

## **Coping with Depression**

Everyone has experienced feelings of depression at one time or another. These feelings commonly follow loss or disappointment and they usually pass in a few hours or days. When depressive feelings, however, persist and interfere with one's health and social wellbeing, then some sort of intervention or professional help is needed.

### **What is Depression?**

Depression is a prolonged negative mood like unhappiness which can affect one's life severely. It is characterized by feelings of worthlessness, excessive guilt, loneliness, sadness, hopelessness, self-doubt, and guilt. Suicidal thoughts may also be present.

### **Symptoms of Depression**

#### **1. Emotional Symptoms**

- Sadness.
- Anxiety.
- Guilt.
- Anger.
- Helplessness.
- Hopelessness

#### **2. Physical Symptoms**

- Sleeping too much or too little.
- Overeating or loss of appetite.
- Lack of energy.
- Pain.
- Gradual loss of sexual desire.

#### **3. Behavioral Symptoms**

- Crying for no apparent reason.
- Withdrawal from other people and new situations.
- Loss of interest in activities which were once of interest.
- Use of alcohol and/or drugs.

#### **4. Cognitive Symptoms**

- Lack of concentration
- Forgetfulness
- Indecisiveness

You don't have to have all the symptoms at once in order to be diagnosed as depressive. If several of these symptoms persist for more than two weeks, please seek professional help.

### **Ways to overcome depression:**

- Be aware of the cause of your depression.
- Try to be aware of your negative thoughts and replace them with positive ideas.
- Focus on your positive experiences.
- Get socially active.
- Find a hobby or two.
- Exercise daily.
- Use self-relaxation techniques whenever you feel tense.
- Do some volunteer work?
- Learn to accept that everyone has different abilities and focus on your unique characteristics and positive accomplishments.
- Try to know and develop your strengths.
- Get professional help if symptoms of depression persist.

### **Need Additional Help?**

For further information, please e-mail KURES: [kures@ku.edu.tr](mailto:kures@ku.edu.tr)

### **References**

Cryan, J. F. & Leonard, B. E. (2010). *Depression: From Psychopathology to Pharmacotherapy*. Basel, New York: Karger