



Depression



The EAP
is a **free** service
for you and your
eligible family members.

All EAP services are
**completely
confidential.**

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Millions of people in the United States suffer from depression. About twice as many women as men suffer from this medical condition. Major depression is a whole-body illness that affects a person's body, feelings, thoughts, and behavior.

Everyone experiences bouts of the blues or periods of sadness now and then. However, if these feelings last more than a couple of weeks or interfere with daily life, a person may be suffering from clinical depression.

Depression involves a set of symptoms that can last for months and sometimes years. It is not a sign of personal weakness or a condition that can be willed or wished away. People with depression cannot merely "pull themselves together" and get better.

Causes

The causes of depression are not always known. Research shows the tendency to develop depression may be inherited and that an uneven balance of naturally occurring mood-influencing chemicals in the brain can play a role. People who have a poor self-image, who view themselves negatively, or who are easily overwhelmed by life challenges may be more likely than others to experience depression. A serious loss, chronic illness, difficult relationship, or unwelcome change can trigger depression.

Symptoms

The two major symptoms of depression include a depressed mood and an inability to enjoy life.

Depression may also include:

- Fatigue
- Sleep disturbances (sleeping too much or difficulty sleeping)
- Change in appetite (eating too much or too little, sometimes weight gain or weight loss)
- Poor concentration
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- General irritability
- Thoughts of death or suicide; suicide attempt
- Vague physical aches and pains, such as stomachaches and headaches
- Excessive crying

Treatment

Treatment for depression can include counseling, medications, or both. If you take medication, you should begin to feel better within 4 to 6 weeks. Counseling can give you support and strategies for coping and learning new ways to think about situations in your life. With the treatment of depression, recovery is the rule -- not the exception.

- Share your treatment plan with people close to you. Talk to friends and relatives and explain what you are going through.
- Take medications exactly they way they are prescribed. You may be tempted to stop taking your medications too soon. However, it is important to keep taking them until your doctor says to stop, even if you begin feeling better. Keep in mind that it may take 2 to 4 weeks to see a noticeable change.
- Report any unusual medication side effects to your doctor, especially if the side effects interfere with your ability to function.
- Keep all follow-up appointments you have with your doctor or therapist. Do not miss an appointment, even if you are feeling better that day.

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- Schedule pleasant activities into your day. People tend to feel better when they are doing activities they enjoy.

Self-Care Steps for Depression

- Set realistic goals for yourself, and avoid taking on a great deal of responsibility.
- Divide your workload. Break large tasks into small ones, set priorities, and don't be hard on yourself if you are unable to get everything finished.
- Do activities that make you feel better, such as exercising moderately, going to a movie, or attending social events.
- Do not expect to "snap out" of your depression. Instead, help yourself as much as you can and do not blame yourself for not being up to par.
- Contact your doctor if your symptoms aren't improving. Most people begin feeling better within a couple of weeks.

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Ways to Enhance Your Self-Esteem

Feeling good about yourself is an essential element to living a healthy, happy life. Unfortunately, we are often our own worst enemy. Whether we are insecure about certain parts of our lives or we set unrealistic expectations for ourselves, how we feel about who we are and how we live our lives can greatly impact our quality of life. The good news is self-esteem is something you can work on and change for the better. Read on to find how you can increase your self-esteem and enhance your life.

Replacing Negative Self-Talk with Positive Self-Talk

What happens when you make a mistake? Listen to your internal monologue and find out what you're saying to yourself and about yourself. By tuning into how you treat yourself internally, you can make your internal monologue more positive. When you don't verbally beat yourself up, you can bring more positive feelings into your life.

Praise Yourself

Take some time to reflect. What have you accomplished? It doesn't matter if it is a big thing or a small thing, if it means something to you and makes you feel good, it's important. Write them down on a piece of paper or take time to think about each success. By noting them, you can realize that what you've done is significant.

Speak Up When Necessary

Don't be a doormat. Think before you speak, but speak up when it is necessary to do so. Respect the opinions of others, and also respect that you have an opinion, too. Teaching yourself to be assertive and to communicate effectively can help your relationship with others and your relationship with yourself.

Be Understanding

If you make a mistake or blunder, don't take it too seriously. Mistakes happen all the time, so forgive yourself and others when they happen. Don't criticize or dwell on what's happened, move forward and use it as a learning situation.

Nurture Good Relationships

Who do you spend time with? The friendships and relationships you choose say a lot about how you feel about yourself. It is important for the people who are close to you to be supportive and kind to you. If they aren't, reconsider those relationships. Finding people who support you helps you support yourself.

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Making a Good Decision in Seven Steps

When making important decisions, you should take time to consider the possible outcomes and consequences that may follow. Pay close attention for the various aspects that are weighing in on your decision and make sure they align with your priorities and future goals. Think before you act, and let these steps guide your decision-making process:



Step 1: Analyze the situation:

- Is this the issue that you should be focusing on?
- Has the problem and direct root of the problem been identified?
- Do you have the knowledge, facts, and input you need to make a good decision?

Step 2: Think about why you are making the decision. Find an objective:

- What will be accomplished by the decision?
- What do you hope the end results will be? What could other end results be?
- Are you focusing on the path, rather than the end point?

Step 3: Think about elements you need to consider before making the decision:

- In order to make the decision, have requirements for the decision been met?
- Are you violating any restrictions by making the decision?
- Are you in the position to best make the decision?

Step 4: Consider other alternatives. This can be reviewing other alternatives you have previously thought of, or brainstorming for other alternatives you haven't yet thought of:

- Are there other ways to reach the end result?
- Are there trusted colleagues or friends you could chat with for additional ideas?
- Are there books, articles, charts, or diagrams that could guide you with ideas on alternative ways to reach the objective?
- Have you given yourself enough time to think of and weigh out alternatives?

Step 5: Consider the impact of the decision. Evaluate and answer questions like:

- How much will the decision cost?
- Is the decision realistic?
- Are availability requirements met?
- What will the impact be on others?
- Does the decision work within your time constraints?
- Are all other important elements considered?

Step 6: Remember the alternative decisions you thought of? Let's go back to them and evaluate each one:

- Does any other alternative decision provide better impacts?
- How can you best make an objective evaluation of the decision and its alternatives? Is there someone you could bounce ideas off of?
- Are the subjective assessments you are making accurate and realistic?

Step 7: Make a decision and reflect:

- Did the decision you chose provide the best impacts? If not, why did you decide this was best? Are your reasons clear?

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Care Decision Guide for Depression:

Occasional feelings of “being down” lasting a few days but not interfering with daily activities	Use self-care
Periods of the blues associated with the menstrual cycle	See provider
Symptoms of depression	See provider
Symptoms of depression leading to inability to care for dependents	See provider
Confused about whereabouts, time, or date; unfamiliar with family or friends	Call 911
Hallucinations or violent behavior	Call 911
Threatening suicide or harm to others	Call 911

Krames Staywell

How to Use Your EAP

When help is needed call 800-433-2320. The intake counselor will ask for your name, employer and a brief description of your presenting concern. If an emergency exists you will be given immediate assistance. If your situation is not an emergency, you will be offered telephone assistance and/or in-person sessions to complete an assessment and make a referral for treatment if needed.

Meetings with your counselor are completely confidential. Your employer will not know you have used the EAP. No one will be provided any information about you without your written consent. Exceptions would occur only in the event of you being considered dangerous to yourself or someone else.

At the first appointment you should be prepared to give the counselor some background information to assist in formulating an action plan. Many people find it helpful to prepare a list of things they wish to discuss at each session.

For Assistance Call: 800-433-2320

Or Text: 503-980-1777

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