

Mind and Matter

DEPRESSION

A publication of the University of Miami Faculty and Staff Assistance Program

FACULTY AND STAFF ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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IN THIS EDITION

CAN WE TALK?

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IN FEATURED ARTICLE

WORDS

CLARITY. CONNECTION. COMFORT.

COPING WITH DEPRESSION - TIPS FOR CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

2019 THE YEAR OF ACTION

UNDERSTANDING DEPRESSION

FEATURED SEMINAR

“Life is fragile and heartbreaking. It turns upside down in a minute. Love your children, hold them tight. Love your family, hold them close. Love your friends, keep them near. Be gentle with others as so many are fragile and struggling. Actually, I think it’s best to assume everyone is struggling, so treat everyone with love, tenderness and compassion.” Maria Shriver

The decision to have a conversation with a co-worker or family member who may be struggling with symptoms of depression can appear to be challenging. Oftentimes, individuals believe they must find the “right words” to express their concern. In reality, what is needed is to convey our deep desire to be of help in our own words.

Other reasons that prevent individuals from having this important conversation include: being unclear about what this condition entails or feeling uncertain what their role may be in supporting their co-worker or family member. It is also vital to keep in mind that the affected individual may not be aware of, or acknowledge, their symptoms. He/she may hold false beliefs about his/her symptoms; that his/her behavioral/emotional symptoms may be part and parcel of the aging process, or they may blame themselves believing this condition is a character flaw.

This October, the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program will deliver the seminar entitled “Understanding Depression” to provide greater awareness of the prevalence, risk factors, symptoms and treatments available to those affected. Please visit our website at www.fsap.miami.edu for more information.

Ideas on how to approach your loved one:

- **Think about what you want to say. Write it down and practice it if you need to.**
- **Find the right time. Let him/her know what you have noticed and why you are concerned.**
- **Listen without interruptions, judgements or advise.**
- **Educate. Depression is a medical condition that is treatable and not a personal flaw.**
- **Propose that he/she get help from a medical doctor or from a licensed behavioral health provider.**
- **Offer to go with them to their initial appointment, if possible.**

Once in treatment, make sure to reinforce his/her adherence to treatment. Stay involved, encourage him/her to participate in activities they used to enjoy. Stress the importance of walking and being physically active. Remind him/her of their positive qualities and how much they mean to you and others. To discuss concerns about how to help a co-worker or family member who may be struggling, please contact the FSAP to schedule an appointment at 305-284-6604.

Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/>

Clarity. Connection. Comfort.



Words

What language do we use when talking about mental illness. What words do we use to describe people who exhibit symptoms? According to author David Bjerklie, "Our words frame and reflect our understanding (and misunderstandings) about illness. The words we choose can isolate and harm, and they can also embrace and help." Words can fuel stigma and this can result in discouraging people from getting treatment. Creating a stigma free workplace includes, minding your words. Using respectful language when approaching an individual who is sad or crying. Avoiding jumping to conclusions by labeling or diagnosing them with "depression." Our goal should be to educate ourselves and be better informed. To remind ourselves of the importance of kindness and compassion when dealing with any illness. We must strive to find the right words.

Source: Time magazine 2019 - Mental Health A New Understanding - "Finding the Right Words"

2019 The Year of Action!

Coping with Depression - Tips for Connecting with Others

While recovering from depression isn't quick or easy, you do have more control than you may realize - even if your depression is severe and persistent. Tools and tips for managing depression vary widely and can range from relatively simple tasks to ones that require more energy and investment of time. The key is to start small and build from whatever momentum those steps may afford you. When you're depressed, the tendency is to withdraw and isolate so that connecting to even close family members and friends can be tough. Therefore, getting support plays an essential role in overcoming depression.

Reaching out is not a sign of weakness and it won't mean you're a burden to others. Phone calls, social media, and texting are great ways to stay in touch, but they don't replace good old-fashioned in-person quality time. The simple act of talking to someone face-to-face about how you feel can play a big role in relieving depression and keeping it away.

Here are 10 tips for staying connected:

1. Talk to one person about your feelings
2. Help someone else by volunteering
3. Have lunch or coffee with a friend
4. Ask a loved one to check in with you regularly
5. Accompany someone to the movies, a concert, or a small get-together
6. Call or email an old friend
7. Go for a walk with a workout buddy
8. Schedule a weekly dinner date
9. Meet new people by taking a class or joining a club
10. Confide in a clergy member, teacher, or sports coach

Source: Smith, Melinda, M.A., Robinson, Lawrence and Segal, Jeanne, Ph.D., *Coping with Depression*, helpguide.org, June 2019

featured seminar

Understanding Depression

What is depression? According to the American Psychiatric Association (APA), "depression is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act." Join us for this informative seminar to increase your knowledge about risk factors, treatments and healthy coping strategies.

October 8th, 10th, 11th. Register through <http://ulearn.miami.edu>

Earn 150 Pure Wellness points (to a maximum of 300 points per calendar year) when you attend an FSAP seminar.

October is Depression Awareness Month

Out of the Darkness Suicide Awareness Walk on October 6, 2019 at Tropical Park. Join **TEAM UM FSAP** and register at <https://afsp.donordrive.com/team/224823>



"Just when the caterpillar thought the world was ending, she became a butterfly."

Barbara Haines Howett

did you know?

1 in 7 employees will have a major depressive episode at some point in their lifetime. Depression will most likely manifest in the workplace with behaviors such as nervousness, restlessness or irritability, as well as, physical complaints (preoccupation with aches and pains), fatigue, withdrawal and low productivity.



upcoming seminars

Building Blocks of Positive Parenting

Mindful Living

Relaxation Techniques for Coping with Holiday Stress

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If you would like to receive this newsletter directly in your inbox each quarter, as well as, announcements about upcoming FSAP seminars, please send an email to cbootle@miami.edu.