

Facts About Depression

What is Depression?

Depression is a medical illness. When low mood or sadness persists or interferes with everyday life, it may be depression. Depression can last months or even years if not treated.

What Are the Symptoms of Depression?

- **Key Symptoms:**
 - Depressed or sad mood
 - Decreased interest or pleasure in activities
- **Other Symptoms:**
 - Significant changes in appetite or weight
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Restlessness or sluggishness
 - Fatigue or loss of energy
 - Lack of concentration or indecision
 - Feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt
 - Thoughts of death or suicide

What Causes Depression?

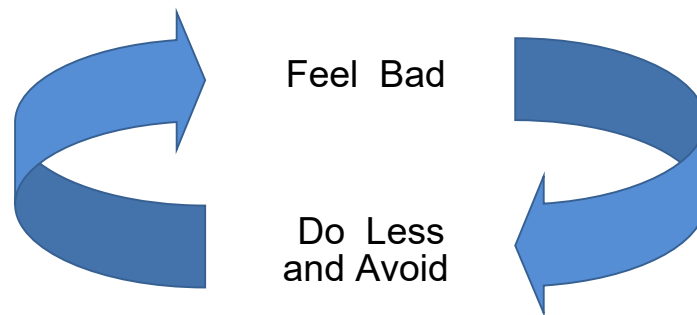
Depression is a medical illness with multiple causes including biological, psychological, social and medical factors. The symptoms of depression may reflect an imbalance in brain chemistry and may be brought about by genetics, stress or loss, or other physical changes co-occurring with medical illnesses. Sometimes depression can develop without any obvious cause.

How is Depression Treated?

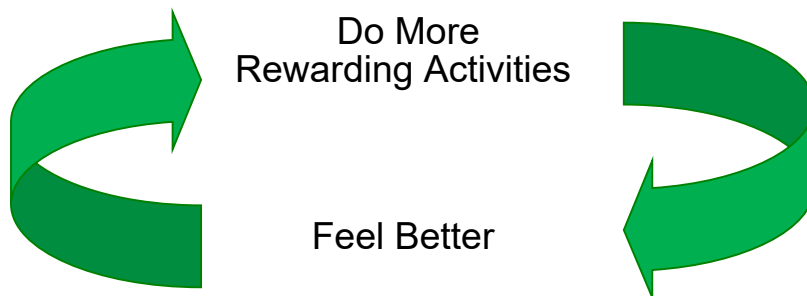
Depression is treatable. Appropriate treatment, such as medication or psychotherapy, relieves symptoms for most individuals. Engaging in pleasurable and rewarding activities has also been shown to improve depression.

Why Is It Important To Do More Pleasurable and Rewarding Activities?

When people get depressed they don't feel up to doing the kinds of things they typically enjoy. By doing fewer enjoyable and rewarding things, they begin to feel worse. As they feel worse, they do even less and get caught up in a vicious cycle.



As part of our meetings, we will help you set a goal of doing at least one pleasurable or rewarding activity each day. These goals can include physical activity, socialization, or other recreational activities or hobbies that have value and meaning to you. Engaging in pleasurable activities like these will help break the vicious cycle of depression and improve your mood, interest level, and energy.



List of Pleasant and Rewarding Activities

Instructions: Use the space below to list activities and rate the difficulty of each. Consider activities that you have previously enjoyed or have identified as mood boosters. Include any new or desirable activities, as well as activities that align with your personal values. It is also important to include any activities you have been avoiding or responsibilities you have fallen away from. Remember this is a list of options, you are not committing to any activities at this point.

	ACTIVITY	DIFFICULTY: E = Easy M = Medium H = Hard
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		

Meeting # _____

Date: _____

Scheduling Activities

Plan at least one activity each day. This is an important way to deal with stress and depression. Schedule out a week's worth of daily activities.

Each day should contain at least one activity. These can be pleasant, social, or physical activities. For example, a pleasant activity might be reading a book or doing a hobby; a social activity might be calling or video-chatting with a friend; and a physical activity might be going for a walk. You can also include activities you may be avoiding or responsibilities you have fallen away from, such as paying the bills.

Rate how satisfied you felt after doing the activity.

Daily Activities			How satisfied did you feel? Rate from 0 to 10:	Completed ✓
Day	Date	Activity (What? Where? When? With Whom?)		
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Values Checklist:

Below is a list of general value categories, and some specific priorities that are common in each. Consider which areas are *important* to you, not just which you think are possible for you (what may seem possible can be influenced by anxiety, depression, and PTSD). Check the overall values headings and any of the individual priorities that may apply.

Family relations

- Work on current relationships
- Spend time with family
- Take an active role in raising my children
- Maintain consistent healthy communication
- Other:

Marriage/couples/intimate relationships

- Establish a sense of safety and trust
- Give and receive affection
- Spend quality time with my partner
- Show my partner how much I appreciate them
- Other:

Friendships/Social Relationships

- End destructive relationships
- Reach out for new relationships
- Feel a sense of belonging
- Have and keep close friends
- Spend time with friends
- Have people to do things with
- Other:

Mental/Emotional health

- Seek fun and things that give me pleasure
- Have free time
- Be independent and take care of myself
- Challenge my negative thinking
- Make my own decisions
- Engage in therapy
- Take my medications
- Stay active
- Other:

Physical well-being

- Live in secure and safe surroundings
- Engage in regular exercise
- Have a steady income to meet physical needs
- Eat foods that are nourishing to my body
- Maintain a balance between rest and activity
- Get enough sleep
- Other:

Citizenship/Community

- Contribute to the larger community
- Help people in need
- Improve society
- Be committed to a cause or group that has a larger purpose
- Make sacrifices for others
- Other:

Spirituality

- Follow traditions and customs
- Live according to spiritual principles Practice my religion or faith
- Grow in understanding myself, my personal calling, and life's purpose
- Find meaning in life
- Develop a personal philosophy of life
- Spend time in nature
- Focus on the greater good
- Other:

Education/Training/Personal Growth

- Be involved in undertakings I believe personally are significant
- Try new and different things in life
- Learn new things
- Be daring and seek adventure
- Have an exciting life
- Learn to do challenging things that help me grow as a person
- Other:

Employment

- Be powerful and able to influence others, have authority
- Make important decisions that affect the organization
- Be a leader
- Make a great deal of money
- Be respected by others
- Be seen by others as successful, be ambitious
- Become well-known, obtain recognition and status
- Be productive, work hard
- Achieve significant goals
- Enjoy the work I do
- Do what I'm told and follow the rules
- Other: