Depression Symptoms and What you can do

Signs that you may have depression can vary as widely as the root causes of depression itself. Race and gender may play a role, age and health may play a role as well as many other things that we deal with in our daily lives. Because anyone can develop depression it is important to know the sign, here are several signs you may be experiencing depression.

1. Feelings of unexplained sadness
2. Excessive ruminating
3. Loss of interest
4. Unplanned weight changes
5. Excessive worry
6. Feelings of guilt
7. Insomnia
8. Lack of concentration
9. Excessive fatigue
10. Substance abuse
11. Neglect

There are several steps you can take to help with depression, these are only a few.

**Be kind to yourself.** If you’re depressed, it’s easy to think, “I shouldn’t be depressed.” When you’re depressed, “beating yourself up” only increases your sense of helplessness. It’s OK if you aren’t as much fun to be around. It’s OK if you’re not as productive as usual. You don’t have a broken leg…you have a broken heart. And it takes time to heal.

**Take small steps.** Lying in bed wishing you could just pull the covers over your head and go back to sleep? It’s OK to keep lying there. Maybe do one small thing that might make you feel a bit better. Like smile for ten seconds. Or stretch a little. I know you don’t feel like smiling or stretching. But give it a shot.

**Take a hike.** Everyone knows how important exercise can be to mental health. It not only produces endorphins but can give you a feeling of accomplishment. There’s no need to do some heavy-duty workout. If you don’t feel like running, walk. If you don’t feel like walking, stroll. Just move your body a bit each day.

**Get a massage.** Whether you’re depressed or anxious, massage is one of the best ways to be kind to yourself. So are other “hands-on” treatments, such as craniosacral therapy and Reiki.

**Talk to Friends.** This one’s a bit tricky. Because most friends want you to feel better so badly, they often make suggestions that make you feel more inadequate. It’s OK to ask a friend to just listen. Just listen.

**Cry and scream.** Crying is not a sign of weakness. It’s a way to let go. I wouldn’t overdo it in front of the kids or at work, but when you can find a safe place to just let it go…let it go.

**Professional counselors and therapy.** Sometimes we need help, professional help. There are many in the field, care givers, crisis hot lines, therapists who can be of great help. Never feel afraid to ask.

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