

Suicide and Depression Resources

Suicide Prevention

The process of someone getting to the point of taking their own life is a process that occurs over time and those who take their lives usually suffer from an illness such as depression, anxiety, bipolar illness (manic depression) or schizophrenia. In most cases, there are opportunities for friends and others to step in to help. Knowing the signs of suicide, depression or other illnesses that may contribute to someone becoming suicidal and how to intervene are all critical pieces to the prevention of suicide.

Depression

If you believe you may be depressed, you should know that depression can be effectively treated. People who are depressed often believe they cannot be helped; some of that belief comes from the illness itself - depression causes a sense of hopelessness. Sometimes the belief that you cannot be helped comes from previous experiences of someone trying to help you. Friends, family members, or professionals may have tried to be of help in the past without success. It is important to know that treatment for depression should be and can be tailored to the individual.

Symptoms of Depression

- SLEEP - Excessive sleep or difficulties falling and staying asleep, nightmares.
- INTEREST - Loss of interest in pleasurable activities such as work, recreation, hobbies, food.
- GUILT - Feelings of guilt that are excessive for the situation, or a constant feeling of worthlessness.
- ENERGY - Loss of energy, fatigue, decreased motivation, difficulty initiating tasks.
- CONCENTRATION - Difficulty concentrating, focusing, or remembering.
- APPETITE - Increased or decreased appetite possibly resulting in weight gain or loss.
- MOOD - Appears down, has a pessimistic or cynical attitude, or is generally apathetic.
- SUICIDAL IDEATION - Suicidal thoughts or intentions.
- SOCIAL WITHDRAWAL - Isolation, change in desire to engage with others. May stay in their room more than usual.
- AVOIDANCE BEHAVIOR - Spending increased and excessive time engaging in behavior to distract themselves (computer games, surfing the net) or behaviors that are self-destructive (alcohol, drug use, or cutting). Avoids people.

- APPEARANCE - People who are depressed sometimes have less interest in their appearance or have less energy to invest in grooming. They may shower less frequently, or wear the same or wrinkled clothes repeatedly.

If you notice a change in someone's behavior and mood, and they experience some of the symptoms described above for more than two weeks, the person may be depressed. You do not have to be able to diagnose someone as suffering depression to help them, just consider the above mentioned symptoms as indicating something is wrong and talk with them about your concern (how you may help someone who is depressed). **If you think you may be suffering from depression call the 24-hour Depression Hotline at 800-273-8255.**