

LET & ABLE Newsletter

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Listen! It is time to talk about our depression. We all say and act like we want change in our lives. Yet, some of us still avoid dealing with our depression. So, let's try another way to nail down the importance of addressing our depression.

With as much love and mercy that I can muster up, I want to tell you that our level of depression is hurting our relationships. Let's be honest. Before the current COVID-19, we were depressed. Before the divorce and before the bankruptcy, we were depressed. Before the change in jobs and before our children started acting out, we were depressed.

Why is it so hard for us to admit that we battle with depression and need real help? Is it because we are too friendly towards our depression? I've come to believe that depression is public enemy number one. Yes, I said it! Depression is not our friend.

For all practical purposes it is an enemy. Why would we continue to sleep with the enemy? I'm finding that for the most important things in life, we must make up our minds and simply do something about it. Addressing our depression is an important thing.

As for me, I've decided that I will not be depressed. Have you decided? I have purposed in my mind that there is too much life out there for me to enjoy. Have you purposed this too? I have come this far by faith, hope and humility and will not let depression compromise what is truly mine. Have you done the stated yet? I have answered the call to address my depression. Have you?

Recco

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When Depression Hurts Our Love Relationships

By Recco Santee Richardson, Ph.D., LPC

The focus of this article is to provide ordinary people with a better understanding of depression and how it impacts our love relationships. As we review this topic, the goal is to conceptualize and secure strategies for what helps us, help our depressed children, co-workers, intimate partners and others. It behooves all of us to be equipped to help others negotiate their depression.

"It behooves all of us to be equipped to help others negotiate their depression." Dr. Recco

Depression is best negotiated by securing healthy emotions and developing coping skills. This is a tall task to complete but a worthwhile one all the same. I'm finding that all of us have the ability and competence to intervene and promote mental health wellness to those who struggle with depression.



Definition

Depression is a persistent negative feeling that moves us to experience various emotional, social and physical symptoms and problems. A similar word to depression is sadness. Sadness means to feel down and blue due to a loss, change, disappointment or anger. According to the Diagnostic Statistical Manual 5 (2020), there are several types of depression (see chart 1).

This Feature Article Discusses

Depression

Relationships

Loving The Depressed

Causes Of Depression

Stress Tolerance

Chart 1 Major Types Of Depression

Adjustment Disorder With Depression
Persistent Depressive Disorder
Seasonal Affect Disorder
Post-Partum Depression
Major Depressive Disorder
Bipolar Disorder
Psychotic Depression
Disruptive Mood Dysregulation
Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder

The depressions most likely to cause severe harm to our love relationships are Major Depressive Disorder and Bipolar Disorder with Depression. This is true because of their ability to promote intense moodiness, relentless irritability, severe isolation, the presence of manic/mania, regular suicidal ideations, prominent fatigue, excessive forgetfulness, callous disregard, on-going annoyance and the list goes on.

Prevalence & Causes Of Depression In Adults

It is held that about 17.3 million adults in America experience at least one major depressive episode. As well, it is believed that just over 7 percent of all U.S. adults experience a major depressive symptom. The prevalence of major depressive episode is higher among adult females at 8.7 percent compared to 5.3 percent for males (Healthline, 2018). In general depression can occur to anyone, at any age, and to people of any race or ethnic group.

“In general depression can occur to anyone, at any age, and to people of any race or ethnic group.”

Ways To Love Depressed People

By Dr. Recco

Strengthen and help

Connect with culture

Stay active

Embrace life

Do things with others

Evaluate goals regularly

Address poor behaviors

Seek solutions

Enhance coping

Motivate to achieve

Learn from situations

Push through

Be grateful

Counseling

Individual .. Family Marriage .. Dating

Here To Help, Here To Serve!

Children/Adolescents: Adjustment, Anxiety, Sexual Concerns, Suicide/Cutting, ADHD, Bipolar, Poor Behaviors, Depression, Defiance, Panic, Moodiness, Defiance, Poor Academics, Moodiness, Anger & Trauma

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Many argue that depression is never a "normal" part of life, no matter what your age, gender or health situation (Mental Health America, 2020). Way too many people could live more fulfilled lives but they resist treatment. They believe their depression is not serious, that they can treat it themselves or that it is a personal weakness rather than a serious medical problem.

What Causes Depression

In a nutshell, there are several reasons we and the people we love, experience depression. It is generally agreed to that the causes of depression are the following.

- 1). Biological differences: People with depression appear to have physical changes in their brains. The significance of these changes is still uncertain but may eventually help pinpoint causes.
- 2). Brain chemistry: Neurotransmitters are naturally occurring brain chemicals that likely play a role in depression. Recent research indicates that changes in the function and effect of these neurotransmitters and how they interact with neurocircuits involved in maintaining mood stability, may play a significant role in depression and its treatment.
- 3). Hormones: Changes in the body's balance of hormones may be involved in causing or triggering depression. Hormone changes can result with pregnancy and during the weeks or months after delivery (postpartum) and from thyroid problems, menopause or a number of other conditions.

Ways To Love (cont.)

Ask for help often

Position yourself

Be mindful

Shape personal values

Resolve conflicts

Create opportunities

Manage image

Establish roles

Learn to agree

Take responsibility

Let things go

Be aware

“We don’t have to be depressed.” Dr. Recco

4). Genetics/Inherited Traits: Depression is more common in people whose blood relatives also have this condition. Researchers are trying to find genes that may be involved in causing depression.

5). Situations: The things that happen in life and the world around us can cause depressive experiences. When situations bind together, they can traumatize us and promote depression.

6). Co-Occurrence/Dual Diagnosis: It is possible for conditions/symptoms such as high blood pressure, anxiety, cancer and diabetes to cause levels of depression.

7). Other: In addition, there are several other things that can lead us to experience depression such as having low esteem, being too dependent on others, harsh criticism of ourselves, a pessimistic outlook, unrelenting stress, financial strain, relationship problems, substance abuse and weight problems.

Addressing Depression Through Stress Management

One of the best ways to address and decrease bouts of depression is to gain victory over the stress in our lives. Stress is a word derived from the Latin word ‘Stringere’ meaning to draw tight. It was popularly used in the 17th century to mean hardship, strain, adversity or affliction. It is a physical or psychological stimulus that can produce mental tension or physiological reactions to produce illness (physical-high blood pressure, heart attack, and mental illness- anxiety, depression, moodiness).

In today’s world, stress is a buzzword used to describe the physical, emotional, cognitive and behavioral response to events that are appraised as threatening and challenging.

Ways To Love (cont.)

Seek opportunities

Challenge yourself

Be fit emotionally

Address stimuli quickly

Stay in the “here/now”

Manage time wisely

Process consequences

Identify triggers

Regularly assess life

Reduce uncertainty

Increase perception

Stay resilient

Reach out to others

Seek professional help

Plan to prevent a relapse

Live life to the fullest

“Life is hard enough, being depressed doesn’t help at all.” Dr. Recco

It has been proven that stress alters the body's response to the demand that is placed on it. This is true because prolonged stress can "disturb the homeostasis" of an organism. The disruption can trigger various changes, including an alteration in behavior, autonomic function and over-activation of hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis.

The Relationship Between Stress, Anxiety & Depression

Below is a quick review of the relationship between stress, depression and anxiety. Anxiety is added to the discussion because it acts and presents like depression's cousin. When one is present, the other one is not far behind. They are like salt and pepper and Batman and Robin.

- 1). The ability to cope with a stressor is a crucial determinant of health.
- 2). The chemical mediators (stress hormones) play an important role in promoting stress adaptation.
- 3). Stress is a predecessor and is a causative factor for the development of anxiety and depression.
- 4) Both depression and anxiety are the result of an inappropriate adaptation of stress.
5. Depression and anxiety are termed as stress-related disorders and are associated with the HPA axis (hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal axis).

Stress Tolerance & Depression

Now is a good time to introduce the word stress tolerance. Stress tolerance means the ability to tolerate life and situations without becoming overwhelmed (anxious) or oppressed (depressed). It is the threshold at which an individual can effectively and consistently deal with and manage stressful situations.

How To Spell Love

Afrikaans .. Lief

Albanian .. Dashuri

Bosnian .. Ijubav

Chinese .. Ai

Czech .. Milovat

Danish .. Elsker

Dutch .. Liefde

English .. Love

Filipino .. Pag-ibis

Finnish .. Rakkaus

French .. Amour

German .. Liebe

Greek .. Agapi

Hindi .. प्यार

Hmong .. Hlub



To better understand and appreciate stress tolerance and its ability to decrease and address depression, a review of the types of stress and their definitions is needed.

- 1). Acute Stress: Defined as and characterized to be immediate danger that occurs within a short span of time.
- 2). Chronic Stress: Defined and characterized by the persistent presence of sources of frustration, depression or anxiety that a person encounters every day.
- 3). Traumatic Stress: Defined and characterized as the occurrence of a life-threatening event that evokes fear and helplessness (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2017).

Why Stress Tolerance Is The Key

Upon a closer look, stress tolerance is one of the best ways to overcome depression that undermines our loving relationships. When it comes to stress tolerance, it is held that:

- 1). It allows us to avoid undue anxiety, panic attacks and health concerns (Workplacetesting.com, 2019).
- 2). It is a way of thinking, responding and reframing that is critical to trauma management.
- 3). It is one of the 12 executive functioning tasks of our brain that is housed in the emotion control task area.
- 4). It is key to individuals being able to thrive in stressful situations, cope with uncertainty and manage change (CIO, 2007).
- 5). Failure to address chronic and traumatic stress can increase the risk of illness, depression and early mortality, among other things (McGonigal, 2015).

“Stress tolerance is one of the best ways to overcome depression that undermines our loving relationships.”

Dr. Recco

How To Spell Love (cont.)

Hungarian .. Szerelem

Icelandic .. Ast

Indonesian .. Cinta

Irish .. Gra

Japanese .. 愛

Korean .. Aejeong

Lao .. ຮັກ

Polish .. Milosc

Portuguese .. Amor

Romanian .. Dragoste

Russian .. Lyubov

Serbian .. Ijubab

Sesotho .. Rata

Somali .. Jeclahay



How To Become More Stress Tolerant

There are several ways to increase our stress tolerance so that we can have healthier love relationships. Below are some examples.

- 1). **Accept The Unknown:** A review of the literature reveals that the ability to embrace stress requires a high tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty (McGonigal, 2015). The act of accepting the unknown or what we can not change, helps us to be more stress tolerant.
- 2). **Address Our Trauma:** We all have been traumatized by something in our lives. For sure bad things do happen to good people. To build our stress tolerance and experience improved love relationships, we must talk about, accept, understand and move on from the trauma.
- 3). **Attend Counseling:** Various clinical counseling treatment strategies such as psychotherapy and behavior therapy have been successful in treating stress. The success is due to the interventions helping clients to be more aware of internal processing and gaining control over bodily stress (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2017).

Benefits Of Stress Tolerance

When our stress tolerance is enhanced, we can expect a whole new world to open up to us and our love relationships. The new awakening can happen because of the benefits associated with enhanced stress tolerance. Some of the benefits are:

Positive View Of Stress
Better Coping Skill
Remain Reality Based
Pathways To Success
Focus On Growth Mindset
Frames Experiences

Learning Opportunity
Emotional Relief
Learn from Situations
Good Decision
Conceptualize Better
Improved Wisdom

How To Spell Love (cont.)

Spanish .. Amor

Swahilli .. Upendo

Swedish .. Karlek

Telugu .. ప్రేమ

Thai .. ซอบพอ

Turkish .. Ask

Ukrainian .. Lyubov

Vietnamese .. Yeu

Xhosa ..Uthando

Yoruba .. Ni ife

Zulu .. Uthando



Licensing Educational Training Program (LET)

Offered by Recco S. Richardson Consulting, Inc., the Licensure Educational Training (LET) Program is an effective supervisory program that targets Limited Licensed Professional Counselors (LLPCs) who need supervision.

LET Services

Group Supervision: Monthly gatherings that review caseloads and discuss trends.

Individual Supervision: As requested, informal one-on-one sessions that provide personal attention and insightful strategies.

Communication: Unlimited monthly communication via phone, email and text.

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Treatment Planning	Personal Confidence
Clinical Diagnosis	Managing Difficult Clients
Career Planning	Grant/Proposal Writing
Ethical Dilemmas	Professional Disclosure

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