



“People who wonder whether the glass is half full or half empty are missing the point. The glass is REFILLABLE.”

Depression

Winter Newsletter

By Bree Winkler, Licensed Professional Counselor

Depression is a common but serious mood disorder. It causes severe symptoms that affect how you feel, think, and handle daily activities, such as sleeping, eating, or working. To be diagnosed with depression, symptoms must be present for at least two weeks.

Signs and Symptoms

If you experience 5 or more of these symptoms daily for more than 2 weeks, you may meet the criteria for clinical depression:

-) Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood
-) Feelings of hopelessness, irritability, or pessimism
-) Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
-) Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
-) Decreased energy or fatigue
-) Moving or talking more slowly
-) Feeling restless or having trouble sitting still
-) Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
-) Difficulty sleeping or oversleeping
-) Appetite and/or weight changes
-) Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts



-) Aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems without a clear physical cause

All symptoms do not have to be present for a person to be suffering from a form of depression. Seek treatment for depression from a licensed and trained professional.

Risk Factors

-) Personal or family history of depression
-) Major life changes
-) Trauma
-) Stress
-) Physical illnesses
-) Some medications
-) Alcohol and drug usage/abuse
-) Lack of appropriate support system



Contact

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Treatment Options

Psychotherapy

Talking to a counselor is beneficial in relieving symptoms of depression. Your counselor can teach you coping skills to manage your mood. With support, guidance, and encouragement, you will see positive changes in your personal life, thoughts, and experiences.



Keep in mind that most emotional and/or relationship problems have evolved over several years, and it is unrealistic to expect them to be solved quickly. Clients are encouraged to engage in therapy until they reach their goals. Clients can return at any point in time for "refresher" sessions or if new difficulties arise.

Medication

Consult with your doctor to determine if you could benefit from an anti-depressant or mood stabilizer. Your doctor will determine the appropriate medication regime and dosage for your specific needs.

It is **not recommended** to take mental health medications without also receiving appropriate therapy with a trained and licensed professional counselor.

Self-Care

-) Try to be active and exercise.
-) Set realistic goals for yourself.
-) Try to spend time with other people.
-) Confide in a trusted friend or relative.
-) Try not to isolate yourself.
-) Let others help you.
-) Expect your mood to improve gradually, not immediately.

) Remind yourself that some mood fluctuations are normal and healthy, if aligned with the current circumstances.

) Postpone important decisions, such as getting married or divorced or changing jobs, until you feel better.

) Discuss decisions with others who know you well and have a more objective view of your situation.

) Continue to educate yourself about depression.

Types of Depression

Major Depressive Disorder

Someone who experiences 5 or more clinical symptoms for at least 2 week which causes a change in functioning.

Persistent Depressive Disorder

A depressed mood that lasts for at least two years.

Bipolar Disorder

Someone who experiences episodes of extremely low moods that meet the criteria for major depression, but also experiences extreme high – euphoric or irritable – moods called “mania.”

Seasonal Affective Disorder

Characterized by the onset of depression during the winter months, when there is less natural sunlight.

Post-Partum Depression

The feelings of extreme sadness, anxiety, and exhaustion that accompany postpartum depression may make it difficult for these new mothers to complete daily care activities for themselves and/or for their babies.