

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

## DOWN AND OUT: WAYS TO HELP AND PREVENT DEPRESSION

Shana Whisenant  
Contributing Writer

Glasses, quizzes, study time, free time, and work are all challenges college students have to balance in their daily lives. There is one challenge not mentioned in this list that some college kids face: depression. Depression was once defined as, "an illness that involves the body, mood, and thoughts, that affects the way a person eats and sleeps, the way one feels about oneself, and the way one thinks about things." There is not one single cause for depression, but things such as genetics, environment, and daily activities can play a role in depression. According to the article "Dealing with Depression" at Helpguide.org, depression is believed to be associated with changes in the levels of chemicals in the brain such as norepinephrine and serotonin. It is estimated that 33-35 million adults will suffer from depression at some point in their lives. Signs to look for in someone who is depressed are loss in appetite, anxiety, and/or insomnia.

According to the article "Understanding Depression: Signs, Symptoms, Causes and Help" at Helpguide.org, there are two main types of depression. One type is Dysthymia, also known as major depression, and another type, Manic-Depressive disease, also known as bipolar disease. Dysthymia is less severe with

long-term chronic symptoms that are not crippling but may make a person not feel well. Manic-depressive disease is more serious and deals with mood swings. One could be in a really high mood or a really low mood depending on the day. If a person is in the manic cycle of the disease, he or she could make poor choices, be over-talkative, have excess energy, or have sudden mood changes and unpredictable behavior.

You may be wondering who is at risk for depression. According to Helpguide.org, women are more likely to be depressed than men. There are 12% of men who suffer from depression at some point during their lives while 25% of women do. Why do you think those statistics are so? Is it because women have more to deal with on a daily basis or because they are just hormonal? Is depression preventable or fixable? There are many questions about depression that no one can truly answer because we all have our own opinion about the subject. Regardless of whether or not depression is a choice or chance, there are always things we can do to improve our state of being.

Exercise is something anyone can do to feel better and relax. There are a wide variety of options for exercise in Raleigh. We could take a stroll down Hillsborough Street or drive to Planet Fitness,

a local gym not far from the college. We can also make healthier choices in foods when we are grocery shopping at the local Whole Foods or Lowe's on Cary Parkway. Even though I am sure it is tempting to buy those Little Debbie snack cakes, try buying a bag of apples or grapes. It may cost you a few extra dollars, but in the end it is worth it. Your health and well-being should be a top priority.

In my opinion, we are about as happy as we make up our minds to be. While depression is a medical condition, I often think it is like

Charlie Brown once said: "This is my depressed stance. When you're depressed, it makes a lot of difference how you stand. The worst thing you can do is straighten up and hold your head high because then you'll start to feel better. If you're going to get any joy out of being depressed, you've got to stand like this." Try going out in a cute outfit, holding your head up high, and saying, "Here I am world, take me or leave me." Confidence is a great way not to let depression get the best of you.

### WHINES & GRIPES

The dorm rooms are over-heated. If we are going green, we should have colder rooms. It is only fall!

Dear Complaining Hallmate: Cornhuskin' is part of Meredith, and you chose to come to Meredith. Stop complaining and deal with it.

Dear Professors: Doing homework on the Internet is a waste of time because there is always a glitch. 8-11 p.m. is designated as "high traffic hours" where we are advised to avoid Webassign. Do you really want me to do my chemistry homework at 4 a.m.??

The stairwells in the freshmen dorms smell horrible.

If my shower burns me one more time, I am going to sue Meredith.

No boyfriends in the dorms? What about no girlfriends in the dorms?

Dear BeeHive: I can get three Value Meals for the price of one thing at the BeeHive. What is up with the prices?

Why does Freshmen Discover seem to be only mandatory for some people? That is not right.

If I am paying \$32,000 per year to attend this school, why are my books so expensive, why does the parlor still have a stove with push buttons, and why is the parlor's TV from 1975?



Photo Courtesy <http://www.christinas-home-remedies.com/symptom-of-depression.html>