

Depression

What is it?

Depression, formally known as major depressive disorder, is a mental health condition that negatively affects your feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and perceptions. Depression doesn't discriminate and can affect anyone, no matter their background, faith, or socioeconomic status.

Symptoms

- Thoughts of death
- Feeling sad, hopeless, or empty most of the day, almost daily
- Significant weight loss/gain or change in appetite
- Trouble concentrating/making decisions almost daily
- Fatigue or loss of energy almost daily
- Insomnia or hypersomnia almost daily
- Restlessness/agitation or slowed speech or movement almost daily
- Significantly reduced interests almost daily
- Sense of self-blame, feelings of worthlessness almost daily

5 or more symptoms must occur in the same 2-week period, including other criteria

Biblical Figures

The Bible comprises many imperfect individuals (much like us) who faced similar challenges and struggles in life. Ultimately, they recognized and held on to the power of God's strength and relied on Him as their supreme source during the highs and lows of their lives.

David: "How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my heart every day?" (Ps. 13:2 NLT).

Elijah: "'I have had enough, Lord,' he said. 'Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors'" (1 Kings 19:4 NIV).

Next Steps

Acknowledge

As with any illness or condition, recognizing the symptoms of depression is a step forward toward healing.

Seek

Professional help can provide alleviation and treatment options to help manage the symptoms. Seeking faith-based professionals will ensure that these options are aligned with the Word of God.

Connect

During difficult times, do not isolate, but seek the support and understanding of your faith community, which is a source of strength and comfort.

Manage

Use strategies to help mitigate the symptoms, such as practicing self-care, exercising, eating healthy, and getting enough sleep.

References:

1. American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-5.
2. American Psychiatric Association. (2024, April). What is depression? <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/depression/what-is-depression>