



The Trauma Healing Collective

Depression

A Self Help Guide

*There are wounds that show on our
body that are deeper and more painful
than anything that bleeds*

What is Depression?

Depression is a very common problem. Many adults will at some time experience symptoms of depression. In its mildest forms depression does not stop you from leading a normal life, but the most severe depression can be life threatening, with thoughts of death and suicide.

These are some of the signs or symptoms that you may experience if you are depressed.

Emotions or feelings:

- Feeling sad, guilty, upset, numb or despairing.
- Losing interest and enjoyment in things
- feeling alone even if you are in company.
- Suddenly burst out crying for no apparent reason.

Physical or bodily signs:

- Restlessness
- interrupted sleep patterns
- changes in appetite
- Tiredness

Thoughts:

- Expecting the worst and having negative or gloomy thoughts
- Thoughts of suicide
- pull memory or concentration
- self-hate
- thinking that everything seems hopeless

These symptoms are guidelines are not for diagnostic purposes. You may experience these feelings from time to time even if you are not seriously depressed. These feelings can happen if you have recently suffered a loss for example, someone close to you dies.

What is Depression?

No single cause for depression has been found. Usually there is more than one reason and this differs from person to person, but sometimes it can happen without any obvious reason.

Distressing events can make someone start to feel depressed and at times this may turn into more serious depression from which is difficult to emerge.

Circumstances can also play a part. For instance, being alone, having to live on a very low income, physical illness and unemployment can all contribute. Sometimes several different factors together can cause the onset of depression.

Having a baby can also lead to Post Natal Depression.

How can I help myself to feel better?

Do Something Active:

Physical activity is helpful. Walk, run, cycle, skip; anything which begins to increase your activity can help to improve how you feel. Plan 15 or 20 minutes of activity every day. Try doing something creative like painting, writing poetry or a journal.

Look after yourself:

Eat well; A good diet can help to keep you in good health, so recovery is easy. Try and treat yourself to things you normally enjoy. Avoid turning to alcohol, illegal drugs or misusing medication.

Challenging Negative Thinking:

- Identify when your mood is low;
- make a note of the unpleasant thoughts you are having during that time: try and challenge these thoughts. Imagine what you would say to a friend if they had such negative thoughts about themselves.
- try and keep a diary or notes of things you've enjoyed or achieved during the week. This can help you to concentrate on the good things rather than the bad things in your life.