

Introduction

| LEARNING OBJECTIVES |

After this lesson, I will be able to:

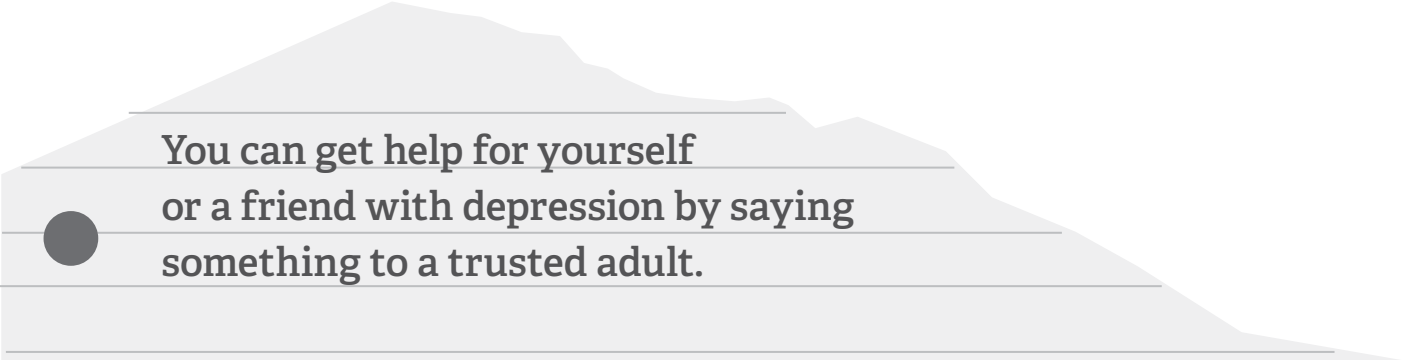
- describe that depression is treatable.
- define what treatment options there are for depression.
- demonstrate how to help a friend who is experiencing depression.
- effectively communicate to a friend in need that I care and can share who to talk to (reliable trusted adult at school).

| QUESTIONS |

1. What are two possible treatment options?

2. Where can you find professional help in your school or community?

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**You can get help for yourself
or a friend with depression by saying
something to a trusted adult.**

Exercise

ROLE PLAY 1

TEEN Hey, Mom, can we talk?

MOM Sure. What's going on?

TEEN Lately, I haven't been feeling like myself. I feel sad and angry all the time. I'm constantly tired, and I can't focus in school.

MOM I've gone through periods like this when I was your age. Hang in there and I'm sure things will get better with a little time.

TEEN Well, usually when I'm down I feel better if I go for a run or talk to someone. This time I can't seem to shake it. It's been like this for a few weeks now. I even took a depression test online and it reported that I should see a doctor to get it checked out.

MOM Really?

TEEN Yeah, I think I need to talk to someone. Can you help me set up an appointment with my doctor?

MOM Sure. I think that's a great idea.

ROLE PLAY 2

SAM Hey, can we talk? Over the past few weeks, I've noticed you've been hanging back a lot – not calling or texting me much anymore and skipping out on me and our friends. Recently, you have even missed quite a few play practices. In general, you seem down. This isn't like you. What's going on?

FRIEND I'm sorry; I've been feeling weird lately.

SAM I can tell something is different. I'm worried about you and I care.

FRIEND You don't have to worry. I'm sure I'll snap out of it, eventually.

SAM You deserve to feel better now and, who knows, it could be something serious like depression. Have you told an adult yet?

FRIEND No.

SAM An adult should know so they can help you find a professional to check it out. Who do you feel comfortable talking to?

FRIEND I guess, Mr. Clark.

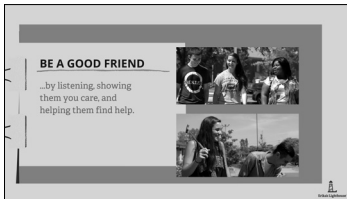
SAM I think he's a great choice. Would you like me to come with you? It might make you more comfortable.

FRIEND Uh sure. Yeah, I'd like that.



Finally, if when talking to a friend he or she tells you that they are thinking of suicide or hurting themselves, **an adult must be notified immediately.**

A friend may ask you to keep this information a secret, but when it comes to matters of safety, keeping a secret can cost a life.



One word of caution. It is important to take care of yourself and understand there are limits to the kind of support a friend can provide to a friend with depression. Often, a person can take on too much responsibility for helping a friend and this can begin to cause stress and bring that person down.

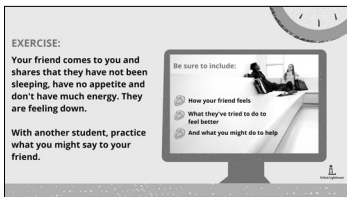
Remember, a friend's job is to listen, show compassion and help a friend to find professional help.



We hope you have a better idea of what depression treatment may look like, and more importantly, feel confident about taking action steps towards treatment if you or a friend may need it.

For more information about finding help and treatment, see our Teen Toolbox at www.erikaslighthouse.org/the-toolbox.

EXERCISE |



A friend comes to you and shares that they haven't been sleeping, have lost their appetite and don't have much energy. They are feeling down. With another student or two, practice saying what you might say to your friend.

Be sure to include:

- how your friend feels
- what they've tried to do to feel better
- what you might do to help.

Then, once written down, practice saying the script to each other.