



Depressed? Anxious? You're not Alone.

Depression affects an estimated 17 million American adults annually and nearly 19 million have anxiety disorders.

Only one-third of the people who are depressed or anxious seek help. Some people fear the stigma still associated with mental health problems. Others are in denial or believe the myth that they should be able to pull themselves up by their bootstraps or simply "snap out of it."

Effective treatments exist for both depression and anxiety disorders. If left untreated, however, depression and anxiety disorders can become worse just like any other health condition.

Most people respond well to medication, psychotherapy or a combination of both.

The first step is to see your physician for a physical exam. Some illnesses and medications can cause the same symptoms as depression or anxiety. If no physical cause is found, your EAP can provide a referral to a psychologist or psychiatrist for further evaluation.

The most important thing to remember is that you can get better, and you don't have to go through it alone.

When to Seek Help

DEPRESSION:

- FEELING SAD OR HOPELESS
- LOSS OF INTEREST OR PLEASURE IN ACTIVITIES YOU USED TO ENJOY
- TROUBLE CONCENTRATING OR MAKING DECISIONS
- CHANGE IN APPETITE OR WEIGHT
- FEELING TIRED OR SLEEPY ALL OF THE TIME
- RESTLESSNESS OR DECREASE IN NORMAL ACTIVITIES
- FEELING OVERWHELMED
- THINKING ABOUT SUICIDE

ANXIETY:

- CONSTANT WORRYING THAT INTERFERES WITH DAILY ACTIVITIES
- HEADACHES OR OTHER PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS FOR NO APPARENT REASON
- SUDDEN, SEVERE ATTACKS OF FEAR
- RECURRENT NIGHTMARES OR FLASHBACKS OF TRAUMATIC EVENTS
- TROUBLE CONCENTRATING
- IRRITABILITY
- DIFFICULTY SLEEPING
- FEELING OVERWHELMED

If you experience some of the above symptoms or your symptoms become worse or more frequent, talk to your physician or call Human Behavior Associates at 1 800 937-7770.

The Power of Boundaries

Setting and maintaining good boundaries puts you on the fast track to psychological health. If you want to accelerate your personal growth in a big way, take a long hard look at how boundaries, or a lack of, have impacted your life thus far.

Boundaries provide clarity. In order to establish boundaries, you must be clear about what you want, what your beliefs and values are, and in essence, clarity about WHO you are. When you have clarity and stand behind your beliefs and values, you are congruent. Many times, out of fear, we focus on adapting to others, and therefore take time away from focusing on ourselves. Our energy becomes divided, and ultimately we lose the thing we strive for the most, our integrity.

Honor and respect yourself by setting some personal boundaries that reflect who you are and who you want to be.

Accountability

Accountability is the opportunity to live by choice rather than accidentally. Accountability is the opportunity to carve out the future rather than to sit back and have it happen to you.

Accountability held from a stand as one's word is the ground from which one's own transformation is created ongoingly.

Transformation lives in accountability. Without committed speaking, without promises and declarations, there is no transformation; there is, at best, peak feelings.

A promise has real power. A promise made from the stand that who you are is your word, engages you as a participant. You cease to be a spectator, and your words become actions that actually impact the world. With a promise you create a condition that supports your commitment rather than your moods. When motivational dialogue comes up about your preference versus your commitments, and you disregard the dialogue in favor of doing what you said you would do solely because you said so, you distinguish yourself from your psychology. In that moment you are your word as an action, rather than only as an idea you have.

In that moment the promise becomes who you are rather than something you said; and your relationship to the world shifts. You find yourself producing results that seem discontinuous and unpredictable from the point of the view of the spectator. The experience is one of joy, fearlessness, irrepressible energy and satisfaction.

—FROM THE CENTER FOR HUMAN POTENTIAL

Cultivating Happiness

"Reframing" is perhaps one of the most effective ways to change your attitude about a situation quickly. Since happiness is based a great deal on contentment, the ability to shift (reframe) your perspective from one of "half-empty" to one of "half-full" is a skill worth mastering.

Many people think happiness is found in external events. The problem with this limited view is it keeps us victims of our circumstances. If we think happiness lies mostly in our state of mind, then we can be flexible and creative in our outlook, and therefore our solutions.

Let's say you get a new job that entails commuting for an hour a day. You can go on and on about what a drag it is and destroy your satisfaction and excitement about getting a new job, or you can look on the bright side and tell yourself, "Great, now I have time to listen to books on tape that I haven't had time for." Or, you think to yourself how glad you are to have some quiet time everyday to get your thoughts together.

Maybe you find a favorite condo at Big Bear is booked during your time off this year and you were really looking forward to spending your vacation there. Once again, you can be completely upset or you can use this opportunity to investigate new places that you might like even better.

Reframing is a powerful tool, quick and easy to use, but in no way should it be used to avoid more deep-seated problems that you do have control over. For example, if your fourth marriage is breaking up, this isn't the time to say, "Great, this will give me a chance to be independent again." Though that may be true, four marriages that didn't work out are a pattern that deserves exploration (otherwise the fifth is just around the corner).

What if you work in an office with a broken heater? It's freezing in the office and you continually express your discomfort to your employer. Your employer says the problem will be handled, but nothing gets done. In this case it would be in your best interest to confront the situation honestly and make a change rather than making the best of it by reframing. Here you might ask yourself, "Why would I earn money for an employer who obviously does not care about me (my comfort)?"

"This is not a reciprocal relationship (win-win) it is a win-lose situation and I'm losing." The next question to ask yourself is, "Do I have other relationships that are not reciprocal? Is this a pattern of mine, giving more than I get?"

If you are one of those people where the glass is always half-empty, then deeper issues need to be explored. This could

be a defense against disappointment that is destined to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. It could be a result of unresolved anger. Whatever the cause, if left unresolved, a life of bitterness and resentment awaits.

We take responsibility for our lives with each and every decision we make. If we approach these decisions consciously and give them the import they deserve, we can't help but create more peace and happiness. When we start feeling better and start getting different results in the world we have feelings of efficacy and bring the power home. This is a mastery, and mastery is the basis of self-esteem.

—By GAY MATHESON

Summertime....

Journaling for Fun & Personal Growth

You don't have to be a professional writer (or speller) to enjoy the benefits of journal writing. Get your pen and paper ready and remember—

A Journal. . .

- aids in understanding, reflecting, growing, and finding direction.
- sets down feelings, inspirations, and ideas.
- allows you to be yourself.
- does not argue back.
- does not demand proof.
- does not point out errors in logic or spelling.
- becomes your confidant.
- can be reviewed from time to time.
- helps create a clearer sense of boundaries.
- helps identify your own needs.
- helps you take a stand on issues.
- helps you confront others.
- tends to have a stabilizing influence.
- may be a portable sanctuary.
- is a way of taking time for yourself.
- is a tool for personal growth
- reduces stress.

"KNOWING THAT WE CAN BE LOVED EXACTLY AS WE ARE GIVES US ALL THE BEST OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWING INTO THE HEALTHIEST OF PEOPLE." - FRED ROGERS (1928-2003)

Human Behavior Associates, Inc.

HBA is the provider of your Employee Assistance Program. Employees and their family members can call 1-800-937-7770 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to request assistance with personal or family problems.