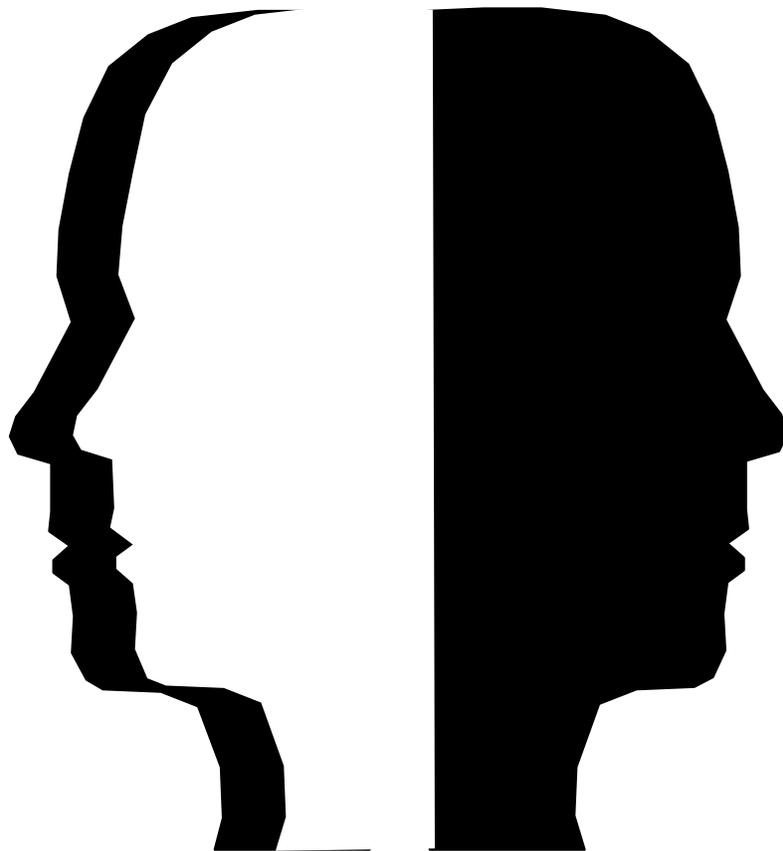


# Stress, Anxiety and Depression



**THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF MANITOBA, INC.**  
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## **STRESS, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION**

**Stress, Anxiety and Depression** was developed for The John Howard Society of Manitoba Inc.'s Basic Literacy Program. It contains fourteen lessons concerning issues of stress, anxiety and depression.

Each of the lessons is followed by an exercise designed to build literacy skills and to reinforce the information found in the lesson.

This manual was developed to provide a basic understanding of stress, anxiety and depression and ways to cope with them. While anyone can benefit from this book, it is especially suited to low-level readers.

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## LESSON #1

### Introduction

Hi, I'm Leonard. I want to tell you how I've been feeling. Lately, I have been really stressed. I mean, my heart starts beating faster and my shoulders tense up. I get angry for no reason sometimes. My girlfriend has started leaving the room when I come in. She says she gets tired of me swearing and losing it so often. I'm sure you know what I'm saying, right? I don't really like these feelings. The other day I was at the store getting a drink and a police officer was in the store buying something too. I didn't do anything wrong but I still felt weird. I thought he was checking me out or something. I almost ran out of the store with the drink. I didn't though. I waited in line to pay for it.

My friend Ben says he feels this way too when he's at work. My doctor said that feeling stressed all the time is not a good thing. High levels of stress can be very painful to a person and to those who care for him or her. It is often not easy to understand or explain why you feel the way you do.

My doctor also talked about anxiety (anks-ZY-et-tee) and depression. She said that when anxiety or depression is severe, they can be like a disease. The good news is that they can be treated.

What's weird is that feeling a little bit of stress is good because it is natural (NAT-chur-ul). It is your body warning you that something may not be right. Or

it can mean that something new and exciting is happening to you. Anyway, this workbook will tell you more about feeling stressed, anxious, or depressed.

**Do you ever feel this way?** I have a lot of stress. But I try to be friendly. I ask people how they are. Then that's all we talk about. They talk about themselves only. How does a less verbal person who is a listener ever get to be heard and listened to? We have a need to be heard too.

*Nora*

-Adapted from Internet message board

**A lot of worry:** I have always been very shy around people. At school, I never talk unless I am around someone I have always known. I even got the nickname "Mute". I worry that I will say something or do something wrong. I also worry about a lot of other things. I went to a psychiatrist and she said that I have depression. I was on medication for awhile, but it started to make me kind of sleepy. I didn't feel comfortable with it, so I'm off it now. My depression sort of got better with the medication, but now it's back. Is there anyone out there who is trying to get through a similar problem?

*Corey*

-Adapted from Internet message board

**Feeling scared:** I am 19 and my heart often beats real heavy. Like it'll take my breath away. This happens a few times a day. In any situation, I become so nervous and scared I start to stutter. I am easily scared by people. Sometimes it gets so bad, I may even cry. I keep telling my parents I want help but they think I will grow out of it. I have been like this for as long as I can remember. Thanks for listening.

*Sherri*

-Adapted from Internet message board

**EXERCISE #1A**

Answer “true” or “false” to the following statements.

1. A little bit of stress is good for you. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Feeling stress all the time is bad for you. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Stress, anxiety, and depression will not cause medical problems. \_\_\_\_\_
4. There is no way to tell when you are stressed. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Stress is not natural \_\_\_\_\_

**EXERCISE #1B**

Answer the following questions in full sentences. Try to give a different answer for each question if possible.

1. When have you felt stressed?

---



---

2. When have you felt anxious?

---



---

3. When have you felt depressed?

---



---

## LESSON #2

### Stress

Everyone has stress in his or her life, even Sally, who is usually upbeat and positive. She doesn't know what to do about her stress. Right now, she is under a lot of pressure.

Stress comes from everyday life. The things that cause stress can be good or bad things. Sally has pressures at work, and her mother just passed away. She also has a wedding that she is planning for and everything is starting to pile up. Even though a wedding should be a happy event it takes a lot of effort and planning to make it happen.

Desmond is also stressed. His stress is different from Sally's because he's in jail. His stressor is his lack of control. He has lost his freedom and he has lost control of the simple things in life. He is told when to go to sleep, what to wear, and when to attend programs. The noise and lack of privacy add to Desmond's stress level.

Our bodies react to stress. A little bit of stress is normal because it keeps us alert and active. If you are like Sally and Desmond and the stressful events are piling up, you may be at risk for illness.

We will learn how to use different coping methods in LESSON #4. Before we learn how to cope with stress, let's do the exercises on the following page to find out where our stress is coming from.

## EXERCISE #2A

Where does your stress come from?  
Checkmark all the things that give you stress.

### A. Everyday strains of life

These stresses can pile up until the pressure makes people feel worn out and unable to cope.

- daily annoyances
- boredom
- irritating neighbours
- noise pollution
- family friction
- chronic or ongoing illness
- other \_\_\_\_\_

### B. Unexpected life events

These are the tragedies and shocks of life. They usually happen suddenly and, even though the stress is great, normally with time, you heal and return to normal.

- accident (yourself or others)
- death
- illness (yourself and others)
- being a victim of crime
- change in income
- other \_\_\_\_\_

### C. Normal life events

Normal life events, these cause positive stress unless you have no control over them, see them as negative, or have had many of these events happen in a short period of time.

- marriage
- retirement
- moving

\_\_\_\_\_ turning 40 or 50 or 60  
\_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

#### **D. Personal trait stress**

Some of your personal traits make stress. This is the only source of stress over which you have complete control.

\_\_\_\_\_ being overly sensitive  
\_\_\_\_\_ being timid or fearful  
\_\_\_\_\_ having low self-esteem  
\_\_\_\_\_ feelings of jealousy  
\_\_\_\_\_ wanting things to be perfect  
\_\_\_\_\_ judging myself or others  
\_\_\_\_\_ others \_\_\_\_\_

**EXERCISE #2B**

If any of the following life events have happened in your life over the past two years, copy the value for that event under the “your score” column.

<b>LIFE EVENT</b>	<b>VALUE</b>	<b>YOUR SCORE</b>
Death of a partner.....	100	_____
Divorce.....	73	_____
Separated from partner.....	65	_____
Jail term.....	63	_____
Death of a close family member.....	63	_____
Personal injury or illness.....	53	_____
Getting married.....	50	_____
Fired at work.....	47	_____
Going back to a partner.....	45	_____
Stopping work.....	44	_____
Change in health of family member...	44	_____
Pregnancy, planned or unplanned.....	40	_____
Sexual problems.....	39	_____
New family member.....	39	_____
Change in business.....	39	_____
Change in money income.....	38	_____
Death of a close friend.....	37	_____
Change in type of work.....	36	_____
Change in number of arguments with spouse.....	35	_____
Housing costs more than my yearly wage.....	31	_____
Child leaving home.....	29	_____
Trouble with in-laws.....	29	_____
Getting a medal or award.....	28	_____
Partner begins or ends work.....	26	_____
Begin or finish school.....	26	_____
Change in living conditions.....	25	_____

(Continued on next page)

<b>LIFE EVENT</b>	<b>VALUE</b>	<b>YOUR SCORE</b>
Change in personal habits.....	24	_____
Trouble with boss.....	23	_____
Change in work hours or conditions...	20	_____
Change in residence.....	20	_____
Change in schools.....	20	_____
Change in recreation.....	19	_____
Change in community.....	19	_____
Change in social activities.....	18	_____
Rent or loan that costs less than yearly wage.....	17	_____
Change in sleeping habits.....	16	_____
Change in number of family get together.....	15	_____
Change in eating habits.....	15	_____
Vacation.....	13	_____
Major holiday.....	12	_____
Minor violations of law.....	11	_____
	<b>Total</b>	_____

- If your total is more than 300, you have an 80% chance of stress affecting your health.
- If your total is between 150-300, you have a 50% chance of stress affecting your health.
- Less than 150, you have a 30% chance of stress affecting your health.

\*This scale was taken from the Holmes-Rahe Scale of Stress Ratings.

### **LESSON #3** When Stress is Bad

Now that we know what can cause stress, we should look at how it can affect you. It can affect you in four different ways. Stress can affect you physically which means that it can change the way your body works. Stress can affect you emotionally which means that it can change the way you feel. Stress can affect you mentally which means that it can change the way you think. Stress can affect you spiritually by changing your beliefs and values.

If this stress starts to make you feel unwell, you need to do something about it. In this lesson we talk about the warning signs and problems caused by stress.

Raina suffers from stress. One physical warning sign is that her appetite for food has lessened over the last month. She gets headaches and she has trouble sleeping. Since she has been stressed, she feels a need to do more drugs. Raina also has emotional warning signs. She is easily irritated and takes it out on her best friend. She feels frustration at work, more than usual. She also often feels discouraged about her son's marks in school. You may notice some of these warning signs in yourself, or you may have others that are listed in the exercise at the end of the lesson.

You can also have mental and spiritual problems from stress. You may feel forgetful or have trouble concentrating. Maybe your attitude has become negative or you feel bored much of the time. You might find yourself "spacing out" or

perhaps you have been feeling empty. You may show more doubt in your decisions, a loss of direction or maybe you just don't care about things anymore.

Stress affects you as well as your partner, your children and your friends. Do you find yourself resenting others for not helping you? When they ask you for your attention, do you feel nagged? If you are feeling stressed, you may be finding it hard to trust others to care for you which can also bring feelings of loneliness. Stress might get between you and your loved ones, which in turn makes the problem worse.

Stress can also cause illnesses such as heart disease, asthma (AZ-mah), migraine (MI-grane) headaches, back pain and high blood pressure.

If you notice the symptoms (SIMP-tums) in this lesson affecting you, it is important that you make an effort to deal with the stress in your life. The next lesson looks at some ways to cope with stress.

### EXERCISE #3

Check the symptoms of stress you've noticed lately in yourself. There could be other causes for these symptoms, but here is a list of things that are often signs of stress.

<b><u>In My Body</u></b>	<b><u>In My Spirit</u></b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Eating more or eating less <input type="checkbox"/> Having headaches <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling tense <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling over-tired <input type="checkbox"/> Can't sleep <input type="checkbox"/> Lost weight or gained weight <input type="checkbox"/> Having colds <input type="checkbox"/> Aching muscles <input type="checkbox"/> Upset stomach <input type="checkbox"/> Pounding heart <input type="checkbox"/> Having accidents <input type="checkbox"/> Grinding teeth <input type="checkbox"/> Skin rash <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling restless <input type="checkbox"/> Tapping feet <input type="checkbox"/> Drumming fingers <input type="checkbox"/> Using more alcohol, drugs, or tobacco	<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling empty <input type="checkbox"/> Can't find meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling doubtful <input type="checkbox"/> Can't forgive others <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling singled out <input type="checkbox"/> Looking for magic <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have goals <input type="checkbox"/> Need to "prove" <input type="checkbox"/> Don't believe in myself <input type="checkbox"/> Don't care
	<div style="text-align: center;"><b><u>In My Mind</u></b></div> <input type="checkbox"/> Forgetting things <input type="checkbox"/> Miss hearing or seeing things <input type="checkbox"/> Poor concentration <input type="checkbox"/> Don't get things done <input type="checkbox"/> Negative attitude <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling confused <input type="checkbox"/> Thinking slowly <input type="checkbox"/> Whirling mind <input type="checkbox"/> No new ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling bored <input type="checkbox"/> "Spacing out" <input type="checkbox"/> Negative self-talk

<b><u>In My Feelings</u></b>	<b><u>People Power</u></b>
___ Feeling anxious	___ Keep away from people
___ Feeling frustrated	___ Can't stand others
___ Feeling "blue"	___ Feeling resentful
___ Mood swings	___ Feeling lonely
___ Bad temper	___ Lashing out
___ Nightmares	___ Hiding
___ Crying spells	___ Clamming up
___ Feeling irritable	___ Lowered sex drive
___ "No one cares"	___ Nagging
___ Feeling depressed	___ Distrust
___ Nervous laugh	___ Fewer contacts with friends
___ Worrying	___ Don't get close to others
___ Easily discouraged	___ Using people
___ Little joy	

## **LESSON #4**

### Coping with Stress

Benito is driving home from work. It usually takes him thirty minutes to get home, but on this day the traffic is really heavy. He keeps changing lanes trying to find the faster one but it doesn't help. He notices that he is getting very upset because his stress level is rising. We have already learned that stress can have a bad effect on our lives. What Benito needs to do is to manage his stress so that he doesn't damage his car or hurt someone. To manage stress you can use the coping skills that are talked about in this lesson.

One thing to keep in mind when dealing with stress is that everyone is different. Some people can handle more stress than others. Also, the way that people handle stress is different. For example, Benito knows he is stressed because he is clenching his teeth and drumming his fingers on his seat. He is coping with the stress by swearing, turning up the radio, and stepping on the gas. Whatever it is that people do, the reason they are doing it is the same. They are trying to cope with the stress.

The first thing Benito needs to do to cope with the stress is to name the problem. Why is his stress level rising? Is it because he feels like he is losing control? Or maybe he feels late for something? Maybe he's just tired and hungry and wants to get home. He needs to see how he is responding to the stress. What

are his body signals? It is easier to deal with a problem if you can figure out what it is that you are facing.

The next thing Benito must do to cope with the stress is to accept the responsibility to deal with the problem. The problem is not other slow drivers or the person on the bicycle. The problem belongs to Benito.

The final step is to come up with good methods to cope with the stress on his drive home. There are many ways to cope with the stress. Some ways may work for some people but not for others. You should try two or three ways and figure out which one works best for you. Here is a list of methods that you can use to reduce the stress in your life:

- Talk things over with a close friend or relative. You may fix the problem and will probably get rid of the tension (TEN-shun) by getting feelings “off your chest.”
- Change the scene. Remove yourself from the situation. Benito could focus his thoughts on something less stressful such as a funny show he saw on T.V.
- Take it easy. You may be asking too much of yourself. Trying to juggle too many duties at once makes it hard to do any task well.
- Exercise regularly. Choose anything that suits your fitness level. Benito could do some neck stretches while he waits for the traffic to move.
- Get enough sleep and eat well. People under stress often are tempted to skip meals or drink a lot of coffee, which causes their stress level to go even higher.

- Do not deal with your problem by taking alcohol or drugs. They won't get rid of the cause of stress. In the long run, they will give you more problems with your health.
- Organize yourself. Plan your day with a goal that you can meet. Remember to keep in mind how much you are able to handle. Don't push yourself to do what others can.
- Focus on a pleasant or relaxing scene such as a campfire, a lakeside, the northern lights, or a warm bath.
- Express your feelings as they come up. Use a journal to write them down.
- Quiet yourself inside and relax your mind by learning how to meditate (MED-it-tate).
- Take time to have fun and feel joy.
- Learn to relax your muscles. We will be discussing this in detail in the next lesson.

**Crumbling under pressure:** I have always been stressed more than most people. I was studying nursing, but recently I got so overwhelmed that I couldn't keep on. I am usually very focused, but now I can't focus at all. Has anyone else had this problem with focusing? I also would like to know how others have overcome a need to do everything perfectly. I need to learn how to relax and let go of things when they are good enough and not keep working on them until I am exhausted. Anyway, I've been going to a therapist. He completely understands how hard it is for me. I think he can help me.

**Rob**

-Adapted from Internet message board

**EXERCISE #4A**

Circle the best answer for each of the following.

1. When dealing with stress, everyone is:
  - a) exactly the same.
  - b) different.
  - c) able to handle the same amount.
  - d) professional.
  
2. Coping with stress means to:
  - a) find a way to manage your stress.
  - b) tell a police officer about your stress.
  - c) yell at the next person you see.
  - d) eat as much as you can to escape from the stress.
  
3. The first thing to do in order to cope with stress is to:
  - a) drink alcohol to relax your mind.
  - b) lock yourself in a room until it goes away.
  - c) start doing jumping jacks.
  - d) name the problem.
  
4. Accepting responsibility to deal with stress means:
  - a) knowing that the problem is yours.
  - b) knowing who to blame for the problem.
  - c) making yourself work harder.
  - d) going to the theatre to watch a movie.

Answer the following question.

1. List two methods from the lesson that you could see yourself using to cope with stress.

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## **LESSON #5**

### Relax Your Muscles

Mai-Lei just arrived home from a stressful day at work. She was asked to work overtime, which in turn made her miss her bus. Now she is two hours late but she still needs to do some chores. She must make the dinner, listen to the kids and clean the kitchen. While she is trying to make dinner, the kids are arguing. What would you do in this situation? It would likely be a good idea for Mai-Lei to have something very simple for dinner and get the kids to clean up the dishes. But tomorrow won't be much different. How can she be ready for the rest of the week?

In the last lesson, we looked at methods to relieve stress. Here is a method of relaxing all your muscles that you may wish to try. Focus your attention (a-TEN-shun) on each of your muscle groups one at a time. Some people practice this daily or a few times a week for 20 to 30 minutes at a time. Like with all of the methods to relieve stress, this works for some people and may not work for others.

The main muscle groups in your body are the ones listed below:

- Right hand and forearm
- Right hand, forearm and upper arm
- Left hand and forearm
- Left hand, forearm and upper arm
- Neck, chin, face and throat
- Chest, back and belly

➤ Right leg

➤ Left leg

For each of these muscle groups, do the following:

- Breathe in. Tense or tighten the muscles in that group for a count of 5 seconds.
- Breathe out and say, “relax” as you release the muscles.
- Pay attention to the relaxed feeling in the muscles. Do they feel warm and heavy and tingly?
- Then focus on a pleasant image in your mind for 5 seconds.

Keep doing each of these four steps for every muscle group on the last page.

When you are practicing these relaxation methods, it is important to allow yourself to relax and let go, in order to get a sense of control over your body.

**EXERCISE #5**

The words in this word-search can be found across, down, and diagonally.  
Some are also backwards.

muscle  
stress  
relax  
body  
control

face  
chest  
arm  
calves  
breathe

thighs  
feet  
inhale  
tense

exhale  
focus  
image  
neck

T	R	R	Y	H	T	J	J	E	C	A	F
T	E	U	E	H	K	Z	B	L	L	A	X
H	B	E	I	L	J	F	K	A	W	T	H
P	F	G	F	Y	A	M	E	H	K	E	M
S	H	E	L	A	H	X	E	N	E	N	U
S	S	N	E	C	K	S	A	I	H	S	S
C	H	E	S	T	E	I	F	T	T	E	C
W	C	V	R	V	I	M	O	W	A	T	L
S	P	I	L	T	Y	A	C	X	E	O	E
M	R	A	N	D	S	G	U	N	R	V	N
R	C	X	O	V	H	E	S	B	B	G	T
A	R	B	C	P	L	O	R	T	N	O	C

\*Created with Puzzlemaker on DiscoverySchool.com

LESSON #6  
Feeling Anxious?

It was in the middle of a thunderstorm that Saleem reached the airport. His flight to his new life was only a couple of hours away. He never did like flying and this day was not any different. The lightning cracked and the thunder shook the windows of the airport. Air travel and storms made Saleem feel anxious (ANK-shus).

When someone feels anxious, they may feel uneasy, tense or even panic. Saleem felt uneasy and was starting to panic as he sat waiting for the call to board the plane. He was starting to think about going back to his empty apartment.

Anxiety can also involve feelings of sadness or guilt. Saleem felt sad about leaving some good friends behind and also guilty about leaving his girlfriend. This only added to the tension he felt in the airport.

Most people have anxiety at some point in their lives. Feeling anxious is normal. It is not a sign of weakness. For some people, though, feelings of anxiety are very scary and confusing.

Feeling anxious is different than feeling afraid. People usually know why they are afraid. People are afraid of many things, such as snakes or visits to the doctor. But it is harder to know why someone is feeling anxious. Sometimes feelings of anxiety seem to come out of nowhere. For example, Carla feels panic

when she thinks about leaving her house to go to the store. Peter feels very uneasy when he is expected to say something in class. There may seem to be no reason for your anxious feelings.

Someone may feel panic for many weeks, it doesn't go away, and the person can't live a normal life. Then the feeling is no longer normal. Then the panic or anxiety has become a mental illness.

Some people tend to get anxious sooner than others.

- If someone in the family has an anxiety disorder, then it is more likely that you will also have anxiety.
- If there are problems in your relationships with other people, then you are more likely to get anxiety.
- If your body reacts to anxiety poorly, then your anxiety is likely to become worse. For example, if your heart starts to beat quickly when you are panicking, the panic will get worse.

**Who I really am:** I have suffered from anxiety for 13 years. I am just getting worn down by it. I believe I have to make major life changes to make my life better. Can I really get relief? Can I recover? How do you find the motivation to move forward to work on things when you're so depressed? I just want to feel happiness and to show who I really am as a person. Any suggestions?

***Ken***

-Adapted from Internet message board

**EXERCISE #6A****True or false?**

1. When you feel anxious, you may feel tense or uneasy. \_\_\_\_\_
2. There is always a good reason for someone to feel anxious. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Very few people feel anxious. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Anxiety is different than fear. \_\_\_\_\_
5. People who feel anxious are weak. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Anxiety is never an illness. \_\_\_\_\_
7. You are more likely to have anxiety if others in your family have anxiety \_\_\_\_\_



**LESSON #7**  
Warning Signs of Anxiety

Here is a list of warning signs that a person may be suffering from anxiety.

Put a checkmark beside any warning signs that you may have:

- í I worry constantly and don't seem to come up with any answers to my problems.
- í I move around a lot, more than I need to. My body trembles or I pace around a room or I fidget with my hands.
- í I break into sweats.
- í My muscles tense up. My neck muscles or face muscles feel tight most of the time.
- í My heartbeat is not regular.
- í I often feel faint and dizzy.
- í I have a high blood pressure.
- í I feel sick to my stomach and feel like I have to vomit sometimes.
- í I get daily headaches.
- í I get irritated easily.
- í I am often afraid that something bad is about to happen to me or others.
- í I have trouble focusing or concentrating on a problem. I end up making poor decisions about problems.
- í I avoid some places or some events that make me anxious.

Are the symptoms that you checked off keeping you from living a normal life? If they are, you may have an anxiety disorder. This will be discussed in the next lesson.

**EXERCISE #7**

Unscramble the words. The words all come from LESSON #7. When you are done, transfer the numbered letters to the same numbers on the next page to solve the mystery sentence.

RORWY

$$\frac{W}{28} \quad \frac{O}{4} \quad \frac{R}{5} \quad \frac{R}{8} \quad \frac{Y}{8}$$

REBMELT

$$\frac{1}{1} \quad \frac{3}{3} \quad \frac{18}{18} \quad \frac{23}{23} \quad \frac{20}{20} \quad \frac{7}{7}$$

GIFTED

$$\frac{10}{10} \quad \frac{29}{29} \quad \frac{25}{25} \quad \frac{24}{24}$$

WETAS

$$\frac{14}{14} \quad \frac{11}{11}$$

SENTE

$$\frac{35}{35} \quad \frac{27}{27} \quad \frac{22}{22} \quad \frac{33}{33}$$

TINFA

$$\frac{15}{15} \quad \frac{26}{26} \quad \frac{6}{6} \quad \frac{34}{34}$$

IDZYZ

$$\frac{32}{32}$$

EACHHEDA

$$\frac{2}{2} \quad \frac{21}{21} \quad \frac{31}{31} \quad \frac{13}{13}$$

DAVONIIG

$$\frac{9}{9} \quad \frac{16}{16}$$

TRAITREDI

$$\frac{12}{12} \quad \frac{30}{30} \quad \frac{17}{17}$$

DRAIFA

$$\frac{19}{19}$$

Copy the letters from the last page to the spaces with the same numbers.

1 2 3      J 4 U 5 6 7 8      9 10

11      12 13 9 U 14 15 16 17      18 19 20 21 22

23 24 25 26 27 14      28 29 30 2      31

14 32 27 25 20 33      22 34 35 P

-Chinese proverb

Copy the sentence here.

---

---

**LESSON #8**  
When Does Anxiety Become a Disorder?

It is important to remember that not every one who feels anxiety has an anxiety disorder. Some people will feel the symptoms of anxiety because of a medical disorder, being on drugs or withdrawing from drugs, but this does not mean that they have a disorder. When a person has an anxiety disorder, the anxiety will:

- seem to come out of nowhere
- last for a long time, and
- interfere with living a normal life.

Russell thinks that he is suffering from an anxiety disorder. He often catches himself worrying and can't focus on what he is doing. These symptoms are making it hard for him to take care of his child and to do his construction job well. Russell would have to see a doctor to find out if he has a disorder and if so, which disorder he has. There are many different types of anxiety disorders and each one has its own symptoms. In this workbook, we will be talking about four kinds of disorders.

Selena has been diagnosed with a **panic disorder**. She suddenly feels intense terror for no reason. She cannot know when an attack is coming because terror attacks can happen at anytime. Other warning signals Selena sometimes feels are shortness of breath and chest pain. Other people with a panic disorder break into sweats and get hot or cold flashes. They may have feelings of fainting or choking. Sometimes they feel like they are not themselves. These panic attacks can last up to several minutes at a time.

Marco suffers from **obsessive-compulsive disorder** (ob-SES-siv cum-PUL-siv disorder). Obsessing means that Marco keeps having unwanted thoughts. Acting compulsively means that Marco feels driven to do things and can't stop doing them. This is how Marco copes with his anxiety about germs and diseases. He always worries about germs and he washes his hands a lot because he is afraid of getting germs. Sometimes, he will wash his hands until they bleed. Other people might obsess about making mistakes or having bad thoughts. They might always be checking their locks or their stoves or putting things in order.

**Phobia** (FO-be-ah) is another word for fear. People who suffer from phobia feel a huge sense of terror, dread, or panic when they are faced with something they fear. Some people are afraid of heights or public places. Some are afraid of public speaking or small, closed-in places. Some fear animals or insects. When the fear becomes too strong to handle on their own, a person has an anxiety disorder called phobia.

**Post traumatic** (tra-MAT-tik) **stress disorder** can affect anyone who has lived through a traumatic event in his or her life. Such events could include a flood, earthquake, car or plane accident, fire, or war. If you have lived through a crime that was a threat to your life, you could get post-traumatic stress. This illness tends to be worse when the event was least expected. People who have been victims of home invasions or rape sometimes get post-traumatic stress disorder. For more information on this disorder you can read the workbook on *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*, which is available from the John Howard Society of Manitoba, Inc.

The good news is that all of these disorders can be treated. The next lesson will talk about ways of treating anxiety disorders.

**EXERCISE #8A**

Draw a line from a term on the left hand side to its match on the right hand side.

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Panic Disorder                 | A. Another word for fear   |
| 2. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder  | B. Can tell if you have a disorder                                   |
| 3. Phobic Disorder                | C. Examples are a fear of heights or fear of public speaking         |
| 4. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder | D. Not wanting to think about something but the thoughts keep coming |
| 5. Phobia                         | E. Someone who may be affected is a home invasion victim             |
| 6. Doctor                         | F. When the person gets intense terror attacks                       |



## **LESSON #9** Treating Anxiety

Anxiety is a common and treatable form of mental illness. An anxiety disorder can be treated using either medicine or therapy or both. Adrian and Maria are both being treated for anxiety disorders but in different ways.

Adrian uses anti-anxiety medicine. Other people might use anti-depressant medicine. Adrian needs to take this medicine for the rest of his life. If he ever goes off of it, he can risk causing a relapse. A relapse would bring the symptoms of the anxiety disorder back into his life.

Maria is also being treated, but she is taking behaviour (be-HAYV-yor) therapy (THAY-ra-pee) where she must slowly learn to face her fear of public places. Maria was taught to relax and make a list of her fears. The therapist (THAY-ra-pist) then got Maria to imagine doing what she is afraid of. The next step for Maria is to be exposed using “real” situations. She is scared of walking on busy sidewalks so the therapist will get her to walk outside for one block. The next week she will walk for two blocks. The third week she will take a bus for three blocks, and so on. This therapy works best for phobic disorders or other anxiety disorders where a reason for the fear can be found.

Other therapists will focus on the anxious person’s thinking. The therapist helps to change the negative voice in the person’s head to a positive voice. The person learns to talk to him/herself with positive, supporting words.

## EXERCISE #9A

Here are three true stories about people with different kinds of anxiety. Each story has 5 spelling mistakes. Circle the mistakes and write the words correctly on the blank spaces.

**Hey there:** I hav finally understood that I have a social phobia and I want to say it out loud. This phobia is causing my life to not reech the high point it could. Every time I have to make some appointments, I don't. I behave like an ostrich that puts his hed into the ground, waiting for the storm to go. But doing this only makes the storm get bigger and wilder, and I get really screwed up. For exampel, I haven't got my high school diploma and can't go to trade skool as I have wanted to do for years. I have a stupid job that I hate. I can't go on like this. Today I am going to see a doctor. I hope he can help.

*-Angela*

-Adapted from Internet message board

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_ 4) \_\_\_\_\_ 5) \_\_\_\_\_

**They accepted me:** I am 23 going on 24. I have had panik attacks since I was 17. When I had my first one I had no idea what do. I thought I was having a hart attack and dying. I drove myself to the hospital. The nurses treeted me like I was a drug addict. After that, I was so afraid of having another attack. I avoided my friends and family for two years. Until this summer, I finaly had the courage to no longer give in to my illness. I went out with my friends and I explained to them why I had not hung out with them in such a long time. They were very understanding. They told me to let then know when I feel an attack coming. They surprised me. They accepted me. I am finally enjoying my life. Let your friends help you. Don't cheat them out of a relationship with you.

*-C.R.*

-Adapted from Internet message board

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_ 4) \_\_\_\_\_ 5) \_\_\_\_\_

**I am not alone:** I have had anxiety all my life. I have been coming to this Internet site for a few years now. It always makes me feel better because when I come here, I know I am not alone in this world. I have made huge strides in improving my life. I have been in therapy for over two years now. This has been the cornerstone of my recovery. I still have a long way to go, but I suggest that all of you commit to some type of counseling or other self-improvement plan. It can only help! I also encourage you to be the best you can be for today. It's all you can do – be yourself at every minute.

*–Terry*

-Adapted from Internet message board

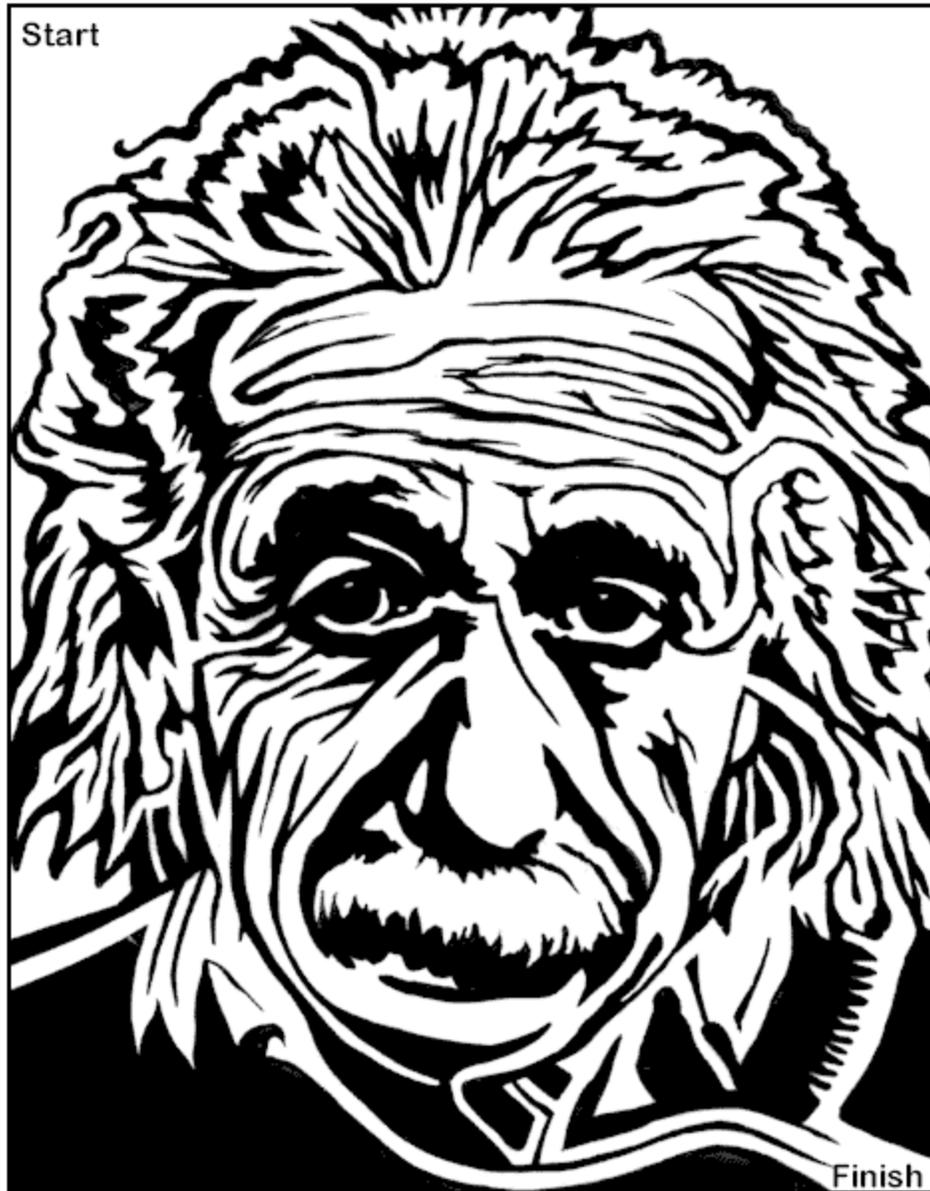
1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_ 4) \_\_\_\_\_ 5) \_\_\_\_\_

### EXERCISE #9B

Help Albert treat his anxiety by getting through the maze.

#### Mazed™ "Einstein"

by Isaac Thayer



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IMT@mazed.com

## LESSON #10

### Depression

You probably know someone who is depressed. Maybe you are or have been depressed yourself. Depression is like anxiety because they are both normal emotions. It's only when depression lasts for a long time that it can become a mental illness. The good thing about depression is that it can also be treated.

Depression does not care who you are. It will affect you if you're a man or a woman. It does not care about your race or even your age. Anyone can be affected by it. Studies have shown that about 1 out of every 4 women and 1 out of every 10 men will be diagnosed with depression in their lifetime.

Nobody really knows what causes depression but some people are more likely to have it than others. You will have depression sooner if:

- You have a family history of depression.
- You have been through a stressful event.
- You have a baby 0 to 3 months old.

Just because you feel depressed does not mean that you suffer from depression. Everyone has days where they feel a bit off. But for some people, depression is a very serious (SEE-ree-us) disorder. This type of depression is an illness and it will not go away just by thinking positive thoughts.

Living with depression is hard for everyone involved. It is hard for the depressed person, that person's family, and their friends. Let's take a look at the

exercise on the next page. It will help you find out if you might be suffering from depression.

**I thought I was better:** I feel so hopeless. For six years, I've been treated for depression. I was getting depressed less often and thought I was better. Slowly, I came off the meds. Now two months later, I am relapsing. My psychologist thinks I have an anxiety disorder. I feel so fed up and find it hard to cope.

*Judy*

-Adapted from Internet message board

**EXERCISE #10**

For the last two weeks, have you had any of the following problems almost every day?

	Yes	No
1. Do you have trouble falling, staying asleep, or sleeping too much?	↑	↑
2. Are you feeling tired or having little energy?	↑	↑
3. Do you have a poor appetite or are you overeating?	↑	↑
4. Do you have little interest or pleasure in doing things?	↑	↑
5. Are you feeling down, depressed or hopeless?	↑	↑
6. Are you feeling bad about yourself? Are you feeling that you are a failure? Are you feeling like you let yourself and your family down?	↑	↑
7. Do you have trouble concentrating on things, such as reading or watching TV?	↑	↑
8. Are you so fidgety or restless that you are moving around a lot more than usual? If not, are you moving or speaking so slowly that other people take notice?	↑	↑
9. In the last two weeks, have you had thoughts of hurting yourself?	↑	↑
10. Have you answered yes to five or more of these questions (one of which was #4 or #5)?	↑	↑

If you answered yes to question #10, you may have depression. You should talk to your doctor and ask for an examination.

\*This questionnaire was adapted from *Depression – Spot the Warning Signs – CMHA*.

## **LESSON #11**

### Do I Have Depression?

The warning signs of depression include feeling sad, helpless, hopeless, and ambivalent. If you are ambivalent (am-BIV-ah-lent) it means that you can't, or don't want to, decide what you want to do. You say one thing, but do another. You may feel that you want to be alone but at the same time you want company.

Lori has been suffering from depression for a few weeks. She has lost all interest in her life. She used to love going to the singles' club with her friends but now she just stays in all the time. She also stopped picking up the phone and lets her answering machine get all of the messages. She rarely eats and when she does have some popcorn or chips, she just leaves the dirty dishes in the living room. She sleeps on the couch in front of the television and stays up most of the night. Lori is going to an adult learning centre to get her GED but she is falling behind in her homework. She doesn't think she'll be ready for the tests and doesn't really care.

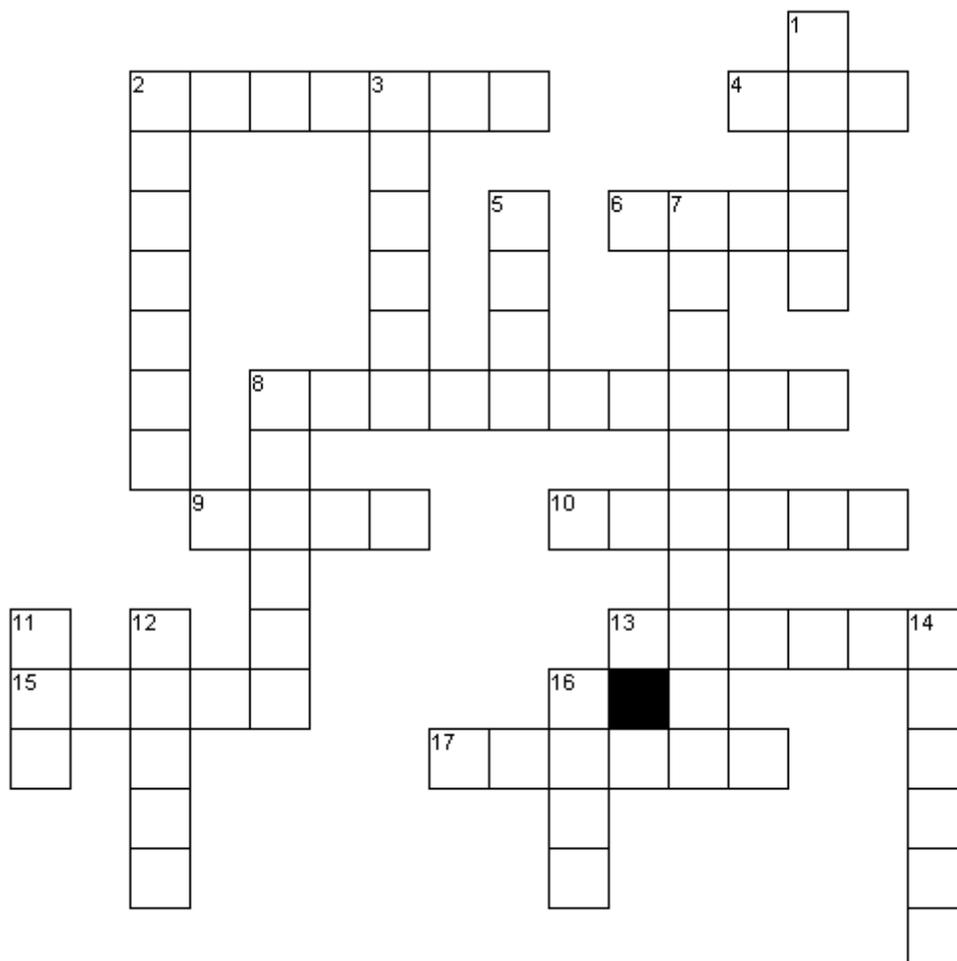
Lori is like most people suffering from depression. When they are mildly depressed, people lose the ability to take pleasure from the good things in life. Depression has become severe (sah-VEER) when people stop doing the things they need to do, like eating or seeing people. If you have depression, other warning signs you may have are:

- A big change in appetite so that you gain or lose a lot of weight.
- Problems falling asleep or waking up.
- Losing interest in activities that you enjoyed before.
- Feeling tired.
- Feeling worthless and guilty.
- Having headaches or stomach aches.

If you have four or more of these warning signs or symptoms, you should see a doctor or other health caregiver.

## EXERCISE #11

Finish the crossword with words from the lesson.



### Across

2. An ache that can be a sign of depression.
4. Not small.
6. Take \_\_\_\_ of yourself.
8. Feeling sad and hopeless.

9. Having a stomach or head pain.
10. Not being sick. Having my \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Very bad. Opposite of mild.
15. Without others. Home \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Feeling that I am to blame.

### **Down**

1. Feeling little energy.
2. Another word for “warning sign”.
3. Not awake.
5. Opposite of “gain”.
7. Not being able to or not wanting to decide what you want to do.
8. Make a decision.
11. Not happy.
12. How are you \_\_\_\_\_?
14. Feeding yourself.
16. Opposite of severe.

\*Created with Puzzlemaker on DiscoverySchool.com

## **LESSON #12**

### Depression and Suicide

Bradley lives on a reserve where there is a problem with suicide (SOO-ah-side). Nobody wants to talk about suicide but everyone hopes that it doesn't happen to someone close to them. This isn't the case for Bradley, because three of his friends have already done it. Bradley is starting to wonder if life is worth living without his friends.

Suicide is often linked to depression, and studies show that out of 100 severely depressed people, 15 will die of suicide. Many other depressed people also try suicide.

When people think about suicide, it is not so much about what is going on in the person's life. What **is** important is how the person feels about what is going on. On Bradley's reserve, his friends don't want to end their lives, but they do want to stop their suffering. All people who think about suicide feel that life is too hard to live. They feel very hopeless, helpless, and desperate.

People are most likely to commit suicide when they:

- have a serious physical or mental illness.
- are abusing alcohol and/or drugs.
- are going through a major loss, such as seeing a loved one die, losing their job, or getting a divorce.
- have tried, or made threats to try suicide.

Some warning signs that a person may be thinking of suicide are:

- if they show over and over that they feel hopeless, helpless, or depressed.
- if they don't sleep, don't eat, don't see people and don't do things they usually do.
- if they give away prized things to friends and family members.

If you or someone you know is so distressed that they cannot think of any way out except by “ending it all,” you must remember that there is help. The beginning of the way out is to let someone else in. There is no reason for people to be ashamed of feeling suicidal. They are not alone. Many people have felt suicidal when facing hard times and have survived. Take the time to tell your feelings to someone you know and trust: a relative, friend, social worker, or spiritual leader. There are many ways to cope and get support. Feeling hopeless and wishing to die will not go away at once, but it will pass.

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, other things that you can do are:

- Call a crisis telephone support line.
- Use the support of family and friends.
- Talk to your elder or family doctor. He/she can refer you to services in your community.
- Get involved with self-help groups such as Emotions Anonymous.

- Meet with mental health workers regularly and often.
- Talk every day to at least one person you trust about how you are feeling.
- Talk to someone who has “been there” about what it was like and how he/she coped.
- Talk to yourself. Remind yourself often that you are a person of worth. The gifts given to you by the Creator cannot be replaced by anyone else.

Now put a checkmark beside the ideas that you would consider using.

For more information about suicide and resources in your area, contact the Canadian Mental Health Association. You may also phone a Community Health Centre or the Society for Depression and Manic Depression for help. Also, you may want to ask for a workbook called Living With Pain and Loss: A Manual on Grieving from The John Howard Society of Manitoba.

**EXERCISE #12**

Here are two stories based on real events. Both stories are missing **capital letters** and **periods**. Read the stories once. Then read them again and fill in the right punctuation.

**Missing a great brother**

my brother zach and i grew up in northern ontario we were really good friends and did everything together my mom kept pushing us to do well in school she made sure we did our homework zach and i were both involved in school sports we both liked hockey i started playing better than zach even though i was smaller and younger than he but all the girls liked zach better one day zach was caught stealing money from the restaurant he was drunk when he did it the owner got the money back and the police didn't arrest him but zach was ashamed of what he did he thought everyone would think he was a loser he was missing the next night in the morning the police found him with a bullet to his head five years later i still miss him like crazy i know his friends do too i don't care what he did he was a great brother

*-Jeremy*

### **Why should I live?**

i started thinking about suicide when i was 21 i had just been fired from my job as a sales clerk i'm sure that happened because of my low self-esteem then my brother's wife left him and moved back to my parents' house with his two kids our house was crazy enough without them i am gay but I always tried to hide it my life was going nowhere fast i had no goals in my life i felt that no one cared about me why should i live i didn't talk about my thoughts of suicide to anyone and I didn't yet have a plan for how i would do it for some reason my sister-in-law suggested to me that i should go to college and get an education she didn't push me or anything i followed her advice i became more self-confident with my education i became a teacher's assistant now i love my job and i have lots of friends i find that i can help others because of what i went through

***-Lara***

### **LESSON #13**

#### **Treating Depression**

Getting better from depression takes time. Dena was depressed for a very long time but now she is being treated. She has days where she feels “good” and other days when she doesn’t feel much better than before. Some people will suffer from mild depression for years. Some people will recover without any help. Most people are like Dena and need to be treated for it. The good thing about depression is that it is one of the most treatable mental health problems. Each person is different and may need different treatment.

Dena is being treated in two different ways. The first way is with anti-depressant drugs. This is the way that most people can be treated. These drugs lift Dena’s mood and allow her to live as a person who does not suffer from depression. The doctor told Dena that the medication works well but there are side effects to look out for. Some foods could react to the drugs and cause high blood pressure. If you take the medicine, you should talk to your doctor about the side effects.

The second way that Dena is being treated is by counselling. Counselling gives Dena the chance to talk about her feelings and to figure out what caused her depression. Knowing the reason for the depression helps in keeping a relapse from happening. Talking to a counselor and taking medication both are the best way to

treat depression. You may want to contact the Canadian Mental Health Association for a counselor.

Another thing that can help depressed people is a self-help support group. You may want to ask your health care-giver about an Emotions Anonymous group you could attend. Dena also gets help from her family and friends, who listen to her and spend time with her.

Aboriginal medicine people or elders can be asked for help in dealing with depression. Remember to give a gift of tobacco when you ask them. An elder may suggest that you take part in smudges or sweat lodges so that you can be cleansed of your depression.

### EXERCISE #13

Being able to talk about how you feel is important for your emotional health. Try writing a poem that tells about feeling hopeless or desperate. Fill in the blanks.

Example:

Feeling depressed is	<u>pitch black</u>	(colour)
It sounds like	<u>rain falling</u>	
It smells like	<u>an old barn</u>	
It feels like	<u>being choked</u>	
It tastes like	<u>dust</u>	

Feeling hopeless is	_____	(colour)
It sounds like	_____	
It smells like	_____	
It feels like	_____	
It tastes like	_____	

Feeling desperate is	_____	(colour)
It sounds like	_____	
It smells like	_____	
It feels like	_____	
It tastes like	_____	

Feeling hopeful is	_____	(colour)
It sounds like	_____	
It smells like	_____	
It feels like	_____	
It tastes like	_____	

**LESSON #14**  
Where Do You Go For Help?

As mentioned throughout this workbook, stress, anxiety, and depression are all normal emotions. However, if you have noticed that stress, anxiety, or depression has kept you from living a normal life, you need to talk to someone about this. If these feelings seem to come out of nowhere and last for a long time, you may be suffering from an illness.

Talking about these feelings with someone you already know like your family doctor or a social worker is the first step. He or she will be able to refer you to a professional in the mental health field. You may also wish to contact the Canadian Mental Health Association in your area. You can look in your telephone book to see if there is an association where you live. You could phone a hospital or the Regional Health Authority. Most cities in Canada will also have a local chapter of the Anxiety Disorders Association.

Help is all around you. Put a checkmark beside the people you would feel comfortable contacting. Put a star (\*) beside the person you may want to contact this week.

\_\_\_\_\_ A friend who has been through it before

\_\_\_\_\_ An elder

\_\_\_\_\_ A doctor at a clinic

\_\_\_\_\_ A public health nurse

- \_\_\_\_\_ Your social assistance worker
- \_\_\_\_\_ An Indian Friendship Centre
- \_\_\_\_\_ Community centre workers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Counselor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Phoning a crisis line
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spiritual leader (minister, imam, pastor, rabbi, other)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Canadian Mental Health Association staff
- \_\_\_\_\_ A family member
- \_\_\_\_\_ Emotions Anonymous, a 12-step support group

“When the right people come together, problems become opportunities.”

**-Robert Redford**

## EXERCISE #14

Read Trina's story and Dan's story. Then go to the last page to write part of your own story, if you wish.

### **Hi, my name is Trina.**

First off, I'd like to say that I hope this post will help others as well as it does me to tell my story. I have had anxiety and depression since I was a child. I don't know exactly when it started, but I always felt something wasn't quite right. It didn't help that I was sexually abused when I was 5 and was date raped at 16. I never learned to drive because I was too afraid. There are so many things I did not do because I was so afraid. I got into drugs and alcohol, starting at 21, in order to self-medicate, of course. How else was I going to cope? No better way to keep myself sane, right? Not only was my life not sane, it went to hell. Anyway, I'm 31 now. I have a 4 year old son and when he was born, I couldn't enjoy being a mom. My anxiety was so bad, I couldn't leave the house without having a drink or knowing where I could get one. That's the only way I knew how to deal with being in public.

A friend then told me that I may have anxiety disorder. He also suffered from it and suggested I go see a doctor. I did and I got diagnosed and got some meds. I tried different ones until we found some that seem to be helping. I also go to a drug treatment program that helps me with my alcoholism as well as my anxiety that started me using in the first place.

Everything in my life makes sense now. Well, almost everything. I'm starting to love myself. I enjoy motherhood a lot. I hope to go to school to become a counselor. My goals for this summer are to take yoga and go camping with my son. I know I've got a long way to go before I am completely well. I don't know if I'll ever be off meds. Who knows what the future holds. That's my story. I look forward to making friends. Look forward to hearing from some of you.

***Trina***

-adapted from Internet message board

### **Hey, dudes. I'm Dan.**

This is my second time in jail. I know what I did was wrong and I should do what I can to make things right. I'm addicted to crack and that keeps me from controlling my life. When I'm in jail, there's nothing I can do about it. When I'm on the street, I get sucked back into the same old way of living. I'm feeling pretty hopeless.

It feels like such a waste of time in here. But it's more than just a waste of time. You wouldn't believe how stressful it is. Every morning I wake up and hope I won't get hurt – or that I won't hurt someone else to protect myself. It's noisy in here, even at night. The light keeps me from sleeping properly. It seems my lawyer has forgotten about me. Most of the guards are okay, but one of them sure has it in for me. On top of it all, there was big fight in the shower today. Do you see what I mean? I feel nervous and tense most of the time.

Last week a new guy came in. Mark is sharing my house. He is more relaxed than most of the guys. He talks to people with respect – even the guards. He invited me to go to the Sharing Circle with him, so I did. The elder and Mark do a prayer and a smudge together every evening. Mark prays a lot, sometimes for hours at night.

The elder is working on getting a sweatlodge for all the guys who want to go. In a sweatlodge, there are songs and prayers calling on the Creator and the spirit helpers. Mark told me sweatlodges are good for healing and for cleaning out bad spirits from your body. I've never been to a sweat and I don't know if I could handle the heat.

But I need to get rid of this tension in my head before I crack. I'm thinking of asking Mark if I can smudge with him. And I figure the heat in a sweatlodge can't feel worse than my stress. I'm signing up.

I wonder if there are sharing circles and sweats I could go to when I get out of here?

**-Dan**



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## What do you think of this Workbook?

What is the title of this workbook?

---

Did you find this workbook useful? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Why or why not?

---

Did you learn things that you wanted to know about? Yes\_\_ No\_\_

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think that you will use any of the ideas in your everyday life? Y\_\_ N\_\_

How: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the reading too easy\_\_ just right\_\_ or too difficult\_\_?

Was the reading boring\_\_ or interesting\_\_?

I suggest: \_\_\_\_\_

Were the exercises too easy\_\_ just right\_\_ or too difficult\_\_?

Were the exercises boring\_\_ or interesting\_\_?

I suggest: \_\_\_\_\_

Which other workbooks, if any, have you completed?

---

What other topics would you like to learn about in a workbook?

---

Do you think the workbooks are a good way to learn about these topics?

Yes\_\_ No\_\_

Do you think there are other ways to learn about these topics? Do you have any suggestions for us? \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.**

Please return the completed form to the John Howard Society instructor or send it to:

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