

The School_Nurse Daily

By: Tamra Douglas

Devotional highlight

'The Indwelling Christ' - John 14:20

Have you noticed how butterflies are formed? Just like a caterpillar that cocoons itself to be transformed into a butterfly or a moth at the end of its transformation, so too does Christ come to life in us through the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, changing us into something better; even more beautiful than a butterfly. Jesus and the Father will enter and make their home in those who obey Him. Through the Holy Spirit, He dwells in us, changing us from inside out. And no matter how you picture it, we have Christ living inside us, guiding us, and helping us to grow and be more like the people of God He has called us to be. ([Extract from Our Daily Bread, 2022](#))

Prayer - Dear Jesus, thank you for sending the comforter to be our guide and our shoulder to lean on. Thank you also for moulding us into the men and women you need us to be. Thank you for giving of yourself that we may be called children of God. Amen.

Diagnosis of the Day

'Depression'

Feeling down lately? Feeling like life is heavy? Or maybe things have not been feeling the same for the past few days? Well, truth be told, we have all been there at one point, but that does not mean you should be treated any less than another person. Now, we are about to be educated on a few of the ins and outs of depression, and it may be a lengthy one. But stay with me if you would like to be intentional in combating depression for yourself, or helping a friend in need.

By definition, depression is a mood disorder that causes severe symptoms that affects how we feel, and carry out daily activities like sleeping, eating, and even thinking.

There are many different types of depression, but the two most common among adolescents (aged 10-19 years 12-18?) are Major Depression, and Persistent Depressive Disorder (also called dysthymia). Major Depression occurs when an individual experiences symptoms of depression most of the time for AT LEAST 2 weeks, while Persistent Depressive Disorder occurs when individuals experience LESS severe symptoms of depression, that lasts much LONGER, typically for at least 2 YEARS.



[1 in every 7](#) adolescents experience a mental disorder, with depression, anxiety, and behavioral disorders being the leading cause of illness among them.

Common [signs and symptoms](#) include:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, or pessimism
- Feelings of irritability, frustration, or restlessness
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Changes in appetite
- Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts

It is important to note that no two persons experience the same symptoms, and you may not always experience every known symptom.

Depression can be hard to deal with, and not everyone will know that they are depressed, and even if they do know, not everyone will be willing to speak about it, or to ask for help. So here we are, discussing the undiscussed. Yes, it is very possible that you may be a little on the sad side right now, but that happens sometimes. We won't always feel like we want to go to work or school today, nor will we always want to socialize like we always do. But do you know what we do not want? To be trapped in this continuous cycle of nothingness. So here are 5 tips that can help to improve our situation.

COPING WITH DEPRESSION

TIP 1 - PRAY

Someone told me once that depression is not mine to own, and I have never looked at depression the same way again. DO NOT OWN DEPRESSION, it is not yours, it is always ‘the depressive feeling’ and not ‘my depression’. 1 Peter 5:7 says that we should cast our anxieties on Him, because He cares for us. Cast depression too! Cast that feeling of nothingness, cast the urge to not eat, cast the thought that no one loves you and that you are alone. Depression can be a decaying process, so it's important that we also fight this battle with the help of the Lord. Or, if you may, hand it over to Him, because many times we are too weak and worn down from experiencing all these emotions, to do anything about it.

TIP 2 - STAY CONNECTED

Getting support is important, while on your own it is challenging to maintain a healthy state of mind, or to gather the strength to keep depression away. Although the very nature of depression prompts us to withdraw from others, it proves healthy to try and push through.

At times we may feel too exhausted to talk, too ashamed to admit it, and too guilty for neglecting our relationships. It is important to know that these feelings are all side effects of depression; and staying connected can make a world of difference in that very outlook, and more importantly, your mood.

How to reach out for support? Here are a few ways how:

- Look for support from people who make you feel safe and cared for
- Try to keep up with social activities even when you don't feel like it
- Care for a pet
- Join a support group (Or make a support group) for depression – being with others experiencing depression helps with reducing isolation and helps with encouraging each other
- Talk about your feelings with someone you trust or through journaling.

TIP 3 – DO THINGS THAT MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD

Doing things that help us relax and energizes us helps to overcome depression. This could be maintaining a healthy lifestyle, learning how to manage stress, setting boundaries on things we can do, exercising and scheduling fun activities in our day.

It is important to remember that we cannot force ourselves to have fun, but we can push ourselves to do the activities, even when we do not like it. And remember, the depressive feeling will not lift immediately, but gradually you will feel more upbeat and more like yourself again.

Let's develop a 'Wellness Toolbox' to deal with depression.

This week I will aim to:

- *Spend some time in nature.*
- *List what I like about myself.*
- *Read a good book.*
- *Watch a funny movie or TV show.*
- *Take a long bath.*
- *Take care of a few small tasks.*
- *Play with my pet.*
- *Talk to friends or family face-to-face.*
- *Listen to positive uplifting music.*
- *Do something spontaneous.*

Ps - However, I will only do about 2 to 3 each day. So, let's start!

TIP 4 – SUNLIGHT, NATURE, EXERCISE, FOOD!

Sunlight helps to boost serotonin levels (a neurotransmitter that helps improve our mood, aka the happy hormone). So, whenever possible, take a walk for at least 15 minutes for the day.

Also, let's enjoy the beauty of nature while we are out there, yes? Yes. Research proves that 'nature therapy' is effective in combating depressive symptoms. It may be a leisurely walk, sitting outside by the river, in your backyard enjoying the scenery, or you weeding out your garden, just do it! Your mind will love you for it!

Believe it or not, exercise is a powerful depression fighter! Whenever I was stressed out by school work, this was always my go-to remedy (that or sleep lol). Studies show that regular exercise can be as effective as medications. So, let's aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise per day. And try that outside to triple the therapy! Sunlight + Nature + Exercise, whew! What a combo!

Let's not forget our food while we are at it. What we eat has as much impact on us as what we read, listen, or do.

- We are going to aim to reduce any food that negatively affects our brain and body, this may include caffeine, alcohol, and even trans-fat.
- We'd also want to stop skipping meals as this makes us feel irritated and tired.

- Let's also boost our B vitamins – when our body lacks these, it may trigger depressive symptoms within us. So, we can either take B supplements, or eat foods rich in B-complex such as citrus fruits, leafy greens, beans, eggs, and chicken
- Eating foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids can help to boost our mood. The best food sources of this can be found in salmon, mackerel, sardines, and tuna. Or, you can always get your supplements at your local pharmacy.

TIP 5 - CHALLENGE NEGATIVE THINKING

Depression has a funny way of putting things in a negative perspective. So, those thoughts of being weak and powerless, the thoughts of bad things happening only to us, the thoughts that make us feel like we have no control over our situation? You see those thoughts? They stem from depression.

Our irrational and pessimistic thoughts and attitudes are also known as Cognitive Distortions, and it is important to know and remember that they are not real. Breaking out of this pessimistic mind frame will not be as easy as just 'thinking positive', so a key factor will be learning the type of negative thoughts that are fueling the depression, acknowledge them, then redirect it and replace it with a more balanced thought process.

One of the more common cognitive distortions is 'Labelling'. This is where we classify ourselves based on mistakes and perceived shortcomings: ("I'm a failure; an idiot; a loser."). With this identified, challenge the thought with questions such as:

- "What's the evidence that this thought is true? Not true?"
- "What would I tell a friend who had this thought?"
- "Is there another way of looking at the situation or an alternate explanation?"
- "How might I look at this situation if I didn't have depression?"

While you cross-examine these, you may be surprised at how quickly the thought is erased from your mind, and with this process you will develop a more balanced perspective of life.



LASTLY AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, seek professional help when you feel all efforts have failed. Approach your school's guidance counsellor and explain to them what you have been going through. You can also visit your local health clinic and request to speak with a counsellor and they will arrange meetings regarding such. You may also speak to your home Pastor and arrange counselling sessions as needed.

Depression is not something to take lightly, nor is it something to make fun of. It is not a situation where you are just 'under the weather and you'll feel better soon'. It is very serious. Do your best to offer support to a friend if they express the need for help, no matter how minor the situation may seem. You never know when that 'I feel out of it' can turn into 'I don't want to continue life anymore'.

Take care of your mental health, and help others care for theirs.

A Herbal Remedy

Colds, Coughs, and flu (Hurley, J.B., 1995, pp 322-325)

Let's start with something common among us all, a constant nuisance, but so easy to cure!

The best way to get through the cold and flu season (even when it is out of season), is to ensure our immune system is tuned up and ready to fight. We can do this through regular exercise, stress management, and even eating garlic too (in moderation). But, to add more useful alternatives, these are what you can do:

- Make a thyme (or eucalyptus) tea - thyme does a marvelous job at temporarily clearing head and nasal congestion ('stuffy nose').
 - Thyme Steam – this also helps to clear congestion due to cold. So, boil a pot of hot water, add some dried thyme, position your head over the pot, and cover with a towel for 15 minutes. Breathe, and relax.
 - P.S. The same can be done with the eucalyptus.
 - Fun fact: thyme is also good for relaxing the lungs enough to encourage the flow of mucus and cure coughing.
- Make ginger tea – this is also great for clearing congestions. Grate a handful of ginger and squeeze the juice into a cup. Cover with boiling water and sip, no need to steam.
- 'Mek wi sweat it out' - things that make you sweat out a fever are known as 'diaphoretics'. One of the best diaphoretics is our good old lemon and a little thyme. Chop a whole lemon, add some dried thyme, add a cup of water, and bring it to a boil. Strain and drink.



Make an Aloe solution – mixing the juice or 'jelly' of the aloe vera herb ('sinkle bible') with equal parts of honey and swallow. Aloe vera as a demulcent helps to soothe scratchy coughs. It has soothing properties and helps to relieve the discomfort that coughing brings.

With that, happy healing!

Read a book with me!

'feeling good - the new mood therapy'

The clinically proven drug-free treatment for depression by David D. Burns, M.D.

I am sure you have gathered by now that I LOVE reading! Absolutely love! Lol, now that we have that established, I would love for you to read this text with me. It's one of my current reads. I will provide you with a weekly summary of certain aspects of the book, aspects that will prove to serve you well! However, not everything will be available on the newsletter, so if you think you need to know more, then go on over to my Instagram page and check the highlights for the posts I have made on this text. With that said, let's get into it, we'll start with basic introductions this week.

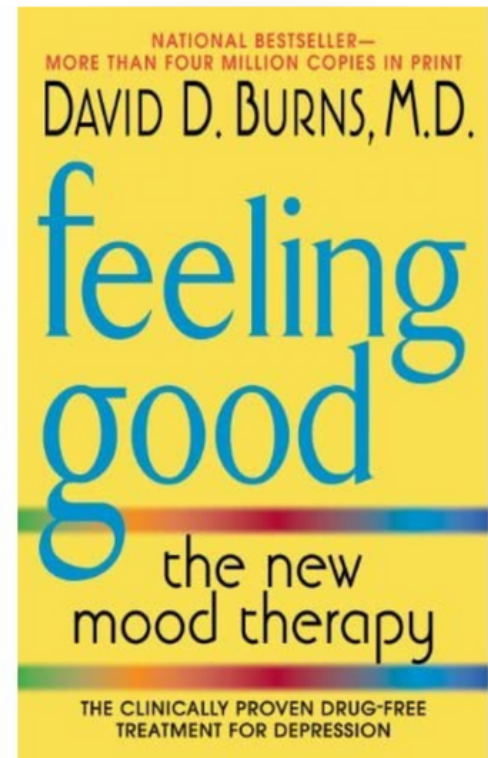
Feeling good speaks to the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in illnesses, mainly depression. The ideas expressed here are basic, down-to-earth, and intuitively appealing. Various research have confirmed the effectiveness of CBT for those suffering from anxiety and depression, as well as other illnesses.

So, what is CBT? Cognitive is a thought or perception, therefore, your cognition is what you think, and this is the branch of psychology that assists with altering your thought process.

We all know that when thoughts scroll across our minds, they automatically have an impact on how we feel. Your feelings result from the messages you tell yourself (believe it or not). As a matter of fact, your thoughts have much more to do with how you feel, than what is actually happening in your everyday life.

Greek philosopher, Epictetus: 'people are disturbed not by things, but by the views we take of them'. Proverbs 23:7 'for as he thinks within himself, so is he'.

Shakespeare: 'for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so'. Coincidence? I think not.



We believe that the cause of our mood is due to something beyond our control, when in fact, we can learn to change the way we think about things, our basic values, and beliefs. After doing so, we will often experience profound and lasting changes in our mood, outlook, and productivity. And that my friend, is cognitive therapy in a nutshell.

The intricacies of this beautiful art will unfold as we read and learn how CBT can help us overcome depression, your constant sadness, or to just help you through your day. Stay tuned for your compressed version of Feeling Good - The New Mood Therapy.

[Visit my website to download a free PDF version of this text.](#)



Ask the Nurse!

Here I'll answer a popularly asked question from the community. This question can be: how to improve your quality of life, a question about my role as a school nurse, or, if you need help with a particular problem, anything relevant, ask away. The means by which this can be done is found on our website.

Question: Why did you start this project?

Response: I have always had a knack for helping people, also, I am very good with words and/ expressing myself, so I decided to give this a shot. That coupled with my love for mental health and empowering people, made giving back to my community (literally and figuratively) in this fashion. I want adolescents to be empowered through knowledge that is either not readily available to them, or is not expressed well. I want parents to become aware of MORE ways they can care for their children, especially mentally, because with the society we are in, there is deep deprivation of this knowledge. And I want my community to know that I am here and available to help in any way I can.

With this platform, individuals (students and parents alike, even those outside of the Kellits High family) will be able to ask the questions they are afraid to ask others, or have asked but did not get a response.

However, please note, I do not know everything, I am not all knowing, and many things I will have to research to be able to assist you as best as possible. With that said, thank you for joining my community and I hope it will be a blessing to you!

Dear Parents:

“It is easy to miss the signs of depression in our children. It is easy to misread mental frustration and lack of interest in activities, as our children ‘just acting out’ because we told them to do something. It is also easy to think that they were up in their room all day because they don’t want to complete their chores, when actually it’s an action due to being depressed or sad. I implore us all to pay keen attention to our children.

Sometimes we push them too hard to complete school related tasks, or even to take up too much responsibility at home, which are both factors that increase symptoms of depression in our children.

I’d like us all to take a moment and reflect. Are we pushing our children too hard and not giving them a break? Do we miss reading the signs of a cry for help? Are we too distant from our children, when they’d very much rather be bonding with us than going out with their friends? Are we speaking ill of our children way too often than is considered ‘appropriate’ for our culture?

What are we missing? And if you think you are not missing anything, do a relationship audit with them separately. Ask them how they are doing, how is school? Are their friendships going well? Is there a close ‘friend’ in the picture? How are their relationships going (please, let’s not be naive. We are talking to adolescents that have gone through puberty with unpredictable emotions. You have two options: either you teach them how to be in proper-supervised relationships, or you let society teach them)?

Do relationship audits as often as possible, and bond with your children every chance you get. The relationship will love you for it.”

Departmental Highlight

This week's departmental highlight comes from the **Examinations Department**. Keep in mind the following examination fees:

Deadline for all payments - Friday , November 4,2022.

Please contact Mrs. K. Brown Bryan at 876344-1598 for further information.

CSEC

Admin. Fee \$ 2,500.00 (one time fee)

Entry Fee \$ 5,445.00 (one time fee)

Subject Fee\$ 4,405.00

CSEC Practical Fees

CSEC Spanish - \$1,890.00

Textile Clothing and Fashion \$1,535.00

Food Nutrition and Health\$ 1,535.00

Family and Resource Management \$1,535.00

Theatre Arts \$ 2,545.00

Physical Education and Sports\$ 3,285.00

CAPE

Admin. Fee- \$ 3, 000.00 (one time fee)

Entry Fee- \$5,590.00 (one time fee)

Subject Fee- \$ 6,595.00

City and Guilds

Admin. Fee\$2,500.00

Entry Fee \$4,380.00

Subject Fee £ 28 .00

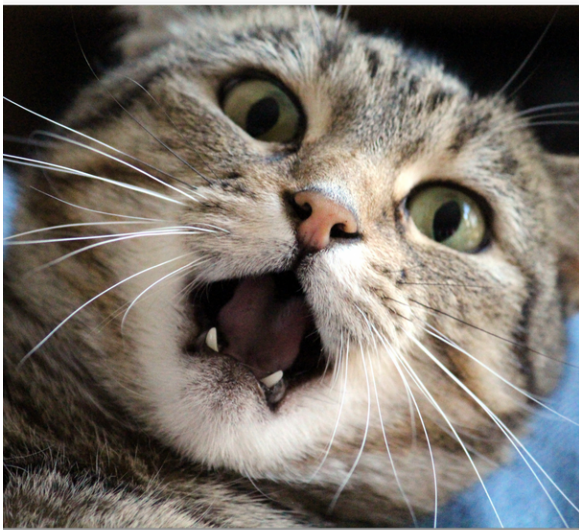
All fees should be paid at the National Peoples' Cooperative Bank (P.C Bank) Kellits, Clarendon. A bank charge of \$150.00 Jamaican dollars is applicable to all payments at the bank.

Den Cu Yah!

This week's 'Cu Yah' (look here) feature is inspired by our diagnosis of the week - Depression.

Did you know suicide accounts for over 800,000 deaths globally each year? It is the second leading cause of death worldwide for 15-29 year old's.

Also, many people do not seek treatment for mental illness due to the associated stigma. Only 44% of adults with diagnosable mental illnesses receive treatment.



Thank you



References

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