



A message to instructors ...

Mental health is a deeply personal issue that is usually difficult to discuss. Whether concerns revolve around an individual's own mental health concerns or those of others, mental health affects entire families, colleagues, close friends and communities. Because of stigma, discrimination and fear, mental health concerns often create family secrets, e.g. something that is never discussed. Added to this dilemma is the fact that a symptom of mental illness is that people often do not recognize when their own thoughts/ feelings are not normal. They may not feel sick and most of the time, people don't have sufficient objectivity to see what others may be observing. This is one of the complexities of addressing topics and concerns surrounding mental health.

While it is a difficult challenge, please know that it's usually a relief when people have opportunities to hear about and talk about such an important issue.

As this curriculum is taught, don't be afraid to ask students how they're doing or how they're feeling. When this is done, be prepared to truly listen for the answers, even if conversations are difficult or uncomfortable. Mental health is a hard subject to teach and to truly understand. While you may not fully understand issues that arise, your most critical teaching role may be to facilitate knowledge and understanding and help people find resources. In discussing these issues, emotions - including your own - may run high. All endeavors to positively address the realities of mental illnesses and mental health challenges are needed. You're embarking on a challenging – but worthwhile - journey to create a healthier, happier environment for those you serve.

Thank you!



Addiction / Co-occurring disorders: addiction problems pose mental health challenges, and mental health challenges often pose addiction problems. However, not all people with addictive disorders have mental illnesses, and vice versa. Addictions often have a strong base in genetics or inherited family genes and physical health. Addiction is not normally considered a mental illness or mental health challenge unless it occurs in conjunction with a mental illness. The facts are:

- 50% of people with an addictive disorder also have a mental illness or anxiety disorder.
- 20% of people with mental illnesses have some sort of addiction.
- There is a strong correlation between mental health and substance use, as alcohol or other substances are often used to medicate (or self-medicate) mental health symptoms.
- Addiction is not a mental health diagnosis, but addictions certainly impact and complicate how the brain - and therefore behaviors - are impacted.
- Addictions, however, may become so serious that they can lead to mental illnesses. Addiction is a vital topic to cover, check statements in the pre- and post- tests to ensure wording that's accurate and comfortable within the context of the curriculum.

You might want to introduce the topic of genetics in this section. It's sometimes hard to be self-aware of personal behaviors, but they may recognize those of family members or friends. Science continues to evolve, but there seem to be linkages to genetics in many mental health diagnoses as well as addiction problems. Genetics are not at the point of predicting who **will** develop illnesses, but it is at a point of recognizing vulnerabilities that make some people more likely to become ill.

- Additional resources to use to bring in some interesting statistics:
 - Family History and Genetics – www.ncadd.org/about-addiction/family-history-and-genetics
 - National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
 - Binge Drinking
 - Consequences and Risks of Underage Drinking
 - Adverse Effects on Brain Development



Let's Talk About Depression

Lesson Plan

Materials needed	Handouts	Estimated time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dry erase board and markers Pencils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Let's Talk About Depression" lesson "Listening Activity" handout Skills Practice Worksheet Pre-Assessment Post-Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 hour

NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR: To accommodate the literacy levels and educational experiences of the participants, oral and/or group activities may be substituted for reading, writing, skills practice, and survey activities.

Elements	Activities	Notes
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the topic. (5 minutes) Conduct the Pre-Assessment. (5 minutes) Introduce the new vocabulary. (5 minutes) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What do you think when you hear the word "depression"? Have you ever known a friend or family member with depression? What could a person with depression do to get better? How can you help someone with depression? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute Pre-Assessment, and ask students to turn it in when it is complete. Write the vocabulary words on the board and ask the students to read them aloud. Ask the students if they know what they mean. Provide students with the definitions from the lesson.
Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the lesson "Let's Talk About Depression". (10 minutes) Identify the vocabulary words in the lesson. (5 minutes) Distribute and review the Skills Practice Worksheet with the students and ask them to complete it. Use the Answer Key sheet to verify the correct answers. (25 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor leads guided reading of topic. Students identify the vocabulary words by circling them in the lesson. Activity 1: Students have 10 minutes to complete this activity. Activity 2: Students have 10 minutes to complete this activity. Activity 3: Students have 5 minutes to complete this activity.
Concept Check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct Post-Assessment. (5 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students complete Post-Assessment.



Let's Talk About Depression
Pre-Assessment

Date: _____

Name: _____

Circle the correct answer.

1. Only old people get depression.

True

False

2. You can get better with treatment for depression.

True

False

3. Some signs and symptoms of depression are:

- a. you are losing or gaining weight
- b. you don't want to do fun activities with your friends
- c. you have problems sleeping
- d. all of the above

4. If you are having thoughts of suicide you can call The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline any day of the week. You can talk to someone in Spanish or English.

True

False

5. What is the best way you can help a friend with depression?

- a. you can talk with the friend and share your concerns
- b. you can listen to him/her
- c. you can help the friend make an appointment with a doctor or therapist
- d. all of the above

Total Correct: _____



Let's Talk About Depression



Vocabulary

- Grieve
- Depressed/Depression
- Suicide
- Therapist

Juan is a 20-year-old man who works at a grape vineyard in Texas. Pablo is his friend. Pablo is worried about Juan. Juan has missed work lately. When Pablo asked Juan about missing work he said, "It's been really hard lately to get out of bed in the morning. I am tired all the time. Everything just seems impossible. I feel like nothing is going to change or get better." Pablo talked to Juan about the time he was depressed. He told Juan how his doctor helped him.

What is depression?

Many people may feel sad for several days or a week or two. A person may *grieve* after a loved one dies. This is normal. Being sad does not always mean you are *depressed*. *Depression* is different. Depression happens when sadness lasts more than a few weeks. It affects everyday activities like sleep and work. It also affects the ability to enjoy life. Depression can affect anyone at any age. It is a medical condition. If you think you are depressed, get help. It can get better with treatment.

Why do some people get depressed?

There are many reasons for depression. It may happen when:

- A person is facing stressful situations like losing a job or sickness
- A friend or loved one died and the grief lasts longer than it should
- A person may have been in, or seen a serious accident
- Other members of the family have had it
- Some chemicals in the brain do not work well

Sometimes a person can be depressed even if there is no reason.

How do I know if I am depressed?

A person who is depressed:

- feels sad or negative every day for **more than 2 weeks**, **OR**
 - feels like he or she cannot manage life as well as before
 - **AND** has some of the feelings below:
- | | |
|--|---|
| • feels negative about the future | • feels very guilty or does not feel important |
| • has lost interest in activities he or she usually enjoys | • has trouble thinking, paying attention, or remembering things |
| • eats a lot more or a lot less than usual | • has thoughts of death or <i>suicide</i> |
| • is often irritable | • has pain, like headaches or stomachaches, that don't go away with treatment |
| • can't get to sleep or stay asleep at night | |
| • feels tired throughout the day | |



Get help if you think you might be depressed.



Where can I get help?

Visit your doctor or *therapist*. To be ready for your visit, write down this information:

- Any changes in life that you think may cause your depression
- When these feelings of sadness started
- How long they have lasted
- How they affect your daily activities
- A list of medicines, vitamins or supplements that you are taking

If you are thinking about suicide call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at
1-800-273-8255.



They are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
They speak English and Spanish.



How can I help someone else with depression?

The most important thing you can do is encourage your friend or family member to get help. Here are some ways you can help:

- Tell your friend or relative about the changes you have noticed. Describe why you are concerned.
- Listen to him or her without *criticizing*. Offer hope.
- Help your friend or relative make an appointment with a doctor or therapist. Go with the person to the appointment.
- Invite your friend or relative to join you for fun activities.

If your friend or relative talks about suicide, call a therapist or doctor right away. If you think he or she is in danger of suicide, call 911. Don't wait!



Vocabulary & Definitions

Grieve:	To grieve is to feel sadness or anxiety, usually after someone dies.
Depression:	When sadness lasts more than a few weeks. This feeling affects everyday activities and the ability to enjoy life.
Suicide:	A person who commits suicide takes his or her own life.
Therapist:	A therapist is a professional who is trained to help people deal with problems.
Criticizing:	When a person says negative things about what someone says or does it is called criticizing.



Listening Activity

Purpose: To practice listening comprehension

Time: 5 minutes

1. Tell your students that in this activity they will practice their listening comprehension skills.
2. State that you are going to read five different sentences twice.
3. Let them know that after you finish reading the sentence for the second time, they need to decide if the sentence is True or False.
4. At the end, check the students' answers to make sure they are correct. If some students do not have the right answer, invite other students to participate in the discussion until the information is clear.

True or False?

Statement	True	False
1. Anyone can suffer from depression.		
2. It is important to get help if you think you have depression.		
3. You may be depressed if you feel sad every day for more than two weeks.		
4. You may not have any reason to be depressed and yet you may suffer from depression.		
5. If you see that your friend has been sad lately you should leave him alone.		



Let's Talk About Depression Skills Practice Worksheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity 1: Let's Read!

Pedro is a farmworker. His wife died a year ago. He feels he cannot recover from this loss. His family lives far away. He is raising his son by himself. He is sad and in a bad mood most days. Things are getting worse lately. Now he doesn't even want to play with his son. He has lost a lot of weight. Last night he was thinking he does not want to continue living. This thought scares him. He knows he needs help.

1. What signs or symptoms of depression does Pedro have? _____

2. How can he find out if he has depression? _____

3. How can you help Pedro? _____

Activity 2: Vocabulary

Identify what Sergio, Selena and Diego are feeling. Write the correct letter at the end of the sentence. Use the lesson if you need it.

A. Sadness

B. Grief

C. Depression

1. Sergio has been having a hard time getting up in the mornings for the past few months. Most days he feels hopeless and full of guilt. Sometimes Sergio wonders if things will ever get better. _____

2. Selena just lost her husband Marcos in a farm accident. She misses him terribly. She feels very sad. It has been three days since his death. _____

3. Diego's best friend Alejandro just moved to Florida. Diego misses his friend. Diego continues to do fun activities with his other friend, Carlos. _____

Activity 3: Listen and Fill in the Blank

Listen to your teacher's instructions carefully and mark the correct answer.

Statement	True	False
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		



Let's Talk About Depression
Post-Assessment

Date: _____
Name: _____

Circle the correct answer.

1. Only old people get depression.
2. You can get better with treatment for depression.
3. Some signs and symptoms of depression are:
4. If you are having thoughts of suicide you can call The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline any day of the week. You can talk to someone in Spanish or English.
5. What is the best way you can help a friend with depression?

- | | |
|---|-------|
| True | False |
| True | False |
| a. you are losing or gaining weight | |
| b. you don't want to do fun activities with your friends | |
| c. you have problems sleeping | |
| d. all of the above | |
| True | False |
| a. you can talk with the friend and share your concerns | |
| b. you can listen to him/her | |
| c. you can help the friend make an appointment with a doctor or therapist | |
| d. all of the above | |

Total Correct: _____

What information should you go prepared to share if you go see a doctor or therapist? (not scored) _____

Activity 1: Let's Read!

Pedro is a farmworker. He lost his wife a year ago. He feels he cannot recover from this loss. His family lives far away. He is raising his son by himself. He is sad and in a bad mood most days. Things are getting worse lately. Now he doesn't even want to play with his son. He has lost a lot of weight. Last night he was thinking he does not want to continue living. Those thoughts scare him. He realizes he needs help.

1. What signs or symptoms of depression does Pedro have?
 - He is sad and in a bad mood most days.
 - He is not eating; he has lost a lot of weight.
 - He thinks things are getting worse.
 - He thinks life is worthless.
 - He doesn't want to play with his son.
2. How can he find out if he has depression?
 - He can find out by visiting his doctor or therapist.
3. How can you help Pedro? **You can help by...**
 - talking with him about the changes you have noticed and why you are concerned.
 - listening to him without judgment.
 - getting an appointment with a doctor and going with him to the appointment.
 - inviting him to do fun activities.

Activity 2: Vocabulary

Identify what Sergio, Selena and Diego are feeling. Write the correct letter at the end of the sentence. Use the lesson if you need it.

1. Sergio has been having a hard time getting up in the mornings for the past few months. Most days he feels hopeless and full of guilt. Sometimes Sergio wonders if things will ever get better. **C – Depression**
2. Selena just lost her husband Marcos in a farm accident. She misses him terribly. She feels very sad. It has been three days since his death. **B – Grief**
3. Diego's best friend Alejandro just moved to Florida. Diego misses his friend. Diego continues to do fun activities with his other friend, Carlos. **A – Sadness**

A. _____
B. Grief
C. Depression

Activity 3: Listen and Fill in the Blank

Listen to your teacher's instructions carefully and mark the correct answer.

1. Anyone can suffer from depression.
2. It is important to get help if you think you have depression.
3. You may be depressed if you feel sad every day for more than two weeks.
4. You may have no reasons to be depressed and yet you may suffer from depression.
5. If you see that your friend has been sad lately, you should leave him alone.

Statement	True	False
1	✓	
2	✓	
3	✓	
4	✓	
5		✓