Depression: A Family Matter

Presented by:
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Who are we?

Clark is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed Professional School Counselor and a National Certified Counselor. He is currently earning his PhD in Counselor Education from the University of Toledo. He conducts research, facilitates undergraduate and graduate courses in counseling, and provides clinical services to college students. Clark has presented at regional and national conferences, and was an esteemed speaker for the TEDx Way Public Library Program. Clark also holds degrees and certifications in music, theatre, fitness, and nutrition.

Rachel is a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor, Certified Family Life Educator, and Certified Trauma Practitioner, who passionately enjoys working with children, adolescents and families. Rachel’s experience includes working with individuals who have experienced anxiety, depression, trauma, major life adjustments and autism. Rachel holds a B.S. in Human Development and Family Studies and an M.A. in Mental Health Counseling from BGSU.

Today’s Outline

▷ What is depression?
▷ How does depression impact the family?
▷ What can be done to help?
▷ Questions!
What is Depression?

- According to the DSM-5, depressive disorders carry the common features of:
  - Sadness
  - Emptiness
  - Irritability
  - Somatic and cognitive changes that impact functioning

- Depressive Disorders include:
  - Major Depressive Disorder
  - Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder
  - Persistent Depressive Disorder
  - Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder
  - Substance/Medication Induced Depressive Disorder
  - Unspecified Depressive Disorder
Depression can exist within the family in many ways. It can create hostility, tension, and disruption in family dynamics. It can increase the likelihood of communication barriers within the family.
Depression and the Family

Might look like:
▷ "I don't like soccer anymore, Mom" ○ Reduction of social activities
▷ "I'm just not happy in my marriage" ○ Changes in partner social functioning
▷ "I can't seem to remember to pick up the kids from school" ○ Changes in parenting skills & responsibilities

What Can We Do?

Self-Monitor
Track, monitor, rate our daily moods and emotional disturbances, lack of energy, somatic symptoms.

Light Therapy
Research shows light therapy boxes and SAD lamps are an effective way of reducing symptoms of SAD.

Physical Activity
Physical activity is shown to increase levels of serotonin, and has other health benefits, reducing depressive symptoms.

Socialization
Research shows that humans are social creatures, are genetically wired for connection, and a sense of belonging decreases depression.

Sleep Hygiene
Maintaining good sleep habits is important for SAD sufferers. Poor sleep contributes to depression, and depression contributes to poor sleep.

Psychotherapy & Medication
Psychotherapy can help you change negative thoughts, learn ways to cope with SAD and manage stress.
Monitor yourself and others

▷ Monitor ourselves by gathering data!
  ○ Track emotions and progress through
    1. Daily mood chart
    2. Mood journal
    3. Technology: Apps
  ○ Rate yourself each day, using scales 1-10 (1=very low, depressed & 10 = best I’ve felt)
  ○ Examine trends & life events that may impact mental health

Light Therapy

▷ Exposure to special light can help regulate serotonin/ melatonin activity in the brain, encouraging production of Vitamin D

▷ Ask yourself:
  ○ Is it made specifically for depression?
  ○ How bright is it?
  ○ How much UV light does it release?
  ○ Can it cause eye damage?

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Physical Activity
▷ Minimum of 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise on most days of the week
  ▷ Does not need to be continuous
▷ Being active in as many ways as possible each day
▷ Schedule out days to integrate physical activity
▷ Go outside!

Stay Social
▷ Plan a game night
▷ Solidify dates on your calendar
▷ Go out to lunch during the week
▷ Enjoy a movie night with each other
### Stay Social

- An inner sense of connection can be nurtured and built:
  - Give, share, support, & do acts of services and kindness for others
  - Take care of oneself
  - Ask for help when you need it

### Sleep Hygiene

- Get between 7-8 hours of sleep
- Maintain a nightly routine or bedtime ritual
- If naps are needed – keep them between 25-30 minutes
- Apps are available to help increase and track sleep
- Increase complementary health approaches
- Avoid sedative hypnotics if possible
Psychotherapy

▷ “Talk therapy”
  ○ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
    ■ Identify and change negative thoughts and behaviors that may be increasing feelings
    ■ Reduce avoidance behavior and scheduling activities
    ■ Learn to manage stress
    ■ Learn relaxation techniques
    ■ Experience emotional catharsis

Medication

▷ Some people benefit from antidepressant treatment, especially if symptoms are severe
▷ It may take several weeks to notice full benefits from an antidepressant
▷ You may need to try different medications to find the right fit for you
Additional Resources

- FamilyAware.org: Depression Symptoms Toolkit for Families
- https://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/newsletter/2014/05/families-parental-depression

Thank you!
Any Questions

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References