



**TALKTOABLOKE**  
COUNSELLING FOR MEN BY MEN

### DO I HAVE DEPRESSION?

Depression is a diagnosed mental health condition and a very serious one. Unfortunately the term is thrown around a lot online and in social circles without a diagnosis. For the purpose of this factsheet, let us instead reframe this as "I am currently experiencing symptoms of depression" or more simply "I am currently feeling down". Depression makes us feel sad, sometimes low or empty, and possibly irritable. It effects 1 in 8 men at some point in their lives, although different sources quote higher figures than this. In general , men tend to become aware of depression physically rather than emotionally. We feel the symptoms in terms of things like energy levels and weight changes before we notice changes in how we feel.

### WHAT TO DO?

1: Seek professional help: Counsellors, Psychologists and your local Doctor are three great options to start.

2: Phone a friend: Or even better.... go and see one. We are social creatures and the value of social support cannot be underestimated. Time with friends , family, and colleagues helps us all.

3: Exercise: We all know it don't we? and yet .... Exercise has a lot of evidence behind it to help with depression. It provides a distraction for us, it improves social connection if done with others, it improves sleep and helps our energy levels. Overall it improves our health in a variety of areas. Importantly it also gives us back some sense of control which helps our self esteem.

4: Diet: I often think, GIGO... garbage in , garbage out with this one. For me, I like to have a beer, and I like to spoil myself with rich foods. But , I know that overindulgence or being a bit TOO regular with these things has a profound effect on my mood, my sleep, my energy levels and more. Take a look at the basics in your diet, how much junk are you eating, how much fruit and veg and how much alcohol are you drinking? Don't hit the fad diets, instead take a look at the evidence based suggestions such as <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/healthy-eating>. One thing that is common across many men I meet is not what we eat but how much, there is a tremendous amount of research supporting the idea of eating less. Take a look!

5: Other: Journalling, yoga, meditation, mindfulness, getting more sleep, and practising gratitude are all options that can help us move in the direction we need to head. With all of these, to me, the factor that accelerates their success is whether or not you can enjoy them. There are a couple of items in this list that I don't like but you might. Give them a go, and as always....

Don't do it alone! Regards  
Evan