

Aware loCall Helpline

The **Aware** loCall helpline is a listening service for individuals who experience depression and concerned family members and friends. It is available at local call rates from 10am-10pm weekdays, and until 1am at weekends.

1890 303 302

Support Groups

Offer attendees the opportunity to gain emotional support and learn new ways of coping with the condition from their peers in a confidential environment. **Aware** also runs support groups for relatives of those affected, as well as some youth groups for younger people with the illness. If you would like to receive a free information pack write to **Aware** at the address on the back of this leaflet or all 01 661 7211.

About Aware

Aware was formed in 1985 to provide emotional support and information to individuals who experience depression and their families. **Aware** also seeks to create an increased public awareness of the nature, extent and consequences of depression and mood disorders. It also promotes research into the causes and effective treatment of mood disorder.

Aware provides services throughout the country, as well as online support services. For more information contact 01 661 7211 or see www.aware.ie

**A listening ear
for people
with depression
and their families**

**LoCall
Helpline**



1890 303 302

Online



www.aware.ie

Contact Aware at

**72 Lower Leeson St,
Dublin 2**

Tel: 01 661 7211

Fax: 01 661 7217

email: info@aware.ie



*A Better
Understanding
of Depression*

DEPRESSION: The Symptoms

- **Feeling** depressed, sad, anxious or bored
- **Energy** tired, fatigued, everything an effort, slowed movements
- **Sleep** waking during the night or too early in the morning, oversleeping or trouble getting to sleep
- **Thinking** slow thinking, poor concentration forgetful or indecisive
- **Interest** loss of interest in food, work, sex, and life seems dull
- **Value** reduced sense of self-worth, low self-esteem or guilt
- **Aches** headaches, chest or other pains without a physical basis
- **Live** not wanting to live, suicidal thoughts or thinking of death

It is important to remember that you don't have to FEEL depressed to actually BE depressed. If any five or more of the above FESTIVAL (acronym) symptoms are present for more than two weeks, please see your GP as you may be suffering from a depressive episode. Or call the **Aware helpline 1890 303 302**.

DEPRESSION: The Causes

Depression is frequently preceded by a setback in life, such as bereavement, relationship or financial difficulties, problems at work/school or medical illness. We all react to loss with a sense of disappointment, which can vary from mild to severe. An inherited tendency towards depression is an important factor in determining how depressed a person will become following a loss.

DEPRESSION: The Facts

- Depression is a treatable condition
- Depression can be disabling as it affects a person's thinking, feeling and behaviour

- Depression is often described as an overwhelming feeling which dulls thinking, impairs concentration, saps energy, interest in food, sex, work and daily events, and also disrupts sleep
- One in three of us will be affected by depression at some point in our lives
- Women are 3 to 4 times more likely to experience depression than men
- If left untreated depression can prove fatal, resulting in the tragedy of suicide
- It is estimated that over 400,000 people in Ireland experience depression at any one time

DEPRESSION: The Different Types

1. Mild Depression

The person typically experiences tiredness, some early morning wakening, indecision, impaired concentration and loss of confidence. The person does not necessarily feel depressed.

2. Moderate Depression:

Most of the symptoms of depression as listed under FESTIVAL are present: the person feels depressed, is extremely fatigued, has marked sleep disturbance and they appear to others to be depressed.

3. Severe Depression:

In addition to the symptoms of moderate depression the person's judgement is impaired in that they have extremely negative and pessimistic views of their own self-worth and their future. Strong suicidal thoughts or intent is present. The person may have delusions or false beliefs that they are evil, wicked, bankrupt or terminally ill or have hallucinations, that is hearing voices or having visions of themes similar to the delusions. When delusions or hallucinations are present the depression is referred to as a psychotic depression. They are an extreme extension of the

negative thinking that is part of a mild or moderate depression.

4. Bipolar Disorder/Manic-Depressive Illness:

The symptoms of the depressed phase of bipolar disorder are identical to those of unipolar depression, but, in addition, there are also episodes of elation or mania. Although elation can sometimes be considered a pleasurable experience, it often has a devastating effect on a person's life, with overspending, restlessness, irritability and agitation common symptoms.

The symptoms of elation

Feeling - elated, enthusiastic, excited, angry, irritable or depressed

Energy - great energy, 'never felt as well', overtalkative or over-active

Sleep - reduced need for sleep and marked difficulty in getting off to sleep

Thinking - racing thoughts, 'pressure in the head', indecisive, jumping from one topic to another, poor concentration

Interest - increased interest in pleasurable activities, new adventures, sex, alcohol, street drugs, religion, music or art

Value - excessive and unrealistic belief in one's ability, or having grandiose plans

Aches - never tiring, being unaware of the physical symptoms of illness such as asthma, having muscle tension at the back of the head or around the shoulders

Live - thinking that one can live forever; taking reckless physical risks or, if angry or distressed, feeling suicidal

If five or more of the above symptoms are present for more than two weeks, it may be a manic episode.

