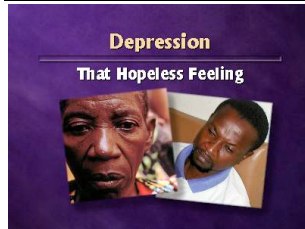
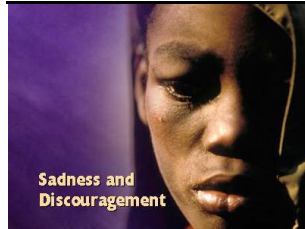


Depression—That Hopeless Feeling



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Have you ever felt so discouraged that you wished you could die? You are not alone! Life isn't easy, and many people feel depressed sometime in their lives. Today's talk is going to give us practical advice on how to overcome that hopeless feeling of depression.



©Malcolm Linton

We all feel sad and discouraged at times. Discouragement and sadness usually have a cause, like being too tired, getting a poor grade in school, being sick, or losing a close friend or relative. A person may feel like crying, not able to face their work, and sometimes feel hopeless.



©Robert Eilets

Usually, these times of sadness don't last more than a few days.



- Good thoughts
- Prayer
- Encouragement from other people (and the)
- Passage of time

...will usually help the person to feel well again.

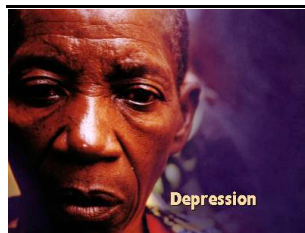


©George Sedupane

But, sometimes, a person may become very sad for a long time and may...

- Lose (their) appetite,
- Unable to sleep (Lie awake at night for a long time and not sleep. Some will even...)
- Lose interest in life.

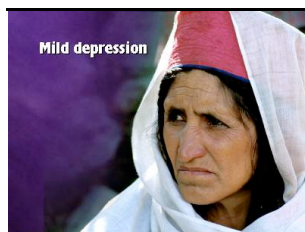
We can say, then, that this person is **depressed**.



©Malcolm Linton

Being depressed is different from feeling sad sometimes. Depression is much more serious. It may affect a person's work, family and even their health.

A depressed person needs help just as much as a person with high blood pressure or heart disease. Because of this it is very important to know when someone is depressed so that you may help them get better.

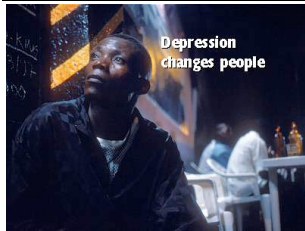


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Mild depression is very common. People who are mildly depressed may look sad most of the time or become more quiet than usual. Some people may become very talkative and even very active so that they don't think about what makes them sad, but deep inside they may be depressed.

People who are mildly depressed usually continue to work and look after their families.

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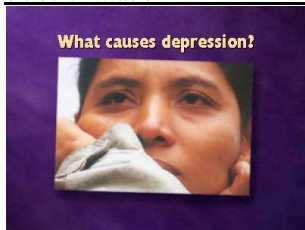
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As depression gets worse, it starts changing how people live. They may lose interest in work and have difficulty sleeping at night. They may lose interest in sexual activity. They may also drink more alcohol and may avoid being with people.



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It is important to know that young people and children can also get depressed. Young people are very sensitive to problems in the family. Sometimes their friends are too cruel to them and because of this they get very sad and may become depressed.



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What causes depression?



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Most people who become depressed get it because of some problem in their lives. It may be the death of a loved one, a broken marriage or bad relationships, losing a job, getting sick, lack of friends, war and being unable to provide enough food for the family.



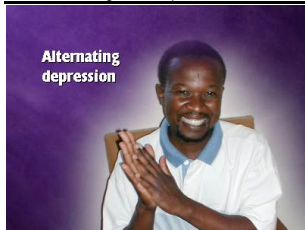
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Giving the depressed person love, encouragement, kindness, patience, and helping them solve their problems usually helps the depressed person get better. Talking with other people such as a wise friend, a teacher, or a pastor may help a lot. If the depression lasts too long, you may need to help the person to see a health worker.



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Sometimes it is not possible to say what makes the person depressed. They **just** feel that way!



©Wildwood Lifestyle Center

One of these kinds of depression makes people feel very depressed and at other times they feel very well and are full of strength and ideas.

Depression—That Hopeless Feeling



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The next day they may suddenly feel depressed again, without any clear cause for the change. This kind of depression is very serious and you should do your best to help them. You may have to take the person to a health worker who knows this kind of problem.



©WHO/TDR/Crump #98031227

Another kind of depression is one in which the person who is very sad...

- ➔ Becomes afraid of things and people, (Fearful)
- ➔ Hears voices, and even
- ➔ Feels someone is spying or following them.

A professional health worker or counsellor who understands this problem should treat this type of depression.



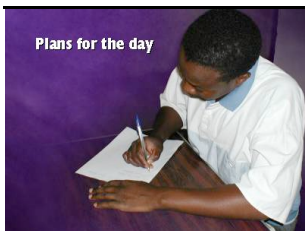
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How can we help a friend or loved one who is depressed?
Here are a few ways:



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All of us need to do something productive or helpful with our lives. It could be cooking a meal, washing our clothes, teaching children, or working in the garden. A person who is depressed, especially, needs the feeling of satisfaction that comes from doing something useful each day.



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Every person needs to have plans to do something during the day. Without any plans, without a reason to get out of bed, even the happiest person could become depressed.



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Eating a good diet with lots of vegetables and fruit and little meat and fish may help people feel better. We should not eat sweets or foods with lots of sugar in it. Fruit is sweet but it is natural and very good for the body. It is also very important not to overeat. Eating only fresh fruit for a day or two is a wonderful way to clear the mind and restore energy.



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Lack of sleep makes depression worse. Most people feel good when they sleep seven to eight hours every night. People who sleep too little or who sleep too much are likely to be depressed.

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Being active makes a big difference in the way people feel. People who are active and exercise their bodies sleep better, have better health and less disease. Exercise causes the brain to work better.



One of the best ways to exercise is to go for a walk every day. It does not have to be a long walk! If you walk for half an hour every day, you will almost certainly feel better.



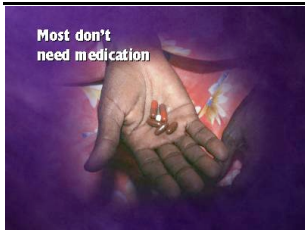
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Water treatments are also very helpful for depression. Many people who are depressed feel better after they bathe themselves in hot water and at the end dip quickly in cold water or throw cold water over themselves.



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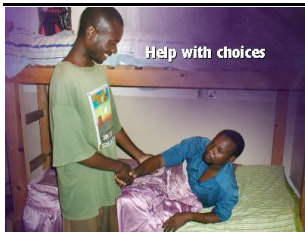
There is another way if you have a shower. Shower for 3 minutes with hot water followed by cold water for 1 minute. This is very refreshing.



©WHO/TDR/Crump #9707342

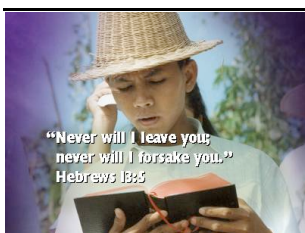
Most people who are depressed do not need any medicines to get better. What they need are people who will help them to cope and solve their problems and to have trust in God.

There are medicines that may help a person feel better. These medicines are more helpful in treating people who are **very** depressed without having a clear reason for feeling that way. It is also more useful in treating people who swing from being very depressed one day to being very happy the next day.



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Whenever possible help people by encouraging them to solve their problems in practical ways. We can help them to make simple everyday choices: like deciding whether to get up in the morning or stay in bed; whether to dress and groom themselves or stay in a bathrobe; whether to watch TV, or go out and do something active. Even people with serious mental problems can learn to make choices that lead to a better life.



© Adventist Frontier Missions

To be worth living our lives must have meaning and value. Through the ages millions of people have found comfort in times of need by turning to our Creator-God for strength and wisdom. The Bible contains many wonderful promises, and here are several:

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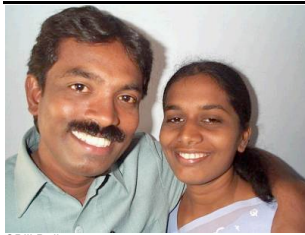


“God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’” Hebrews 13:5 NIV

Many people today live their lives away from God and forget that He is near and can help us in our daily lives. If you feel far from God, you only have to **ask** Him to help you and He will. He will listen to your prayer.



“For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, ‘Fear not, I will help you.’” Isaiah 41:13 NKJV



©Bill Dull

Close positive relationships, both with the Lord and with your loved ones, go hand-in-hand with good physical, mental and emotional health.



The most effective treatment

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The most effective treatment for nearly all depression is the healthful habits we all need to be practising--a simple, natural diet, daily active exercise, enough rest, having worthwhile goals to accomplish, having positive relationships with others, and developing spiritual goals and values.



“Praise be to... the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles.” 2 Corinthians 1:3,4

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Remember God wants us to be healthy, and is always near to comfort and encourage us. We never need to feel alone and helpless.



We have this reassurance: “Praise be to ... the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles.” 2 Cor. 1:3,4 (NIV)

Abstracted from Health Power, Aileen Ludington