
FEUP
Healthy Minds

You deserve it



Contacts

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Psychological support by appointment:

Mondays to Fridays, from 9:30 to 15:30

PSYCHOLOGY AND GUIDANCE SERVICE

FEUP FACULDADE DE ENGENHARIA
UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO

Understanding Depression



What is it to be depressed?

Everybody experiences states of sadness, discouragement, tiredness and unhappiness for reasons they might or might not know. Feeling depressive is common, especially after negatively experienced situations.

How can I tell if I'm depressed?

If feelings of **sadness, demotivation, apathy and loneliness are stronger and extended in time**, you can be going through depression.

Common symptoms of depression are:

- Changes in appetite (absence or excess)
- Sleep disturbances (somnolence or insomnia)
- Fatigue, lack of will, tiredness and loss of energy
- Changes or lack of concentration
- Feelings of uselessness, of guilt, of lack of confidence and self-esteem
- Concerns about the sense of life and with death
- Feelings of hopelessness about the future and suicidal thoughts
- Detachment, apathy, sadness, easy crying
- Changes in sexual desire
- Irritability
- Manifestation of physical symptoms (muscular pain, abdominal pain, nausea,...)

Where does it come from?

Depression is frequently a **response to events perceived as profoundly problematic, stressful, or threatening to one's identity.**

Pain and loss of all sorts (death of a loved one, breakups, family issues), **major changes** in life or **failure experiences** might awaken feelings of despair and weaken well-being, leading to depression.

Depression's source can be of all kinds: obvious or invisible.

Past sufferings may manifest only (even years) later, **chemical or hormonal changes** may initiate mood alterations and even some **diseases** (mental, infectious, hormonal, oncological, chronic,...) might generate depressive episodes.



Depression as an opportunity

Depression is painful but it is a survival mechanism.

Being depressed translates into a slowdown and an opportunity to reflect, reconsider and rebuild!

It is a clear warning sign for the individual and for others that something is wrong.

But there are more effective ways to communicate and explore the inner world: psychotherapy.

Besides trying to resume activities you may have interrupted and trying to stay physically and mentally active, seeing a Psychologist is most important when dealing with depression.

The chance to talk and reflect about one's own values, needs, fears and behaviours, of being listened to in a trusting, empathic and confidential relationship and of truly feeling understood, can have, by itself, a very positive and significant effect!

Your Psychologist will be there to listen to all your fears and to help you build a greater meaning in life.