

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 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?

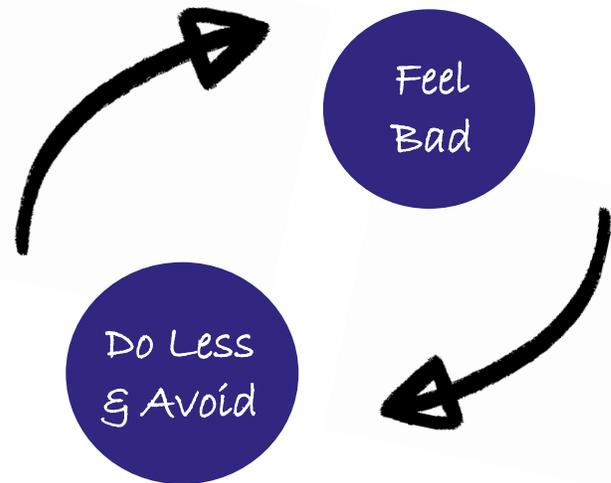
Depression is a medical illness with multiple causes including biological, psychological, social, and medical factors. The symptoms of depression may reflect an imbalance in brain chemistry and may be brought about by genetics, stress or loss, or other physical changes co-occurring with medical illnesses.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

How is Depression Treated?

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

Importance of Doing More Pleasurable and Rewarding Activities

When people have depression 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.



Meeting #: _____

Date: _____

Scheduling Activities

Scheduling at least one activity per day is a helpful way to manage stress and symptoms of depression.

Instructions

To start, 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 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've been meaning to get to, such as paying the bills.

Then after you have completed an activity, rate how satisfied you felt afterward on a scale of 0 (not at all) to 10 (extremely satisfied).

Day	Date	Activity <i>What? Where? When? With Whom?</i>	Satisfaction Rating (0 – 10)	Done?
Mon.				
Tue.				
Wed.				
Thu.				
Fri.				
Sat.				
Sun.				