and more hurtful than anything that bleeds.”

— Laurell K. Hamilton

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What is Depression?

We all go through ups and downs in our mood. Sadness is a normal reaction to life's struggles, setbacks, and disappointments. Many people use the word "depression" to explain these kinds of feelings, but depression is much more than just sadness. Some people describe depression as "living in a black hole" or having a feeling of impending doom. However, some depressed people don't feel sad at all—they may feel lifeless, empty, and apathetic, or men in particular may even feel angry, aggressive, and restless. Whatever the symptoms, depression is different from normal sadness in that it engulfs your day-to-day life, interfering with your ability to work, study, eat, sleep, and have fun. The feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and worthlessness are intense and unrelenting, with little, if any, relief.

Clinical depression is a state

of extreme distress in which the sufferer feels empty or numb rather than merely sad. The depressed person is unable to enjoy life normally or have an emotional shift from the depressed state.

A persistent depressed mood may be the feature of a Mood Disorder when it is present all or most of the time for at least two weeks. In a Major Depressive Episode, someone might also experience:

- either diminished appetite with weight loss or increased appetite with weight gain,
- either insomnia or increased sleep,
- either agitation or slowed movements,
- loss of all pleasure and enjoy-

- ment, tiredness and fatigue,
- feelings of guilt and worthlessness,
- poor concentration, and
- Thoughts of death, including suicidal thoughts and plans.

Suicidal thoughts are always abnormal, and are an indication of needing urgent help. Depression is a major risk factor for suicide. The deep despair and hopelessness that goes along with depression can make suicide feel like the only way to escape the pain. Thoughts of death or suicide are a serious symptom of depression, so take any suicidal talk or behaviour seriously. It's not just a warning sign that the person is thinking about suicide: it's a cry for help.





***" You largely
constructed
your
depression. It
wasn't given
to you.
Therefore,
you can
deconstruct
it."***

— Dr Albert Ellis



BEACON

Psychology is a science of the behavior of living organisms. The application of this knowledge to real life is an art. 'Beacon' is an endeavor of Department of Psychology to bring about a confluence of this science and art. We have always been involved in the pursuit of attempts to ensure mental well being of one and all, at least in our sphere of influence. This is one more step in that direction.

Mrs. Archana Patki

Head, Department of Psychology

On Sorrow and Joy

Then a woman said,

"Speak to us of Joy and Sorrow."

And he answered:

Your joy is your sorrow unmasked.

And the selfsame well from which your laughter rises was oftentimes filled with your tears.

And how else can it be?

The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain.

Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter's oven?

And is not the lute that soothes your spirit, the very wood that was hollowed with knives?

When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy.

When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.

Some of you say, "Joy is greater than sorrow," and others say, "Nay, sorrow is the greater."

But I say unto you, they are inseparable.

Together they come, and when one sits alone with you at your board, remember that the other is asleep upon your bed.

Verily you are suspended like scales between your sorrow and your joy.

Only when you are empty are you at standstill and balanced.

When the treasure-keeper lifts you to weigh his gold and his silver, needs must your joy or your sorrow rise or fall.

— Kahlil Gibran

8 Signs of Depression...

Could you be depressed without realizing it? Here are eight signs that can tell you if you are suffering from depression.

Weight changes: Depression can result in a total lack of interest in food, so somebody may begin to lose weight without even realizing it. But the opposite can happen, too: to fill the emotional void, some of us turn to food and will gain weight in turn.

Sleep problems: Just like with appetite, the physical changes can swing to either extreme. You may suddenly find that you're tired and sleeping all day, or that you can't get a wink's shuteye at all. A particularly common form of sleep deprivation is to find yourself waking up in the middle of the night, night after night.

Aches and pains: A lot of people don't realize that depression comes with bona fide physical symptoms. Feeling sick to your stomach, knots in the gut, a weak immune system and constant colds and flu, whole body aches and pains, and exacerbated chronic conditions (such as arthritis) can all come with a depressive episode.

Anger and irritability: If you are continually depressed, you can become extremely frustrated, and this can manifest as anger. Anger is depression turned inward, as the expression goes. Having a short fuse, and finding that little things that would normally not bother you suddenly have the power to completely ruin your day could be a sign of buried depression.

Alcoholism: About 40% of people who suffer from depression struggle with alcohol. Drug use—illicit and prescription—are also common ways that many of us try to escape our emotions. It doesn't just mask the problem, it can also make things worse; liver damage and poor health only worsen depressive episodes.

Concentration issues: Finding yourself unable to focus, taking three hours to do something that ought to take half an hour, struggling to formulate your thoughts coherently—these are also factors that come with depression. If you constantly feel that you have no mental energy, and feel like your mind is muffled and numb, it may be time to seek help.

Problems with work: Depression can severely interfere with your ability to work—waking up in the morning and not feeling capable of getting out of bed can lead people to long bouts of absenteeism. But even just missing a day or two every week—or just constantly coming in late and leaving early—is a common sign. "Presenteeism," meaning regular attendance but failure to get anything done, is also a sign.

Lack of sex drive: A complete and total lack of interest in sex can be (but is not always) a feature of depression. If you are in a relationship, a total lack of desire for your loving partner can make you feel even more guilty, self-loathing and insecure—sometimes forcing you even deeper into depression.

Treatment for Depression: Psychotherapy

Psychological counselling is a key for depression treatment. Psychotherapy is a general term for a way of treating depression by talking about your condition and related issues with a mental health provider. Psychotherapy is also known as therapy, talk therapy, counselling or psychosocial therapy. Through these talk sessions, you learn about the causes of depression so that you can better understand it. You also learn how to identify and make changes in unhealthy behaviour or thoughts, explore relationships and experiences, and find better ways to cope and solve problems, and set realistic goals for your life. Psychotherapy can help you regain a sense of happiness and control in your life and help ease depression symptoms such as hopelessness and anger. It may also help you adjust to a crisis or other current difficulty.

There are several types of psychotherapy that are effective for depression. Cognitive behavioural therapy is one of the most commonly used therapies. This type of therapy helps you identify negative beliefs and behaviours and replace them with healthy, positive ones. It's based on the idea that your own thoughts — not other people or situations — determine how you feel or behave. Even if an unwanted situation doesn't change, you can change the way you think and behave in a positive way. Interpersonal therapy and psychodynamic psychotherapy are other types of counselling commonly used to treat depression.



Goldberg's Depression Test

This is the depression test developed by the psychiatrist Ivan K. Goldberg. But please note: The test result is NOT a final diagnosis! The scale cannot replace professional help. If you suspect that you might suffer from depression, you should contact the college Counsellor as quickly as possible, no matter what test result you get.

| Question | Not at all | Only slightly | Partly | Quite a lot | A lot | To a great extent |
|--|------------|---------------|--------|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| I do everything slowly | | | | | | |
| My future seems hopeless | | | | | | |
| I find it hard to concentrate when I read | | | | | | |
| All joy and pleasure seem to have disappeared from my life | | | | | | |
| I find it hard to make decisions | | | | | | |
| I have lost interest in things that used to mean a lot to me | | | | | | |
| I feel sad depressed and unhappy | | | | | | |
| I feel restless and cannot relax | | | | | | |
| I feel tired | | | | | | |
| I find it hard to do even trivial things | | | | | | |
| I feel guilty and deserved to be punished | | | | | | |
| I feel like a failure | | | | | | |
| I feel empty- more dead than alive | | | | | | |
| My sleep is disturbed, too little, too much or disturbed sleep | | | | | | |
| I wonder HOW I could commit suicide | | | | | | |
| I feel confined and imprisoned | | | | | | |
| I feel down even when something good happens to me | | | | | | |
| I have lost or gained weight without being on a diet | | | | | | |

Score 1 for Not at all, 2 for Only slightly, 3 for Partly, 4 for Quite a lot, 5 for A lot and 6 for To a great Extent. Calculate your scores for each statement. Check which criteria your total score falls into.

- 0 - 9 Depression unlikely
- 21 - 35 Minor to moderate depression
- 10 - 17 Possibly minor depression
- 36 - 53 Moderate to severe depression
- 18 - 21 On the verge of depression
- 54+ Severe depression

If you are having suicidal thoughts. This is a serious warning sign, and you must seek help quickly. If you have the symptoms of severe depression and if the condition seems to cause serious problems in your everyday life, and you should consult the college Counsellor immediately.