



# LOW MOOD & DEPRESSION



Everybody experiences low mood sometimes, but depression is a mental health condition where a consistent and long-lasting low mood impacts the person's ability to lead a normal life.

Depression can be mild, moderate, or severe. Some people with depression have thoughts about death and suicide.

Experiencing low mood can make everyday life very difficult. People with depression may struggle with their normal every-day tasks, withdraw, and isolate themselves.

## COMMON SYMPTOMS

- Consistently feeling sad, hopeless, guilty, numb
- Losing interest in things you used to like
- Low energy, low motivation, feeling tired, tearful
- Changes in sleeping, eating and weight
- Negative thoughts about yourself, the world and the future

## WHAT KEEPS IT GOING

Depression can be caused by stressful life events, past experiences, low self-esteem, bereavement, and genetics.

Negative thoughts play a big part in depression and low mood. Often, our thoughts, feelings and behaviours influence each other and interact to keep depression going.

## GET TO KNOW YOUR DEPRESSION

It can be extremely difficult to see past the darkness and hopelessness that comes with depression.

Understanding your depression can help you separate yourself from it, helping you to see things more clearly.

- Recognise depression for what it is – a mental condition that is temporary
- Give your depression a name
- Use a mood tracker to study your mood patterns. Rate your mood on a scale of 1-10.
- When you notice a negative thought, ask yourself “is this thought based on fact?”



## COPING STRATEGIES



These strategies can help you find some comfort and support when your mood is low.

- Coping strategies include:
- Make a plan or timetable of your day to help you manage essential tasks. Make it manageable, not overwhelming
- Make your own “What I will say to myself” cards
- Use relaxation techniques to comfort your body and mind
- Distraction activities and selfcare

**BE KIND TO YOURSELF, AND SHARE YOUR FEELINGS.**