

# DEPRESSION

## THIS KIT WILL WALK YOU THROUGH THE FOLLOWING:

- **defining depression**
- **knowing the signs in kids/teens and adults**
- **how to talk to kids about depression**
- **how to talk to friends or loved ones about depression**
- **how to be resilient**
- **how to manage depression now/long-term**



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## CHARACTER GUIDE

### GRAY THE ORANGUTAN

#### KNOWING THE SIGNS

##### IN KIDS/TEENS:

Because a child with depression may be irritable or uncooperative, parents may misunderstand it as a bad attitude. Most likely, however, symptoms of depression often present themselves during teen and college years. Teens may have a persistently depressed mood, feel hopeless, have low self-esteem, feel guilty, irritable, restless, have a loss of interest in activities and appearance, have difficulty concentrating, and might experience weight fluctuation.

##### IN ADULTS:

A change in how they take care of themselves, may not shower or change clothes, appear to have no emotion at all, angry, anxious, sleep for a long time, cry a lot, overreact, have a loss of interest, loss of appetite, hard time making decisions, and distance themselves from friends and family. Depression looks different for everyone. Someone may experience all or some of these symptoms, and they may change over time.

#### WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

Depression is when feeling low or feeling blue becomes constant or happens a lot of the time. This mental health condition is characterized by continuous sadness, having a "bad mood," or a loss of interest in activities, which can make daily life difficult to manage.



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## A NOTE ABOUT SENSITIVITY

The information provided in these infographics are meant to help those who need guidance or more information. However, please note that these topics can be sensitive to some and should be approached gently.

## HOW TO TALK TO KIDS ABOUT IT

Sometimes kids have a hard time expressing that they want to start a conversation, so try initiating it yourself. "I've noticed you've been (quiet, spending more time alone, really angry, unhappy) lately, are you okay?" / "How are you feeling?" / "Is there something you need help talking about?" / "Is there any way I can help you?" / "If you want to talk to me about what's worrying you, I'll do my best to help." / "When you feel sad, what do you think about to make yourself happy again?" Be ready to listen and empathize with their concerns. Sometimes people just want to talk and aren't looking for advice so listen carefully to what they need. And remember, it's okay to not have all the answers. It can be good to revisit topics with kids if they don't want to talk immediately so it's OK to keep trying.



## HOW TO TALK TO A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE ABOUT IT

Let them know you're concerned and what you've been noticing. You can start with "I'm worried about you because you seem..." And follow up by asking "Do you want to talk about it or vent?" Keep their needs in mind and ask them first if they want help. Next, listen if they're willing to share their worries or fears. Try not to offer advice if they don't want it. Help them out with things that might relieve their depression. You can ask them what that may be by saying, "What can I do to help?" Don't feel like you have to have all the answers; being there for them to let them talk or vent is already incredibly helpful. It's always okay to remind them that they are not alone.



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## HOW TO MANAGE DEPRESSION NOW

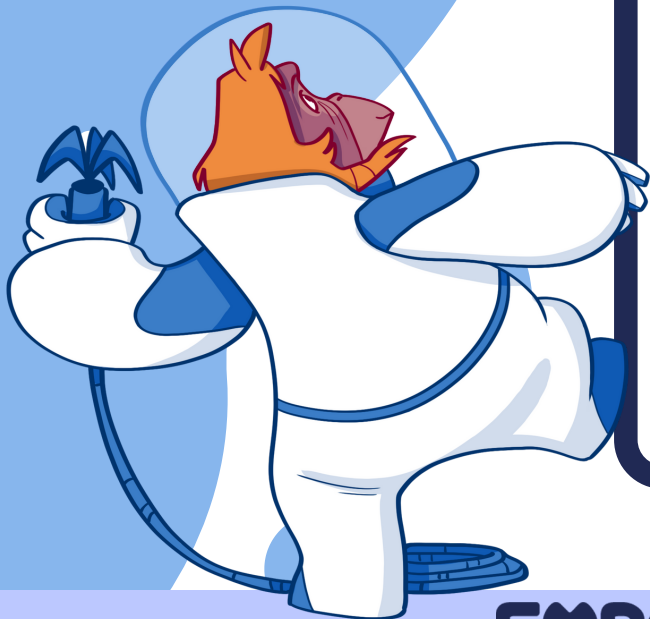
Exercise, no matter how rigorous or long, is an effective way to help depression. Seek a doctor to make sure there are no other health conditions that might be causing depression. Meet with a mental health professional to help evaluate and make a plan. "Usually it takes a few weeks for the treatment to start working, so it is important to be patient and stick with it."

## A NOTE ABOUT RESILIENCE

Kids are usually more resilient than we think, but only when treated with respect and care. See our **Resilience Guide** for more information.

## HOW TO MANAGE DEPRESSION LONG-TERM

Exercise is an all-natural and supportive method to help fight depression and can boost your mood. If you've consulted with a doctor or mental health professional and developed a plan, try to stick to it. If your needs have changed or if the plan isn't working, it's always okay to find a new plan and your mental health professional will help you. A change in medication or counseling may be necessary. Medication can be part of the treatment process and doctors can recommend it only when needed. Taking medication isn't always long-term, but be sure to discuss options with your doctor to find the best choice for you.



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## RESOURCES

### SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT

**Heather L. Yardley, Ph.D.**, Clinical Associate Professor & Pediatric Psychologist at Nationwide Children's Hospital, and Board Member at Drawn from Valor

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fbTD2089crh7Z5YskjMqADzeEl3miFZs/view> (CA Surgeon 2020)

<https://bornthisway.foundation/research/kindness-is-action/> (BTW "Kindness is Action")

<https://bornthisway.foundation/research/hard-conversations-dont-happen-when-young-people-fear-being-judged/> (BTW "Mental Health Online Diaries")

<https://www.jedfoundation.org/someone-close-to-me-has-lost-someone-to-suicide/> (JED Loss)

<https://www.jedfoundation.org/i-am-concerned-someone-i-care-about-may-be-overwhelmed-with-anxiety/> (JED Anxiety)

<https://www.jedfoundation.org/a-friend-of-mine-seems-really-down-and-may-be-depressed/#card=7> (JED Depression)

<https://www.jedfoundation.org/sleep/> (JED sleep)

<https://youngminds.org.uk/starting-a-conversation-with-your-child/starting-the-conversation/> (Conversation starters from Young Minds)

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/help-kids-manage-anxiety/anxiety-activities-to-help-kids> (OOS Anxiety)

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/dealing-with-loss> (OOS Loss)

<https://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/children-trauma-update> (APA trauma)

[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/nine\\_tips\\_for\\_talking\\_to\\_kids\\_about\\_trauma](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/nine_tips_for_talking_to_kids_about_trauma) (Greater Good)

<https://www.headspace.com/articles/how-to-reduce-anxiety> (Headspace Anxiety)

<https://www.hcf.com.au/health-agenda/body-mind/mental-health/downsides-to-always-being-positive> (HCF)

<https://hbr.org/2020/03/that-discomfort-youre-feeling-is-grief> (Harvard Business Review)

[https://www.ptsd.va.gov/family/how\\_help\\_grief.asp](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/family/how_help_grief.asp) (VA)

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/signs-of-grief-in-children-and-how-to-help-them-cope-4174245> (Very Well Grief)

<https://www.verywellmind.com/physical-symptoms-of-grief-4065135> (Very Well Grief in adults)

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/coping-emotions> (Kids Help Line)

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/ptsd-trauma/coping-with-emotional-and-psychological-trauma.htm> (Help Guide)

## LOOK TO OUR EMPOWERNAUT GUIDES TO HELP YOU THROUGH YOUR MENTAL HEALTH JOURNEY



GRIEF/LOSS



TRAUMA/PTSD



DEPRESSION



ANXIETY

# EMPOWERNAUTS