

## *Depression ...*

Many things can cause depression: a change in life style, a loss of a partner, retirement, a new family member or a chemical imbalance within the body. For those with sever depression, it is not simply “pick yourself up by the boot straps,” it is not a matter of choice, you simply are there. It can come on at anytime and can leave a person feeling helpless.

Accompanying depression, there can also be a sense of shame. A person may feel that they should be able to handle things, that as an adult, they shouldn't feel so helpless.

### *What can you do if someone you know is feeling depressed?*

*Express your concern.* Sometimes, the depressed person may not recognize what is happening to them. Sometimes, by just talking about it, the tension is relieved and the person can focus on the problem. Identifying the problem can be the biggest hurdle.

*Assure them* you do not think less of them because of where they're at. With any illness, we all worry about rejection.

*Suggest they contact* a professional counselor who can help them work through this problem. Emphasize the importance of seeking prompt attention. Reassure them that depression is treatable.



**Lutheran Social Service**  
*for changing lives*

Call 612.642.5990 or 1.800.582.5260  
for the counseling office nearest you.

*Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota serves all people regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, handicap or age.*

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## Dealing with Depression

All of us have days when we're feeling "blue," too tired to cope with stress, or upset about a relationship or something that's happened during that day. But when those feelings last several days, or weeks, it becomes important to find out what's troubling us. Depression can be disabling. Inability to make decisions, withdrawal from friends and family, lack of energy and direction ... can cripple our ability to feel alive, alert and loving in our daily lives.

Check out these warning signs:

- Feeling helpless and hopeless ... feeling "trapped" or that there is "nothing to live for."
- Feeling confused ... being unable to make decisions.
- Finding it difficult to function in daily routines.
- Withdrawing from others ... wanting to be left alone.
- Depending on chemicals such as sleeping pills, tranquilizers, or alcohol to keep going.
- Feeling a lack of self-esteem ... worthless.
- Experiencing significant sleeping or eating changes.

**Feeling depressed is not something we choose.** Depression knows no boundaries. It can happen to anyone, male or female, rich or poor, at any age, and needs to be dealt with, not hidden by feelings of guilt or shame.

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