

Introduction

Feeling down, blue, miserable, out of sorts, are some of the phrases we use to describe feeling “depressed”. We all feel like this sometimes but usually we are able to continue with our lives and we recover fairly quickly.

Where these feelings are severe, don’t go away and/or prevent us from living our life as usual, it can feel like they will never go away we can feel a sense of hopelessness and experience a sense of despair. Depression in these terms can severely affect our ability to lead our normal lives.

Signs:

- Feeling tired and lack of energy
- Loss of enjoyment and interest in activities
- Feeling anxious
- Withdrawing from social situations
- Difficulty concentrating
- Eating too much or not enough
- Sleeping too much or not enough
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Loss of interest in personal appearance
- Feeling numb
- Crying a lot
- Thinking of suicide

How to Help Yourself:

Although it is difficult it is important to challenge negative thoughts and replace them with positive, hopeful ones. You should remind yourself that you can and will recover. Things that can help include:

- Physical exercise (even a short walk every day will help)
- Eat healthy foods
- Avoid alcohol, tobacco and other drugs
- Be good to yourself – take care of your personal appearance
- Tell yourself every day the things that you like about yourself
- Make a plan for each day of what you are going to do
- Talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling
- Get help from a mental health organisation
- Talk to your GP about how you are feeling

How to Help Someone Who is Depressed:

- Listen to what the person is saying and let them talk about how they are feeling
- Encourage the person to take small steps forward each day
- Help the person eat healthily, sleep well and take regular exercise
- Be hopeful and positive about the person's recovery
- Don't tell the person to "snap out of it" or "pull yourself together" – this doesn't help and won't work
- Get professional help if you are very concerned for the person
- Look after yourself too

Useful Contacts:

Samaritans

24hr confidential phone line for people who need someone to talk to.

www.samaritans.org

08457 90 90 90

Breathing Space

Confidential phone line for people who need someone to talk to.

www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk

0800 83 85 87



Penumbra is a leading Scottish voluntary organisation working in the field of mental health. We provide an extensive range of person-centred support services for adults and young people.

We also campaign to raise awareness of mental health issues and reduce the social stigma attached to them.

If you would like more information or have any further questions about any other Penumbra services please contact:

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