

## What Can Cause a Depressed Mood?

- Having a family history of depression and/or imbalanced brain chemicals
- Having anger turned inward (feeling like it is better to suffer in silence than to make someone else angry)
- Lacking assertiveness (Not speaking up for yourself or your needs)
- Having sleep problems
- Using addictive substances (including alcohol, marijuana, street drugs, possibly prescription medications, etc.)
- Comparing yourself to others (Instead, just be who you are)
- Withdrawing from social activities and support (You need regular contact with people and a deeper, trusting relationship when times are hard)
- Having a poor diet or lack of exercise
- Having too high expectations (for yourself, your family, children, job, etc.)
- Not having enough fun or humor
- Having financial stress
- Not having skills for seeking gratitude, thankfulness, contentment, or joy
- Lacking job satisfaction, feeling like you are not productive or valuable
- Having grief or loss (May be from self-blame or failing to grieve a loss)
- Having a sense of meaning and purpose (We all have a role in life)
- Modeling the depressed mood of others (If you are with depressing people, you may tend to copy them, but you can change to more positive thinking)
- Feeling overwhelmed, defeated (Lacking courage, confidence or insight)
- Having too much stress without having support
- Feeling trapped in an unhealthy relationship (You may need to adapt if you choose not to end the relationship)
- Having lived with trauma or abuse
- Having values that don't match your actions
- Having pain or disability
- Lacking comforting spiritual connection, or unable to forgive or "let go"
- Resisting changing your thoughts (Not believing that changing yourself can change your feelings and behaviors in a very powerful way)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from Coyle, B. R. (2007). Stress, anxiety and depression DVD. MyTherapySession, Inc.