

Dissecting Depression

Recognizing and Dealing with Depression

Clearwater, FL; Decebemer 30, 2008 - The weight of financial burdens combined with an increasingly tough economic state is enough to make anyone stressed. Mounting credit card debt, a failing housing market, a sharp decline in job security, and rising gas prices are just a few of the challenges that could attribute to stress and/or depression. When there is an economic downturn there is an upswing in the number of cases of depression. During difficult times, people must be more sensitive to their friends, relatives, and co-workers needs and consider their potential difficulties.

Today, there is still an unwarranted stigma attached to those who suffer from depression. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), depression is thought to be a result of a combination of genetic, biochemical, environmental, and psychological factors. People who suffer from depression aren't just feeling sorry for themselves or unable to break out of a slump. Depression directly affects certain parts of the brain responsible for regulating moods, thinking, sleeping, appetites, and behaviors.

Early symptoms of depression include: frequent headaches, weight gain/loss, insomnia and/or excessive sleeping, difficulty concentrating and remembering details, irritability, restlessness, and a loss of interest in activities that were once enjoyable. Left untreated, depression can lead to persistent feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, helplessness, and suicide.

Those suffering from depression may feel that there is nothing that they can do to improve their situation. They should be encouraged to take small steps to improve their mental health by engaging in mild activity and/or exercise, setting realistic goals, breaking up tasks into prioritized small goals, and attempting to spend time with other people instead of isolating yourself. While dealing with depression, it is important that they are informed that their mood will improve gradually with treatment and they shouldn't expect to just "snap out of it." During this time they should refrain from making any important decisions like marriage, moving, and changing careers, or talk over any decisions with a confidant who can provide an objective opinion.

Depression can affect anyone, regardless of family histories, age, income level, or gender. Employers are becoming more sensitive to the issue and providing employee assistance programs or counseling components within the workplace. Increased awareness about depression, its effects and symptoms, ensures that those suffering can get the help that they need to control their symptoms.

About Directions for Mental Health Inc.

Directions for Mental Health, Inc., established in 1982, is a non-profit organization committed to helping heal the hurt in the lives of thousands of Pinellas County residents suffering from—or at risk of—mental illness. With nationally accredited programs, Directions sets the standard for best practices in mental health treatment, while making mental health care affordable and accessible to individuals and families, and building a safer, healthier community. Serving more than 8,000 people per year, Directions is dedicated to developing innovative programs that change lives, while reducing crime, homelessness, drug abuse and child abuse.

For questions about mental illness and programs, visit Directions for Mental Health's website at www.directionsmh.org or call (727) 524-4464 extension 1700.

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