

Words Can Work®:
When Talking About Depression and Other Mental Health Disorders

List three symptoms young people with depression may experience:

1.) _____

2.) _____

3.) _____

Note: At one time or another, many young people may experience these symptoms. When symptoms that persist for at least two weeks or longer, they may be a sign of depression.

If someone said a person with depression or other mental health disorder was “weak,” how would you respond?

Chamique says that when someone is depressed and asks for help, it’s a sign of strength not weakness. What do you think she means by this?

Why is it important for a person with depression to seek medical treatment?

When someone is prescribed antidepressant medication, why’s it so important they take the medication under the care of their doctor?

Mike was so depressed that he thought about taking his own life. How did medical treatment change the way he viewed life?

Mike turned to his school guidance counselor for help. Write down the name of an adult you could talk to if you felt emotionally overwhelmed.

If you suspected that a friend or someone else you care about was depressed, what would you do?

Sometimes young people don’t tell an adult when a friend says they’re depressed or mentions suicide. If a friend confides this, why’s it important that you tell an adult you trust?

List two things Angie learned in therapy.

1.) _____

2.) _____

In the past, Angie drank alcohol to try to numb her emotions. Why is it dangerous for someone to use alcohol – or another drug not prescribed specifically for them by a doctor – to try to cope?

All people have upsetting things happen to them. Name a recent event that upset you, and describe how you dealt with it.

Looking back, how do you feel about how you handled it?

How is being upset different from being depressed?

List two healthy ways to deal with stress.

1.) _____

2.) _____

Self-injury is a sign of deep distress. If you knew that a friend was cutting, scratching, or injuring him or herself in any other way, what would you do?

At first, James worried that others would judge him if they knew he had a bipolar disorder. After reading his story and the others in this booklet, has your view of mental illness changed? If so, how?

Chris has a mental illness called schizoaffective disorder. List two symptoms of this mental illness.

1.) _____

2.) _____

Some people don't talk about mental illness if they or a family member is affected. What can happen when people stay silent about mental illness?