

## Depression Factsheet

Thank you for downloading our factsheet on depression. There is a lot of information contained here, some of which turns traditional views of depression on its head. Whether you are using it for yourself or a friend or relative feel free to share or reproduce this information for non commercial purposes. If you wish to talk further about anything contained in this factsheet please contact Life Resolutions on (01449) 612262 and we will be happy to help.

### What is depression?

Depression is a sustained period of low mood accompanied with various symptoms (listed below) that negatively affects daily functioning.

### Symptoms of depression:

The following is a general list of symptoms of depression. Having one or even more of these symptoms doesn't necessarily mean you are depressed, but if you have two or more of these symptoms consistently (at least once a day) for any period of time over two weeks you may be depressed.

- Exhaustion even after a long nights sleep
- Interrupted or poor sleep patterns
- Excessive worrying
- Catastrophising i.e. "If I do this it will only end in disaster"
- Inability to think straight or quickly
- Lack of self worth
- Inappropriate feelings of guilt/shame
- Feeling suicidal or planning suicide
- Rapid extremes of mood
- Crying for no apparent reason
- Lacking motivation for even simple tasks
- Disengaging from life i.e. not socialising any more, stopping hobbies or interests etc.

### What causes depression?

People sink into a depressed mood when their innate physical or emotional needs are not being met and, instead of dealing with this situation, they begin to misuse their imagination and worry excessively. This increases the amount of dreaming they do, upsetting the balance between slow-wave and dream sleep. an imbalance between energy burning dream sleep and refreshing slow-wave sleep occurs and they start to wake up feeling tired and unmotivated. This makes them worry even more as they feel that, "something is wrong with me". This starts a negative self feeding loop of worry-over dreaming-exhaustion-worry and so on (Source Human Givens Institute)

### Can depression be cured?

Yes and in most cases you can start feeling better in a matter of hours or days. With the right support and help from a good counsellor, therapist or psychotherapist (different terms for people doing the same work for the difference and for a good counsellor checklist download our good therapist guide) you could be feeling much better in a shorter time than you could imagine,

## Common Myths about depression

### **Depression is an illness!**

**Not (strictly) true.** Depression should never be treated lightly or dismissed and can make you extremely ill, but depression is an emotion that we experience. You cannot “catch” depression just as you cannot catch happiness. In its purest sense depression is an extremely low mood for a sustained period of time.

### **There is a depression Gene/ is hereditary, passed on from parent to child!**

**Absolutely not true.** There is no evidence or proof of a “depression Gene” It is true that parents and their children who have been depressed share genes, but those same genes are present in unrelated people who do not get depressed.

You cannot inherit depression from your parents (it cannot be passed on in a will!). It is true that you can **learn** to be depressed from your parents just as you can learn to be a good or bad cook from your parents. If as a child or young adult you are exposed to constant worry/negative emotions/catastrophising etc from your parents it is likely (**but not certain**) that you will learn that that outlook is “normal”. The good news is that we can all **learn** to have a positive outlook on life, solution focus rather than problem focus etc.

### **Depression is caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain**

**Again not true.** The chemical imbalance (low serotonin levels amongst other chemicals) is caused by (a side effect of) depression not the other way round. That’s why most anti depressants don’t work or only work for a short period of time, they treat a symptom not a cause, stop taking them and the symptom will likely reoccur if you haven’t treated the problem.

### **Antidepressants cure depression**

**No they don’t.** They can in a few cases help to ease the symptoms of depression which may be enough to give you the capacity to deal with the problem that caused your depressed episode, but there are much more effective methods to deal with depression without the (in some cases severe) side effects associated with short and long term use of anti depressants. Call Life Resolutions on (01449)612262 to find out how you can get rid of your depression without the side effects.

### **Once I have depression I’ve got it for life!**

**Not true!** It is true that episodes of depression can re occur on occasion through your life but it is not an incurable disease. Try to compare it to the difference between the common cold and Diabetes; a cold like depression comes and goes, sometimes lasts 24 hours and sometimes lingers for a few weeks but eventually goes away, whereas once you have diabetes it’s with you for life

### **Depression is just another name for madness or insanity**

**No it isn’t.** Depression can affect your mental health but it just simply isn’t madness or insanity