

6 Takeaways

from More Feet on the Ground's Depression Workshop



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The More Feet on the Ground Campaign

An initiative created by Brock University in partnership with Niagara College and local mental health service providers that aims to address gaps in mental health information in postsecondary schools across Ontario.

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Depression Defined

Depression is a mood disorder that causes persistent feelings of sadness and loss of interest. It affects how you feel, think and behave. It can lead to a variety of physical and emotional problems. Although it may go into remission on its own, people cannot snap out of depression intentionally or willfully.

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Types of Depression There are several different types of depression. The most commonly known form is Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) which is characterized by episodic disturbances in mood, thoughts, and behaviour. Persistent Depressive Disorder is similar but symptoms are less severe and last for two or more years. Other forms of depression include Psychotic Depression, Seasonal Affective Disorder, and Post-Partum Depression.

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Causes and Contributing Factors

Although the cause of depression is still unknown, research tells us that a number of factors can influence the onset and severity of a depressive episode. These factors include: chemical imbalances, traumatic life events, family history, substance abuse, stress, and grief.

SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

Depression affects one's overall mood, resulting in loss of interest in daily activities and causes difficulty with day-to-day functioning.

To be diagnosed with MDD, at least five of the following symptoms must be present nearly everyday for at least two weeks.

Feelings of guilt or worthlessness

Significant changes in sleep

Significant change in appetite or weight

Fatigue or loss of energy

Indecisiveness or difficulty concentrating

Slowed thoughts and reduced physical movements

Thoughts of suicide

NON-SUICIDAL SELF INJURY

Non-suicidal self injury, also referred to as self harm, is deliberate physical harm inflicted upon one's own body in attempt to relieve emotional distress. Self-harming behaviour can be managed and resolved when replaced with positive and effective coping skills.

DID YOU KNOW

All of these people once struggled with self harm?

Comedian, Russell Brand

Actress, Drew Barrymore

Actor, Johnny Depp

Actor, Colin Farrell

Actress, Megan Fox

Actress, Angelina Jolie

Singer, Demi Lovato

Princess Diana



SUICIDE AWARENESS

RISK FACTORS:

- Mental illness or substance use
- Impulsive or aggressive tendencies
- History of trauma or abuse
- Family history or exposure to death by suicide
- Access to lethal means
- Lack of social support and health care

WARNING SIGNS:

- Depression
- Fixating on death or suicide
- Hopelessness or helplessness
- Feeling trapped, having no way out
- Dramatic mood changes
- Guilt or shame
- Avoiding making plans for the future

If you believe someone you know is at risk of attempting suicide, support the person in seeking help. If needed, report your concern to local authorities or your school's counselling or security services.



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Treatment Options Luckily there is a wide array of treatment options for people experiencing depression. Medication can help the brain regulate mood, psychotherapy helps people gain the skills and mindset they need to fight depression, and lifestyle changes can help manage symptoms. Additionally, alternative options such as hypnosis, supplements, relaxation techniques, and acupuncture are said to complement treatment. More invasive options are also available for treatment-resistant depression.

6

Self-Care Matters!

Self-care is any intentional actions a person takes to take care of their wellbeing. As a student, you are likely juggling a combination of responsibilities but don't forget that **your wellbeing** is just as important! Schedule time to take a break, treat yourself, and do something you love. Self-care will help you gain and maintain mental wellness!

NEGATIVE THINKING: CHALLENGE IT!

Negative thinking often dominates the thoughts of people experiencing depression. It is important to recognize these thoughts as symptoms of depression and to challenge them when they occur.

Examples of negative thinking:

All-or-nothing thinking
"If I'm not perfect, then I'm a failure"

Overgeneralization
"I can't do anything right!"

Diminishing the positive
"She said I did a good job, but she was just being nice."

Jumping to conclusions
"I'm never going to succeed."

Emotional reasoning
"I feel like such a loner. No one cares about me."

Challenge these statements within yourself and others. Prove them wrong by suggesting more reasonable and truthful alternatives!

Want to know more? Need some tips on how to talk to someone experiencing depression? Take our **FREE ONLINE TRAINING** at: morefeetontheground.ca

Resources: