

UWE Wellbeing Service

Depression

It is normal to feel down at times. If these feelings become more intrusive on your life, last for a longer time (over two weeks, on most days), or appear without an obvious cause (e.g. recent bereavement, relationship breakdown) you may be experiencing depression.

Depression is characterised by a number of emotional signs, physical symptoms and behavioural changes. Not everybody will experience all the symptoms of depression and the intensity of the symptoms may vary over time, between people, and even a day.

Emotional & Psychological Signs	Physical Symptoms	Social and behavioural changes
<p>Continuous low mood or sadness, feeling hopeless or helpless, low self-esteem, feeling tearful or guilty, feeling irritable and intolerant of others.</p> <p>Having no motivation or interest in things, finding it difficult to make decisions and concentrate, not getting any enjoyment out of things you previously enjoyed.</p> <p>Having suicidal thoughts or thoughts about harming yourself.</p>	<p>Moving or speaking more slowly than usual. Changes in appetite or weight (usually decreased, but sometimes increased)</p> <p>Constipation. Unexplained aches and pains. Lack of energy and / or loss of sex drive.</p> <p>Changes to your menstrual cycle.</p> <p>Disturbed sleep (for example, finding it hard to fall asleep at night or waking up very early in the morning).</p>	<p>Withdrawal - taking part in fewer social activities. Avoiding contact with friends or speaking with people during the day.</p> <p>Neglecting your hobbies and interests.</p> <p>Stopping necessary and routine tasks e.g. personal hygiene, cooking, eating, paying bills.</p> <p>Having difficulties at University, home or work.</p>

If you are experiencing a number of the above you may want to speak to your GP. Additionally there are self-help tools and resources that can help you increase your understanding, learn resilience and provide you with support. Regardless of the causes of depression, there are things that you can do now to help influence your mood and make a full recovery from depressive episodes.

Websites

- **Get Self-help** – a range of CBT self-help and therapy resources
www.get.gg
- **Living life to the full** – CBT resources for depression and anxiety
<http://www.llttf.com/>
- **Mood Gym** - a free interactive web program designed to prevent depression. It consists of five modules, an interactive game, anxiety and depression assessments
<https://moodgym.anu.edu.au/welcome>
- **Students Against Depression** - offers information and resources validated by health professionals alongside tips and advice from students.
<http://studentsagainstdespression.org/>



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UWE library

Gilbert, P (2009) **Overcoming Depression: A Self Help Guide Using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques**. Robinson.

This book covers the causes of depression from an evolutionary perspective. It guides you through understanding the thoughts, feelings and behaviours associated with depression. It also delivers accessible exercises and approaches for you to try and manage your mood.

Further reading

- Bramptom, S (2010) **Shoot The Damn Dog: A Memoir of Depression**.
- Cantopher, T (2012) **Depressive Illness The Curse of The Strong**. This is a useful book for those whose depression is related to stress
- Greenberger, D., Padesky, C.A. (1995) **Mind Over Mood**. Change How you Feel By Changing the Way You Think.

Apps

- **MoodPanda** - Easy to use and visually pleasing, allows you to record your mood, building up a picture of your mood over time. It has an online community where you can connect and compare your scores <http://www.moodpanda.com/>
- **Virtual Hope Box** Free to download. This app is split into four parts. Distract me, Inspire Me, Relax Me, and Coping Tools. This is a simple app that can help when things are difficult. <http://tinyurl.com/jsgxtvg>
- **Five Ways to Wellbeing:** NHS Five Ways to Wellbeing. It allows you to track, reflect on and plan activities based around areas shown to be effecting in improving wellbeing <http://tinyurl.com/gtepw3k>

Podcasts and Videos

- Penman, D., Williams, M (2011) **The New Psychology of Depression**. Oxford Press. Available Free at: <http://www.learnoutloud.com> A 3 hour pod cast discussion about depression and its treatment.
- Youtube: **I had a black dog video**. Heartfelt video which illustrates through animation what it is like to have depression <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiCrniLQGYc>

