

RECOGNIZING DEPRESSION PART I

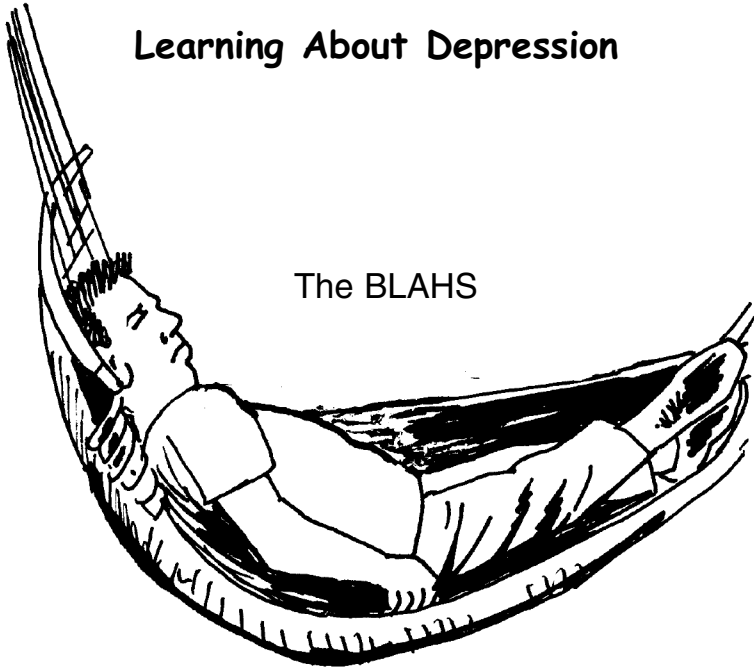
RECOGNIZING DEPRESSION

PART I

Personal
Development

Learning About Depression

The BLAHS



The BLUES



and ROTTEN MOODS



WHAT TEENS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT DEPRESSION

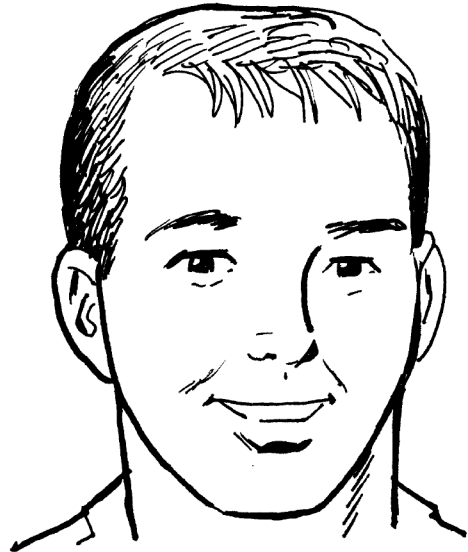
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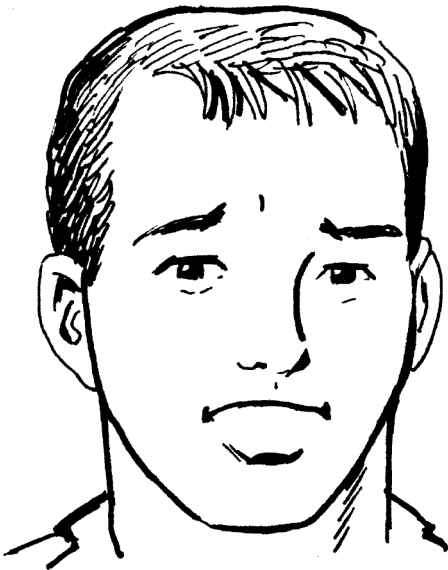
How's life treating you these days? Blue skies and happiness? Or are you on the down side? You know, down in the dumps?

It's normal to have good moods and bad moods. It's not unusual at all to have

feelings of happiness



suddenly turn to sadness.



Have you ever gone to school expecting to have a good day, only to have your expectations ruined by an argument with a friend? . . .



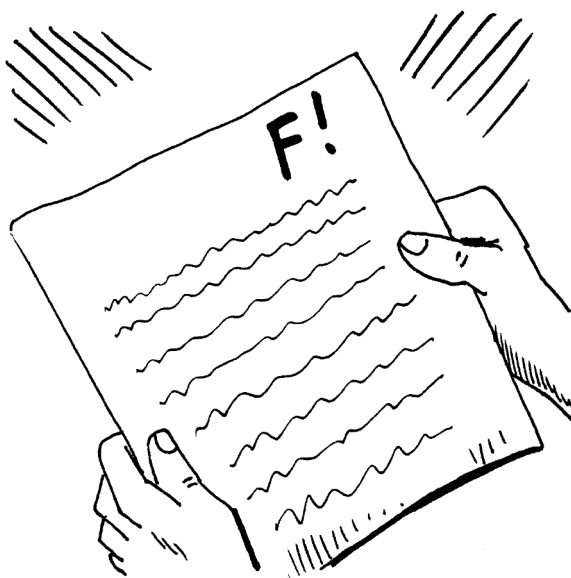
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Or a failing grade?

Sure you have!

Think about how you would feel if the following happened to you:

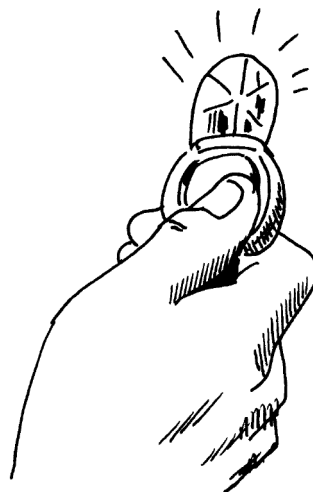


"Betty, it's not enough that you failed another English test, now I find out that you just got detention for not cleaning out your locker."

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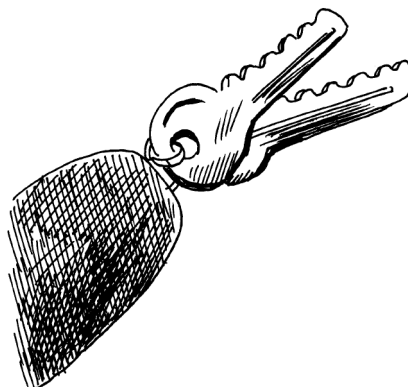
"I'm sorry, Albert, I want to break up with you. I don't want to see you anymore."



Hey, it's not the end of the world you tell yourself. There are lots of fish in the sea. But, you still have to admit that you still have a little bit of the blahs.

On the other hand, think about how you would feel in the following situations:

"Sure. You can use the car tonight and, by the way, I'm raising your allowance," said Dad.



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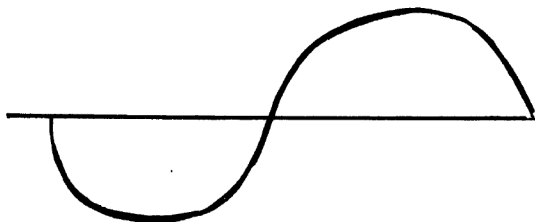
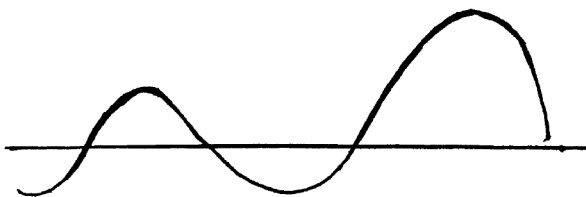
PART I

Personal
Development



"Helen, will you go to the Dance with me Saturday night? You will? That's great! My dad is going to let me use the car. How about I pick you up at 7:30? Okay, great. I'll see you then. Bye."

Your feelings in these situations are much different, aren't they?



Most of us have cycles. Sometimes we're happy. Sometimes we're sad. Whenever you experience a low cycle, what do you call it? Maybe you say,

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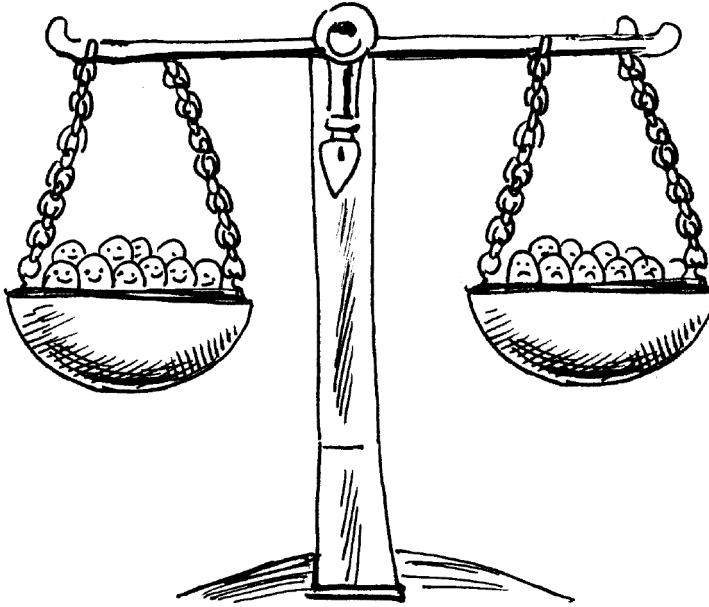
“I’VE GOT
THE
BLAHS”

or perhaps it’s

“THE BLUES”

or it could be that you’re just in

“A ROTTEN MOOD”



Whatever you call it, most of the time things seem to balance out. On the other hand, some people experience sadness that just won’t go away. This kind of sadness is referred to as

DEPRESSION

Depression is an emotional imbalance that has many symptoms that occur over a long period of time and just won't go away – no matter how much you try to overcome them.

HEALTH:

Physical
Emotional
Spiritual
Mental

Symptoms of depression interfere with a person's ability to function in a healthy way. They interfere in the areas of *physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental* health.



Depression in healthy people usually occurs along with a sad event. This sadness passes within a few days or weeks. In more serious depression, nothing seems to bring relief from the sadness . . .

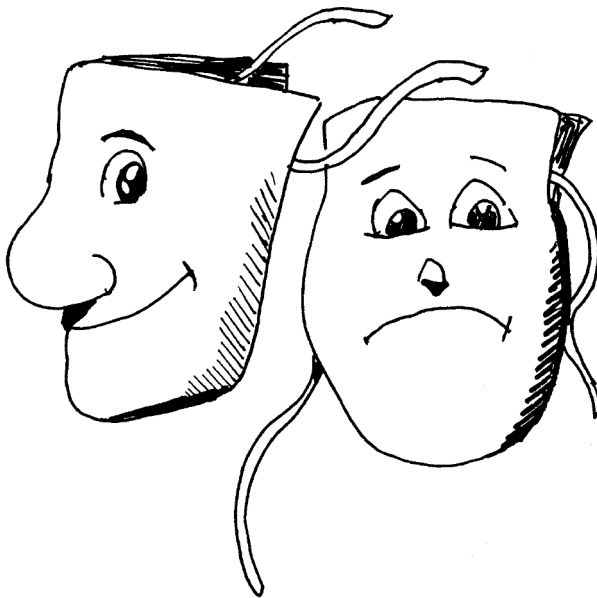
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not even happy events!

It's not typical for people to be in a good mood and to be happy ALL the time.



People who are happy all the time may be masking the disease of depression.

Also, it's not a good sign to be sad all the time. Feeling "down-in-the-dumps" much of the time is a more obvious indicator of depression.

SADNESS

Sadness is a sign of depression.



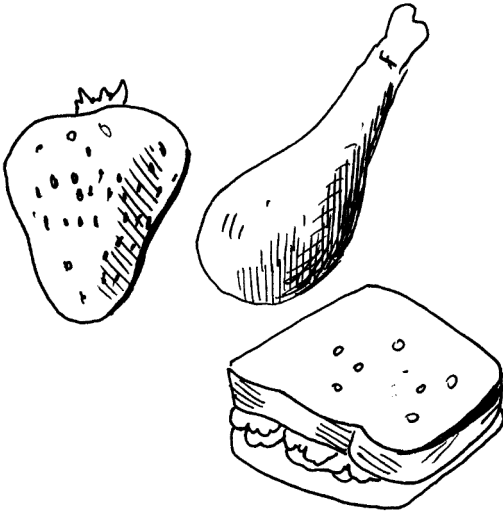
"No one cares about me anyhow. Why should I care about anyone."

LONELINESS

Loneliness, or a sense of being alone, is another sign of depression.

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A change in your appetite – either an unexplained loss or an increase – is a possible indicator of depression.

"Who can think of food when their whole life seems a waste?"

"Who cares about fat? I'm so fat now, it doesn't matter. I'm just going to have one more ice-cream cone."



ANXIOUS



"It's no use. It's just never going to work. I should have never tried."

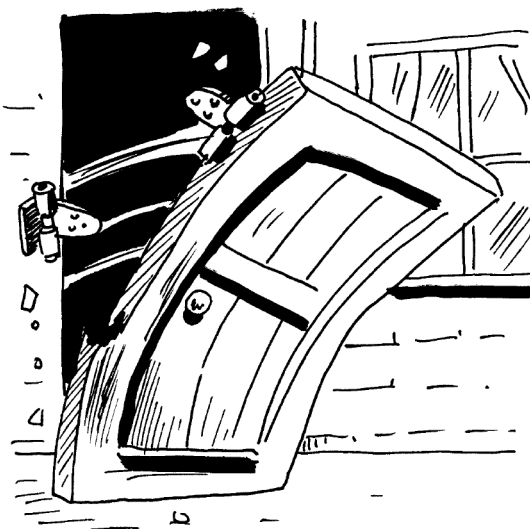
IRRITABLE



"It just makes me so mad. Now, what's going to happen? The coach will probably kick me off the team. I'll be the laughing stock of the school. Why can't people just leave me alone?"

Mike looks angry, and anger can be a symptom of depression. This is particularly true if someone overreacts to the least provocation.

"Just leave me alone. I told you - I don't want to go to that movie. Get lost!"

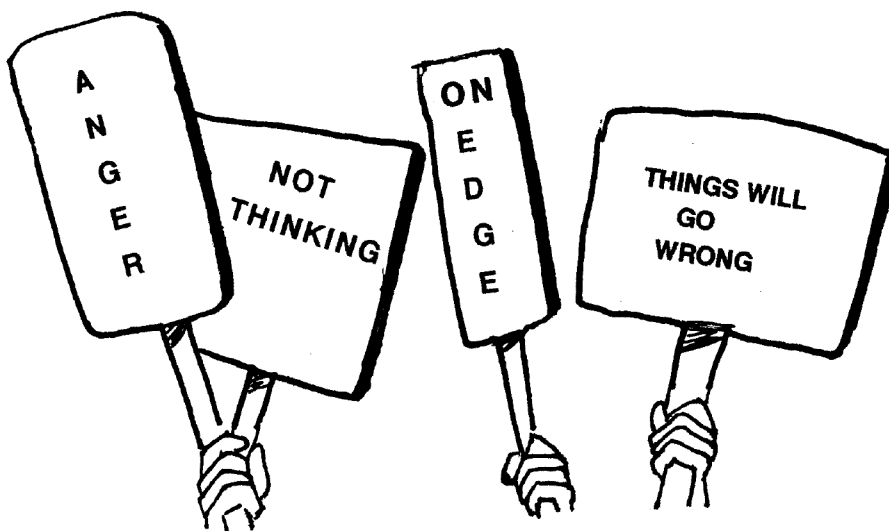


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Teenagers who take unnecessary risks, like crossing the rail-road tracks when the warning gate is down, or repeatedly act without thinking about the consequences of their behavior, may be depressed.



If you find that you're quick to anger every time things don't go your way – or you act without thinking and are on the edge all the time, expecting everything to go wrong – these might be signs of depression.

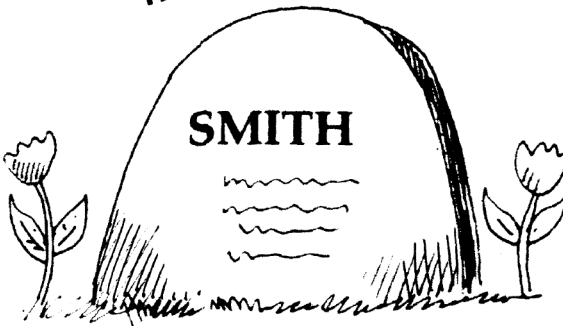
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Sometimes depression can be simple and brief. For instance, if someone close to you dies.

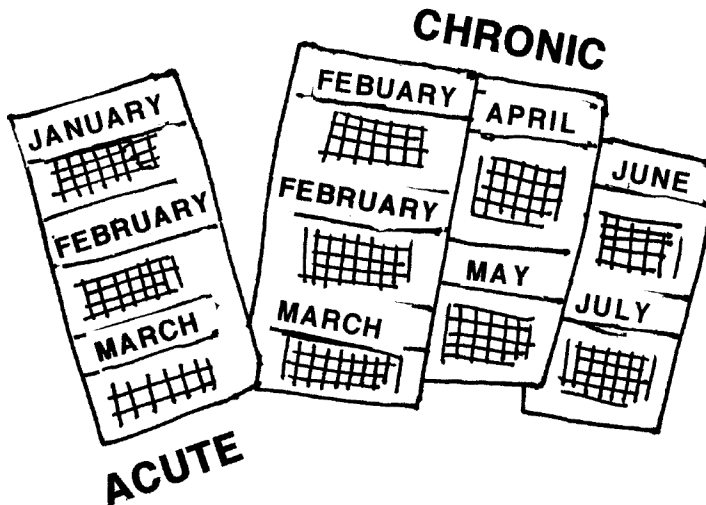


REACTIVE



DEPRESSION

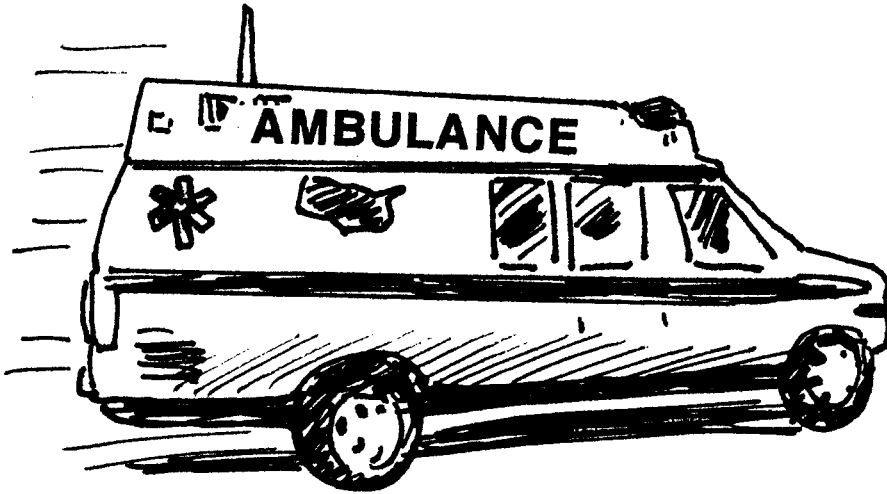
You will experience grief and a depressed reaction to the death. This is an example of **REACTIVE DEPRESSION**.



ACUTE DEPRESSION is brief and generally lasts less than six months. If the depressed state lasts for more than six months, then it is called **CHRONIC DEPRESSION**.

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The chronically depressed person may not be able to control the symptoms. This kind of depression is more likely than reactive depression to be life threatening. In fact, suicide is occasionally a tragic ending to the life of a chronically depressed person.

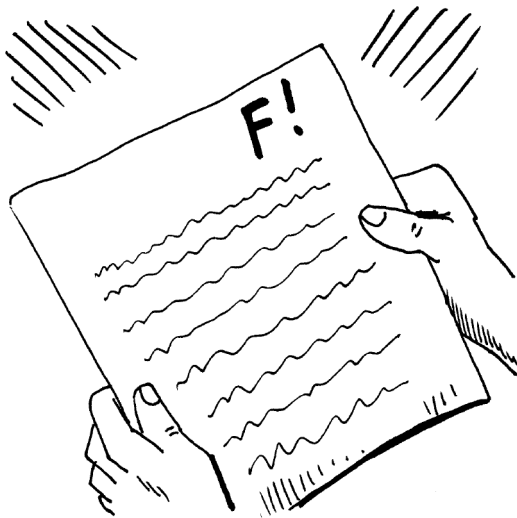
Now, let's review some of the symptoms of depression in teens:

- 1. Sadness and Moodiness**
- 2. Loneliness**
- 3. Changes in Appetite**
- 4. Anxiety & Irritability**
- 5. Anger & Impulsiveness**
- 6. Change in Sleep Habits**
- 7. Self-defeating & Suicidal Thoughts**
- 8. Hopelessness**
- 9. Decrease in Ability to Function**

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Other signs of depression might be the withdrawal from family or friends,



persistent boredom or a decline in schoolwork,

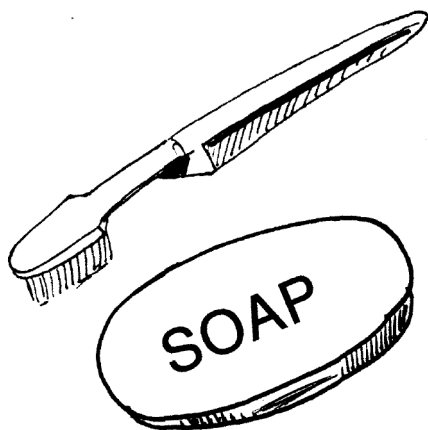
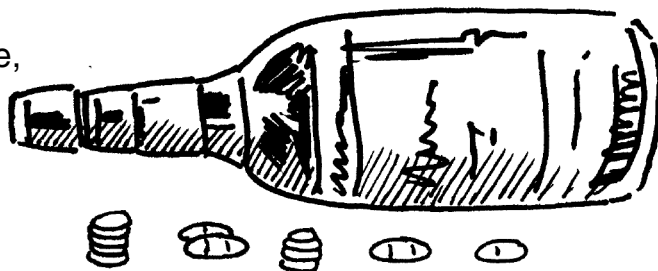
rebellious or violent behavior,



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drug or alcohol abuse,



neglect of appearance and lack of personal hygiene, or any sudden change in personality.

It's important to recognize the danger signs of depression in a friend. Learn to recognize the symptoms early on.

There are teens who manifest "covert" depression. (Everyone has heard of the "super-kid" – the model student who suddenly kills him or herself.) Teens who manifest COVERT DEPRESSION appear to have it "all together." When you ask them how things are going, they'll always say, "fine."

Just because a teen "has it all together" on the *outside*, doesn't mean that life is all that great.

If you are one of those kids, who do you turn to for help? Who can you trust? Who's going to keep it a secret?

Recognizing depression is only the beginning. Our next step is doing something about it.

Learning About Depression

1. How would you describe the blahs?

2. What is the difference between feeling the blahs and depression?

3. How would you explain “covert” depression?

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TRUE (T) or FALSE (F)

- ___ 1. It is normal to have good moods and bad moods.
- ___ 2. Depression is a feeling of sadness that won't go away.
- ___ 3. Having an argument with a friend will cause serious depression in a healthy person.
- ___ 4. A change in one's appetite is a definite sign of depression.
- ___ 5. Sleeping too much or too little can be a signal of depression.
- ___ 6. Acute depression lasts a brief time (less than 6 months).
- ___ 7. Chronic depression lasts 6 months or more.
- ___ 8. The symptoms of chronic depression are easily controlled.
- ___ 9. Anger is not a sign of depression.
- ___ 10. Reactive depression usually leads to suicide.

Answers can be found on page 40.

Learning About Depression

FILL IN THE BLANKS

Fill in the blanks with the words from the box below.

personality	sad	anger	recovery	normal
sadness	suicide	relief	loneliness	neglect

1. Depression interferes with one's ability to function in a _____ way.
2. Depression in healthy people usually occurs along with a _____ event.
3. In serious depression, nothing seems to bring _____; not even happy events.
4. _____, _____, and _____ are all symptoms of depression.
5. Occasionally, a chronically depressed person is capable of _____.
6. A sudden change in _____ is a signal that someone may be depressed.
7. _____ of appearance and personal hygiene may be symptoms of depression.
8. Recognizing depression is the first step toward _____.

Answers can be found on page 40.