



CARING

A service of your *Caring for the Mind* and
Employee Assistance Programs

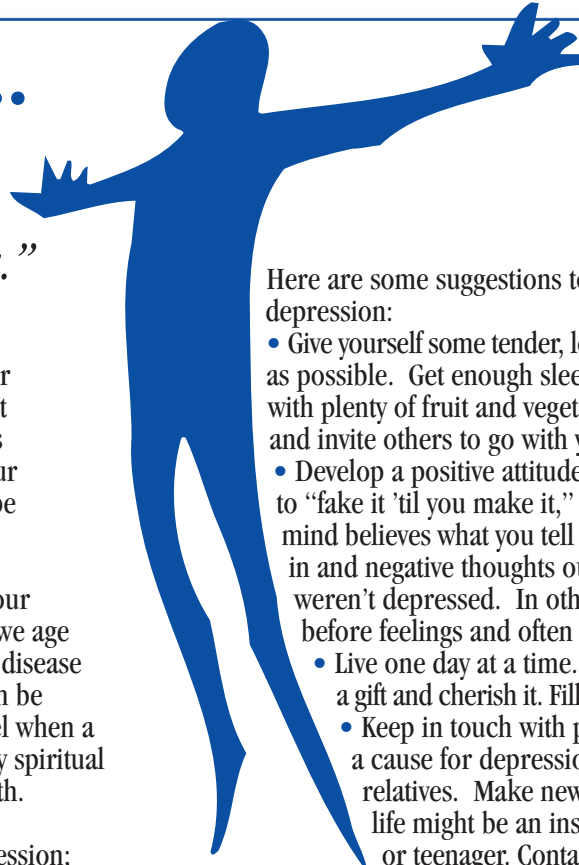
A Time to Heal ...

There's a lot of truth in the bumper sticker that reads, "Growing old ain't for sissies."

With all the physical and emotional changes that occur as we age, it's not unusual for mild and sometimes not so mild depression to set in. Depression, some say, is the soul crying out for attention when some area of our lives is out of balance or not fulfilled; the effects can be physical, emotional or spiritual.

Some depression can be linked to physical health as our hearing, sight, mobility and sexual energy wanes. As we age it's harder to do the things we used to do, or physical disease may cause pain and discomfort. Some depression can be triggered by emotional issues, such as the grief we feel when a loved one dies. Depression can also be brought on by spiritual issues as we ponder the meaning of our lives and death.

The good news is that we can work through our depression; however, it's important to know that depression can be caused by chemical imbalances in the brain. Certain types of depression cannot be relieved by will-power or staying busy. It's a good idea to check with your physician to see if your depression would be better treated with an antidepressant.



Here are some suggestions to help you cope with depression:

- Give yourself some tender, loving care. Stay as healthy as possible. Get enough sleep. Eat balanced meals with plenty of fruit and vegetables. Take lots of walks and invite others to go with you.
- Develop a positive attitude. Sometimes you have to "fake it 'til you make it," as the saying goes. Your mind believes what you tell it. Keep positive thoughts in and negative thoughts out. Act as though you weren't depressed. In other words, put actions before feelings and often the feelings will follow.
- Live one day at a time. Treat each day as a gift and cherish it. Fill it with meaningful activity.
- Keep in touch with people. Isolation is often a cause for depression. Call friends and relatives. Make new friends of all ages. Your life might be an inspiration to a lonely child or teenager. Contact social service agencies

and find a senior group in your area. Remember, play is good for all of us.

- Avoid making big decisions when you are depressed. Depression impairs our judgment. Postpone important decisions until the depression lifts.

Hiking in the Mountains

Once there was a father and a son hiking in the mountains. As they were walking along, the son falls, hurts himself and screams, "AAAHHHHHH!" To his surprise, he hears a repeating voice somewhere in the mountain, "AAAHHHHHH!" Curious, he yells, "Who are you?" He receives the answer, "Who are you?" Angered at the response, he screams, "Coward!" He receives back, "Coward!" He looks at his father and asks, "What's going on?" The father smiles and says, "Son, pay attention," and then he screams, "I love you!" The voice answers, "I love you!" Again the father screams, "You are a hero!" The voice answers, "You

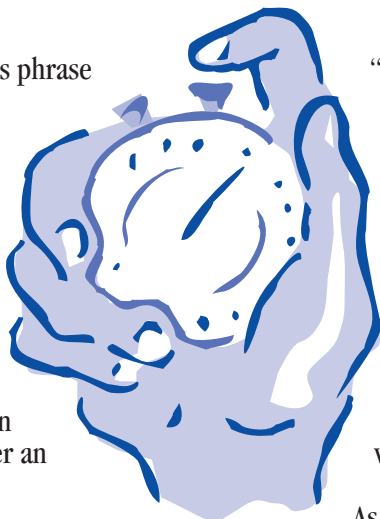
are a hero!" His son does not understand. The father explains, "People call this an echo, but really, it's life. Life gives you back everything you say and do. Our lives are simply a reflection of our actions. If we want more love in the world, we must create more love in our hearts. If we want more competence in our team, we must improve our own competence. This relationship applies to everything in life. Life will give you back everything you have given it. Your life is not a coincidence, it's a reflection of you."

—Unknown Author

Just Say No!

We've all heard the famous phrase, "Just Say No!", usually referring to drug abuse, however, this phrase is widely underutilized.

In order to be an effective time manager this phrase needs to be used. Your time needs to be prioritized to fit your schedule and priorities. There will be times when other people will come first, but you need to be the one deciding where they are placed on your priority list. If you're the type of person that puts everyone's requests and needs first, then it's time for you to stand up and say, "NO!" Okay, it might not be so wise to use the phrase just in that manner, but the following are examples in which you can say "no" in a polite way and sometimes offer an alternative solution.



"I have so much on my plate right now I'm not sure when I'll be able to get to that, but I do know someone over here that might be able to help you."

"Before I take this on for you, let me show you a few things so that you might be able to do it yourself."

"I have made so many commitments to others that it would be unfair to them and you if I took on anything more at this point."

"I don't know how soon I can help you on this, but I will get back to you as soon as I am free to help you."

"I can't help you on this now, but I can get to it next week. Would that be okay?"

As you speak, smile. The nonverbal behavior that you demonstrate will determine whether the person will understand your situation, which will help with any guilt you may feel by not helping with their situation.

Strengthen Your Marriage

Marriage is hard work and sometimes we get so caught up in the day-to-day aspects of life we forget the little things we need to do for our spouses to keep our marriages fresh. Here are some ways to strengthen your marriage:

- Start every day with a kiss.
- Always wear your wedding ring.
- Go on a date with your mate once a week.
- Accept each others differences.
- Be polite, gentle and kind.
- Give gifts.
- Smile.
- Touch.
- Talk about dreams.
- Give back rubs.
- Laugh together.
- Do something for your spouse before being asked.
- Listen.
- Be an encourager.
- Call your spouse often.
- Hold hands.
- Look your best.
- Apologize.
- Reminisce about your favorite times together.
- Pray for your spouse everyday.
- Watch a sunset together.
- End each day with a hug and kiss.



About CARING

CARING is a quarterly publication of the Business Resource Center of the Pastoral Institute. It is designed as a resource to help you cope with the challenges of daily living at home and at work. Your *Caring for the Mind* and Employee Assistance Programs provide counseling for you and your family when you face personal and family concerns. To make an appointment in Columbus, call (706) 649-6500. In Lanett, AL, call (334) 644-1172. In other areas, call (800) 649-6446 to get a referral to a counselor in your area. Please send comments about this publication to: Editor—Delane Chappell, 2022 15th Avenue, Columbus, GA 31901 or email dchappell@pilink.org