

DISCUSSING DEPRESSION DOESN'T HAVE TO BE DEPRESSING

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Defining Depression

A state of sadness, dejection or despair . . . feeling “down.”

Symptoms may include low energy, loss of appetite, sleep loss, negativism, uncertainty, psychomotor changes, agitation....

Dealing with times of discouragement and depression is characteristic of everyone’s life experience. It is *not* a sign of being “crazy” or having a bad attitude. No one gets through life without facing times of loss and problematic situations.

There are various degrees of depression, and individual factors must be taken into account.

Dynamics of Depression

Biological

- ◆ biochemical
- ◆ injury
- ◆ effects of medicine

Psychological

- ◆ guilt
- ◆ anger
- ◆ failure

Social

- ◆ loss of significant relationship
- ◆ rejection by others
- ◆ lack of involvement with others

Circumstantial

- ◆ accidents
- ◆ “unfair” events
- ◆ Anticipatory fears

Deterring Depression (“An ounce of prevention....”)

There are actions we can take to help us *cope* more effectively with difficult life experiences, and thereby *reduce the impact* of problematic events. Preventive measures must include all four aspects of our being.

Biological

- ◆ proper exercise
- ◆ good diet
- ◆ adequate rest

Psychological

- ◆ ways in which we perceive and interpret events
- ◆ attitude of gratitude
- ◆ dealing honestly with difficult feelings

Social

- ◆ nurture family relationships
- ◆ maintain friendships
- ◆ contribute to the welfare of others

Spiritual

- ◆ have time for reflection and meditation
- ◆ utilize spiritual resources
- ◆ consider the meaning of your life

Dealing with Depression

Recognize the need for EXPRESSION

...rather than repression.

Understand the role of INTERPRETATION

...rather than pre-determined.

Distinguish between what is under my CONTROL

...and what is not.

Discover the lesson and restore HOPE

...rather than wallow in despair.

Utilize the available RESOURCES

...physician
...counselor (BHS EAP options, community providers)
...speak with a good friend or church leader

Engage in activities related to PREVENTION

...rather than remain passive and wait for some magic.