



ANG Psychological Health Program



Singing the Blues...NOT! Understanding Depression

Presented by:

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Depression Statistics

- Women are more likely than men to be diagnosed with depression: in and out of the military
- Depression in the general population is approximately 3-5% (3.2 % in military overall); 5-13% in those seen by a VA primary care physician
- Cost of depression annually is \$83.1 billion (direct care, mortality, morbidity)
- Suicide rate for depressed people is 8 times higher than in general population
- Depressed patients have more heart-related issues than the general population.



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What to Know About Depression

- Most people do not seek care
- 50% recurrence rate after first episode
- Most patients present with somatic complaints
- Best treatment for most is considered to be both medication and psychotherapy.
- Normal to feel depressed after significant sad life events



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Symptoms

- Feelings of depression and/or anhedonia
- Appetite disturbance
- Sleep disturbance
- Psychomotor agitation or retardation
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feeling worthless or excessive guilt
- Poor concentration or indecisiveness
- Suicidality

Must cause significant impairment or distress in social, occupational, or other areas of functioning.





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Triggers

- Recent significant loss
- Disease or Trauma
- Unfinished Psychological Issues
- Substance Use/Abuse
- Feeling undervalued or overly criticized
- Having limited options





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Myths About Depression

- The causes are clear
- It always resolves on its own
- There are no physical symptoms
- Emotional stress is the only cause
- Depressed people just need drugs or cheering up
- It is a sign of mental weakness
- Good treatment is always long-term

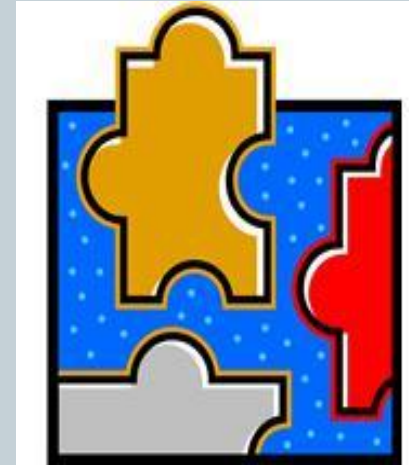


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Helping Yourself

- Don't isolate—socialize and TALK!!
- Exercise, eat regularly, and sleep on a schedule
- Watch your drug and alcohol use
- Keep to a schedule and set small goals
- Do some things you are good at
- Do something for yourself/others
- Surround yourself with positive people and laugh!!





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Helping Your Wingman

- Become a good listener
- Offer support and reassurance
- Avoid 'canned' responses
- Remind them of past successes
- Emphasize that this state is temporary
- Help them to focus on small, attainable goals
- Continue to involve them socially





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Questions?

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