

**change your
narrative**

**SOMEONE I CARE FOR
IS STRUGGLING WITH DEPRESSION
WHAT DO I DO?**

- Parent Edition -

Change Your Narrative: Someone I Care For Is Struggling With Depression, What Should I Do? Parent Edition. Copyright © 2019; Cassandra Smith. Printed and bound in the United States of America. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by an information retrieval system—except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review to be printed in a magazine, newspaper, or on the Web—without permission from the Publisher. For information, please contact publisher via:

www.ChangeYourNarrative.org

Statistics included were taken from:

National Institute of Mental Health
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
Center for Disease Control
Anxiety and Depression Association of America

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SHIFTING INCOMPLETE
STORIES OF DEPRESSION
TOWARDS TRUTH

How To Use This Book

Depending on what you are looking for, you can use this book in a variety of ways. Feel free to skim, read every line, or just check out our videos.

We believe important topics call for important conversations which is why some of our material is presented via videos. In order to access the videos, you will need to click the link if you are reading via a digital device such as Kindle. If you have a physical copy of the book, you can access the links via QR codes.

A QR Code looks like this and can be scanned using your device's camera:



On an iOS device, simply open the camera app and point your camera over the code. A notification will pop up, asking if you would like to head to YouTube.

On an Android device, you will need to download a QR code app. Our team recommends several options, all of which are free as of this printing:

- QR & Barcode Scanner
- QR Code Reader
- Free QR Scanner by Avira
- QR DROID PRIVATE
- Kaspersky QR Scanner

I Am Glad You Are Here...

The world needs individuals who care for one another. If you are reading this book because you want to provide encouragement and support to family members who struggle, I want to say how proud of you I am.

I also want to acknowledge its hard to know *how* to help someone. We may want to be the one to provide a solution, but at times, this is out of our control.

Even so, I believe learning about the issue can help us know how to be there for others. When we match our concern and empathy, along with insightful knowledge, it can help us to be prepared to point others in the right direction.

I Want To Be Clear In The Beginning...

Unless you are a professional who has been trained to know how to step in and offer solutions to children with depression or mental health struggles, you may not be able to fix the root cause behind their struggle.

This does not mean, however, that they do not need you.

Having support from parents who have insight into the issues surrounding depression and who knows what professional resources are available is key.

The best thing anyone who is struggling with depression can do is seek out professional care. We may not be able

to take away the good or bad thoughts or feelings of another. But, we all can strive to be supportive loved ones. The fact you are reading this tells me this is the type of parent you want to be.

The things which we *can* do, is seek to be the most prepared we can be in order to be family members who can point family members towards getting the best possible help they can.

My goal is to help you to learn how to understand the complex topic of depression a little bit better, so you have insight into how to care for your family.

If you or someone you care for is in danger of harm, please contact one of the numbers below or turn to the resource section at the back of this book.

For Immediate Help:

Covenant House- 1800-999-9999

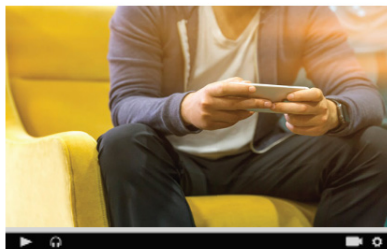
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Youth Crisis Line – 1800 Hit Home

Hopeline 1800-442-5673

<http://www.crisischat.org/chat>

Video: What Is Like To Call A Hotline?



<https://youtu.be/6IRGmusmp1M>

SHIFTING THE NARRATIVE
of lost hope

What Is Depression?

Depression is characterized by feeling immense sadness, a lack of energy or interest in previously enjoyed pursuits, and a loss of appetite.

There are several forms of depression which can stem from life changes or biology. It is common for young people to feel sad or hopeless about a specific situation or experience. This feeling will come and go throughout our life. But when it lasts, it is important to pay attention to those thoughts and feelings and start trying to find out what's going on.

If you believe a family member is depressed—there are numerous ways to take action and fight back. But, how do we know if we need to take action? The first key is to recognize where you or someone you care about are at.

Check out the video below for more insight:

What Is Depression? - Video Discussion



<https://youtu.be/nUxwrKoSmx8>

How Many Young People Struggle?

1.9 million children, 3 – 17, have diagnosed depression.

- Centers for Disease Control
“Data and Statistics on Children’s Mental Health”, 2018

13.3% of adolescents aged 12 to 17 had “at least one major depressive episode” in 2017, which equates to 3.2 million American teens.

- National Institute of Mental Health

60.1% of depressed adolescents received no treatment; 19.6% received treatment from a health professional; 2.4% were treated with medication alone; 17.6% received treatment from both a health professional and medication,

- National Institute of Mental Health

7.4 percent of youth in grades 9-12 reported that they had made at least one suicide attempt in the past 12 months.

- 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Summary

WHEN YOU
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WHY YOU
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LONG. -UNKNOWN
AUTHOR

Is It Okay To Bring Up The Topic Of Depression?

If you are wondering if someone you care for is fighting depression, and you question if you should bring it up, it is likely time to talk about it. But it is important to broach the topic with care.

While it is ideal for them to come to you and open up, there are times in which it is critical for you to bring up the possibility of depression with them - especially if they are your child.

The reasons why young people face depression range from short-term incidents to life-altering events. Some of these are internal. Others are external.

Though there can be major hurdles on the path to working through depression. It does not mean the you and your family can not fight for wholeness—and fight well. One of the ways we start to do that—is to talk about it.

Is It Okay To Bring Up The Topic? - Video Discussion



<https://youtu.be/Wwlfu49MOZs>

Ways To Begin A Conversation About Depression

You may have noticed some slight or significant changes in the life of your child.

The question you might have is, “How do I ask them if they are okay?” On top of this, you might wonder what to do if they say they are not. What is helpful to say? What should not be said? What are the next steps?

It might feel overwhelming, and yet you know something needs to be done. So, where do you begin?

To start, I would encourage you to learn a little bit about mental health from individuals who have professional insight in the topic. In the next section, we will provide links to helpful articles which can help you know the best way to bring up an important conversation.

Ways To Begin A Conversation - Video Discussion



<https://youtu.be/ooxTAj3z6al>

I Think My Child Or Teenager Is Depressed, How Do I Know?

Not knowing if your child is struggling with their mental health is frightening. The good news is there are numerous, dedicated resources which provide guidance and support for you as you begin to answer this question.

The American Depression And Anxiety Association of America has a screening tool for you to use and share with your child's doctor. It can be found here:

<https://adaa.org/living-with-anxiety/ask-and-learn/screenings/screening-anxiety-disorder-children>



Scan Here For Tool

Additionally, the **Mayoclinic** and **CDC** have helpful guides which can come along side of you as you find your child the support they might need.

<https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/depression.html>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/mental-illness-in-children/art-20046577>

Support For You As You Care For Your Child Or Teenager

The National Alliance On Mental Illness has a directory of support groups for you and your family.

<https://www.nami.org/find-support/nami-programs/nami-family-support-group>

The Society For Adolescent Health And Medicine has a comprehensive listing of additional support.

<https://www.adolescenthealth.org/Resources/Clinical-Care-Resources/Mental-Health/Mental-Health-Resources-For-Parents-of-Adolescents.aspx>

Helpguide.org created a guide for parents to know how to best support their children.

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/parents-guide-to-teen-depression.htm>

Ways To Begin A Conversation With Your Child Or Teenager

NBC News created a check in with 14 questions to ask your child, in order to support and guide them if you wonder if they are anxious, depressed, or being bullied.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/better/lifestyle/mental-health-check-14-questions-ask-your-child-ncna1006936>

CREATE A

TRAINING PLACE

AND STRATEGY SPACE

What Kind Of Help Exists?

The National Institute of Health reported up to 80% of individuals who were treated for depression began to show positive change within 4-6 weeks of treatment, which generally included medication, therapy, support groups or a combination of these treatments.

This leaves us to ask, “What kind of help exists?”

The resources available for mental health issues and depression range from self-care suggestions to inpatient treatment facilities. The only way to know exactly what type of action you should take, the first key is to talk with a support professional.

There are a host of tools which can help you know steps to taking action. These include:

- Apps Which Offer Support
- Communities With Offer Support
- Finding A Professional

What Kind Of Help Exists? - Video Discussion



<https://youtu.be/A7CNzHsrg0M>



Apps Which Offer Support

TalkLife offers online support similar to group therapy. Share anonymously or with your name.

Moodpath offers 14 days of check ins, providing an overview of your emotional well-being. Plus 100+ exercises.

Happify includes games and activities which elevate mood and build resilience through CBT, mindfulness and positivity.

What's Up aids individuals in discovering the cause of feelings and thoughts through guided questioning.



Self-Help For Anxiety Management (SAM) offers an anxiety toolkit which tracks thoughts and behaviors, while also offering tools to combat negativity.

Panic Relief provides coping strategies, exercise, and breathing techniques to help move through a moment of panic.

PTSD Coach provides ways to understand PTSD along with how to find additional help.



Communities Which Offer Support

To Write Love On Her Arms -

<https://twloha.com/find-help/>

Offers a search for free or low cost therapy options to connect with a therapist.

7 Cups Of Tea -

<https://www.7cups.com/depression-help-online/>

Offers chat rooms to begin a conversation, plus educational videos and when to seek professional help.

Lifeline Crisis Chat -

<https://www.contact-usa.org/chat.html>

Offers free, online chatting with trained individuals.

Love Is Respect -

<https://www.loveisrespect.org>

Offers education, support and advocacy to those facing complicated dating issues, along with a live chat feature connecting you to trained advocates.

Remedy Live -

<https://www.remedylive.com/depression>

Offers a faith-based videos on mental health issues along with trained advocates who want to connect.

Anxiety And Depression Association Of America -

<https://adaa.org/supportgroups>

Provides a listing of support groups, including a search feature to find a group near you.

Heads Up Guys -

<https://headsupguys.org/take-action/>

Provides action points and support specifically for men from men.

OK2 Talk -

<https://ok2talk.org>

Offers online support, education, and relatable stories for teens and young adults who battle mental health.

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LIKE GIVING
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**REMEMBER THE
REASON WHY
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**HELD ON FOR
SO LONG.**

-UNKNOWN AUTHOR

A Conversation On Medication And Natural Remedy

When thinking about your child sharing their story with a support professional, you may believe the first thing a therapist or doctor will do is prescribe talk therapy or medication.

This is likely to be true. If that concerns you or your child, it might help to do a little bit of research in order to understand what it means to take medication, the side effects, and what someone can expect when considering your options.

In the video below, we have links to articles and voices which are more qualified to share. We encourage you to continue your research as you get to know what types of help are available.

What Is The Right Type Of Help? - Video Discussion



<https://youtu.be/Vnch5AvmWAM>

Reiterating Why You Offer Support

When a young person struggles with depression, they often are caught in a mental battle of wondering why they are worth your time, effort, or love.

The question in their mind constantly is, “Why someone would want to love or help me?”

They may also believe help will be temporary until someone sees them as a burden or as a person who is just “too much.”

Because of these factors, It is important for those offering support to be a continual source of reassurance in why you want to support them, why you want to see them reach a place of wholeness.

This does not mean they dictate our lives or we cater to every whim. That is not what I am talking about. Healthy boundaries are important in every relationship, even ones which have mental health complications in the midst.

Yet, I believe one of the best things we can do for someone who is struggling with depression is to continuously and consistently reiterate the why behind our actions.

So, “Why would anyone want to help someone who is fighting to shift the story of depression?”

I wholeheartedly believe it is because our care for that person gives us compassion and insight into three things: their future, their pathway, and their value.

Their Future

You have an intrinsic belief that as someone you care for walks a path of wholeness and healing—they have a future.

Their Pathway

You may not have the professional skill to offer the treatment or healing needed, yet you want to be with them on their pathway as they seek it out. You want to offer tangible guidance and see them win in the journey.

Their Value

You have a foundational belief—that the person you care for has value. When you speak with them—it is directly tied into a personal reason why you believe they matter, have importance, and that the outcome of their life is important to you.

Reiterating Why You Offer Support - Video Discussion



<https://youtu.be/fP4Xpr9jDz0>

The Obstacles In Offering Help

It is fair to talk about the obstacles someone you care for may meet along their journey. It is incredibly tough to watch them face one or all of the following. I acknowledge the fact these moments can create tremendous setback or make it difficult for them, or maybe even you, to want to continue to fight for wholeness. I encourage you to continue to seek support and encouragement for yourself as you journey alongside of them. May you have the strength to continue to fight on.

- Help Seems Hopeless
- A Question Of Worth
- Lack Of Energy
- Disappointing Attempts

For a more in-depth discussion about these points, including guidance on how to overcome them, check out the video below.

The Obstacles In Seeking Help - Video Discussion



<https://youtu.be/P3DTsdnz8hA>

What To Do When A Child Pushes Back

Getting push back when you try to help, is frustrating. As you engage with them, remember it is important to:

1. Go at their pace.
2. Own what is yours.
3. And yet, know this may not be about you.

Recognize push back is often overcome by:

- Being consistent.
- Stating why you are for them.
- Reaffirming them.
- Apologizing for previous disappointments.

Lastly, be honest. It might be good to share how their behavior made you feel.

For a more in-depth discussion about these points, and how to overcome them, check out the video below.

What To Do When A Child Pushes Back - Video



<https://youtu.be/RZvb4ZRt6rA>

Building A Safety Plan

If you are helping your child to take a stand against depression, you know mental health issues can fight back. Yet, having a pathway to fight back helps them continue to live with wholeness.

Let them know you are willing to be an active part of their plan. You are someone they can check in with. You are someone who commits to help them find professional, skilled help if they need someone more than you can offer. This is not a sign of your failure as a parent, rather your courage to find them help - even if it is outside of you.

Talk through what actions steps each of you can take in moments when the struggle is fierce.

One such resource which has a fantastic list of tools and resources for creating a safety plan is *Challenge The Storm*.

You can check out their advice here:

Challengethestorm.org/safety-plans-mental-health/

They even have a sample plan that any of us are able to use to help us learn how to build our own plan.

You can check that out here:

<http://www.knowresolve.org/docs/safety-plan-web.pdf>

Please note: Even with the best of plans, there are times in which a crisis is stronger than a plan. In those moments, seek immediate, professional help. The following ideas on a safety plan are not intended to take the place of skilled, professional help.

Building A Safety Plan - Video Discussion



<https://youtu.be/tA4fZltaFnw>

The Goal Is Wholeness

Wholeness is about a state of contentment and peace in a life. It doesn't eliminate the past or any previous pain, instead it acknowledges how that pain has affected us—all while striving to form a new narrative.

Wholeness is about freedom—and I believe it is possible for each individual to discover for themselves.

Is it easy? Not at all. The pathway can be long and come with obstacles which may make us feel as if we may not make it.

But with the right support and tools—I intrinsically believe we can.

I welcome you, and those you care for, to find it.

The Goal Is Wholeness - Video Discussion



<https://youtu.be/tG18UzeL26w>

Identity Goes Beyond The Struggle

In the core of who I am—I am convinced none of us are defined by our struggles. Our identity goes far beyond what anyone stole from us, did to us, or how they disappointed us.

While it may be true you or your child have faced a deep struggle or have been treated in ways they did not deserve, I believe it does not have to be the key identifier of what makes an individual—they.

Wholeness is still available. Though it requires a journey, it's a pathway to be free of pain's influences—as if it was the only thing to define a life. I believe each of us still have life in front of us and it is filled with the ability for hope, the ability to make a difference in other's lives, and the ability to go out there and have positive and meaningful impact.

Identity Goes Beyond The Struggle- Video



<https://youtu.be/CnMJlc8PIRE>

The Invitation To Shift The Story

If you, or someone in your family is looking for a way to walk a journey to shift an incomplete story towards truth, you are invited into change your narrative.

Come on a journey through twenty video-based pathway markers which offer guidance on how you or someone you care for can seek wholeness. Change Your Narrative believes everyone has the right to be able to take back the pen of your story.

Come On A Journey To Find Wholeness...



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThTdleKhc-CY&t=6s>

Please Note:

All statements and views within this book, the **change your narrative** website, and the videos on our YouTube channel are strictly opinion based. They are not intended to be utilized as professional treatment or care. If you or someone you care for struggles with mental illness, depression, suicidal thought or destructive life choices, I highly recommend seeking out professional help.

If you are in immediate harm or danger call 911.

Additional Resources:

24/7/365 Crisis Call Center Hotline:
1 (1800) 273-8255

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1 (1800) 273-8255

Text "Answer" to 839863

Chat with a Soul Medic:

<http://remedylive.com/soulmedics/>



Apps Which Offer Support

TalkLife offers online support similar to group therapy. Share anonymously or with your name.

Moodpath offers 14 days of check ins, providing an overview of your emotional well-being. Plus 100+ exercises.

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OK2 Talk -

<https://ok2talk.org>

Offers online support, education, and relatable stories for teens and young adults who battle mental health.



Resources For Those Who Offer Support

Healthline -

<https://www.healthline.com/health/how-to-help-a-depressed-friend#be-patient>

Offers a list of action steps you can take as you continue to care for someone.

HelpGuide.org -

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/helping-someone-with-depression.htm>

Provides a comprehensive overview of what the person you care for may be feeling or thinking, with links to various additional resources, including what questions to ask and what to say.



Resources for Parents

The American Depression And Anxiety Association of America has a screening tool for you to use and share with your child's doctor. It can be found here:

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Support For Families

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<https://www.adolescenthealth.org/Resources/Clinical-Care-Resources/Mental-Health/Mental-Health-Resources-For-Parents-of-Adolescents.aspx>

The Depression and Bipolar Alliance Support Alliance offers connection to local chapters.

https://secure2.convio.net/dabsa/site/SPageServer/PageServer?pagename=help_family_center_support

Family Caregiver Alliance provides a map of network help in your area.

<https://www.caregiver.org/family-care-navigator>

Insight For Siblings

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/sibling-mental-illness_n_59aeca9ee4b0dfaafcf2df44

<https://www.bustle.com/articles/113804-7-signs-your-sibling-is-depressed>

change your narrative

The Place Where The Discussion Continues...

THE SAFE PLACE TO TALK ABOUT THE **ISSUES THAT MATTER** TO YOU



www.ImChangingIt.com



