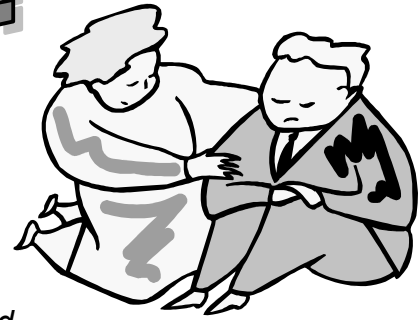


Why Am I So Depressed?

Your life seems...

*...hopeless, empty, sad, numb, distorted, apathetic, despairing, an endless, downward spiral toward more pain. Maybe **your life** seems this way right now. After your loved one died you were able to continue functioning for a short period of time but now you can't seem to shake this unwanted feeling of hopelessness. Your feet feel as though they are stuck in cement.*



If you can admit that you really feel that way, you have just admitted to yourself that you may be depressed. There are phases in normal grieving that look and feel like depression, but it can be more than this for some. Depression may overwhelm you during your grieving. Affects on your eating and sleeping, how you view yourself, how you relate to others, your level of activity and your overall emotional state are all aspects of depression. Depression can cause you to withdrawal from those who wish to help you or drain you of the energy needed to get out of bed.

Even in Scripture we see examples of depression. In 2 Samuel 12:13-25, David became depressed over his dying son. He pleaded with God for his son's life. He laid on the floor and refused to get up. He fasted and wouldn't take any nourishment for seven days until his son died. David was in such a deep pit, no one could convince him otherwise. Even so his son died. Afterwards, he got up, got dressed and ate because he realized that he could not change the death of his son. Although David experienced depression, he made some changes once his circumstances became evident. We can learn from his example that there is light at the end of the dark tunnel. God will bring us through our depression because He is our **Hope** when we feel hopeless!

Because depression affects so many aspects of our lives, there are some practical things that we can do to help ourselves through this period of time.

- ✦ **We can fight our depression by taking control of some aspects of our life. Do the routines of daily living.**
- ✦ **Make a plan and follow it through. It may be a plan as simple as getting up and getting moving each day.**
- ✦ **Get out of your house for set periods of time every day. Plan short visits with family and friends.**
- ✦ **Let those around you know that you are struggling and that you need encouragement.**
- ✦ **If you have lost your appetite, eat small meals frequently. Exercise. Take short walks.**
- ✦ **Write a note to yourself saying, "My depression will come to an end". Display it in a prominent spot.**

✦ Be aware of your thought life - write out Philippians 4:8 on a 3x5 card and memorize it (thinking about what is pure, right, lovely, admirable, etc) If you can't identify some good things to think about, ask a trusted friend or counselor for help.

There are no easy answers to battling depression. Everyone experiences it differently. If symptoms persist, you may need to seek a counselor for some professional help. But with God's help and the encouragement of those around you, the depression you experience is manageable and will end.

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