

DEPRESSION

Counseling Guide

WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

Facts about Depression

- Depression is a real illness.
- Depression affects people in different ways.
- Depression is treatable.
- If you are depressed, you are not alone.
- Even Christians can experience depression.

If you are contemplating suicide,
please call for help immediately.

—THERE IS HOPE and YOU ARE NOT ALONE—

Need help now?

Call the DBU Counseling Center at **214.333.5288** or
call the 24-hour, toll-free National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1.800.273.8255.

How do you know if you are depressed?

It is very NORMAL for people to periodically experience symptoms of depression. Even biblical heroes, including King David, Job, Jeremiah, and Paul experienced times of depression in their lives. Symptoms of depression can be caused by loss of employment, loss of loved ones, disease, or unexpected changes in life circumstances. Most depressive symptoms resolve on their own; however, if the symptoms are persistent and cause extreme disruptions in daily life, then assistance may be needed.

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

- Feelings of emptiness or sadness
- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- Dramatic weight change: weight gain or weight loss
- Feeling guilty, worthless, hopeless, and/or helpless
- Being irritable
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of pleasure and energy
- Isolation

Common self talk when experiencing depression

- I am not worthy. I am a loser. I cannot do anything right.
- I am useless.
- No one needs me. No one loves me.
- I am all by myself. I am lonely.
- There is no hope.
- I don't care.
- I don't want to talk. I don't want to be around others.
- I hate myself.

Assessment

The DBU Counseling Center provides an anonymous online self-assessment for all DBU students/faculty/staff which provides a general evaluation of mental health. If your test results indicate that you may have symptoms that are consistent with depression, please seek help.

DBU Self Evaluator

http://www.ulifeline.org/DBU/self_evaluator

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE DEPRESSION?

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW FIRST

1. You are not alone.
2. There IS hope.
3. Help IS available.

1. Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy, such as counseling, is very useful in treating depression. For severe depression, medical interventions such as inpatient services and/or prescription medications may be necessary, but for mild or moderate symptoms, counseling or psychotherapy has been proven to be effective in reducing symptoms of depression.

2. Medication

Your doctor or psychiatrist can help you with proper medical intervention to stabilize your condition. Antidepressants are useful forms of medication in treating depression.

If you are enrolled as a current DBU student, you can receive counseling services from the **DBU Counseling Center** at NO COST.

The **DBU Counseling Center** is located in the 1st floor of the Collins Learning Center. You can call **214.333.5288** to make an appointment.

THINGS YOU CAN DO IF YOU EXPERIENCE SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

- Reach out for help. Talk to someone you can trust, such as family members, friends, church leaders, and faculty/staff members, or seek professional help from doctors, counselors, psychologists, or psychiatrists.
- Set simple and achievable goals for yourself, for example, “Once I wake up, I will get out of bed.” “I will eat at least two meals today.”
- Remain connected with the daily activities you enjoyed before.
- Recognize negative thoughts related to your emotions.
- Allow yourself TIME to improve instead of trying to “fix it quickly.”
- Stay in tune with your emotions. Keep an eye on certain timing, things, people, events, or behaviors that may trigger thoughts of depression.
- If you are a Christian, seize God’s promises, and pray about it. Identify God’s mighty power. His glory and honor can lift up your spirit.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT DEPRESSION?

God is always there for you.

“Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7)

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.” (Romans 8:28)

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT DEPRESSION? (CONTINUED)

God promises to provide everything you need.

“Then Jesus said to his disciples: Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!” (Luke 12:22-24)

“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

God will never leave you.

“The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” (Deuteronomy 31:8)

“Those who know Your name trust in You, for You, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek You.” (Psalm 9:10)

Preventing Depression: 4 Basic Principles of Self-Care

- Eat well.
- Sleep well.
- Exercise regularly.
- Stay connected with other people.

WHAT IF MY FRIEND OR LOVED ONE IS SUFFERING FROM DEPRESSION?

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW FIRST

1. They are not lazy.
2. They are willing to change but they need help.
3. They want to be better just like you do.

Three Don'ts

Don't Encourage: Don't tell the person to "press on" or "all is well."

Don't Argue: Listen to the person instead of telling him/her what to do.

Don't Blame: Don't put blame on the person for his/her symptoms.

Three Dos

Listen: Take time to listen carefully to their concerns without giving any advice. They may have tried to get themselves out of the situation, but did not succeed. Telling them what to do may make them feel worse.

Set boundaries: Take care of yourself and maintain healthy boundaries.

Make a Referral: Help them seek professional help, such as reaching out to a doctor, counselor, psychologist, or church leader.