



Dancing with the Blues

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**A Discussion About Depression and Suicide
Among Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults**

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(he/him/his)**

Content Warning

This presentation will discuss content such as depression, suicide, other potentially triggering topics. At anytime during this presentation for whatever reason, please feel free to mute me, turn your camera off, leave the meeting, and do whatever else you need to do to take care of yourself.





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What is Depression?

01.

Reflection Activity

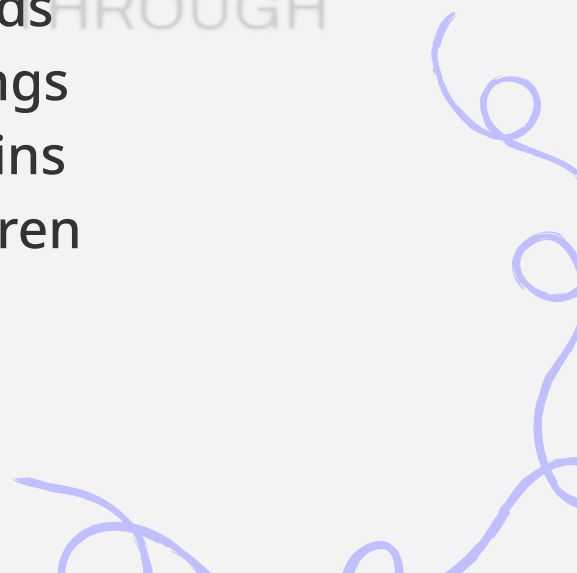
- Imagine somebody who is depressed
- What do they look like?
- What do they do?
- How do they act?
- What do they believe in?
- Why are they depressed?
- What else about them is important to know?

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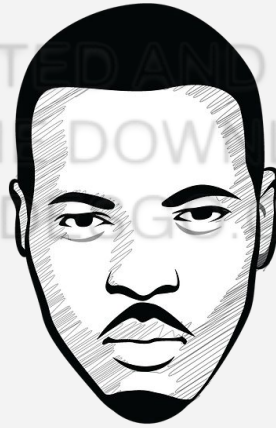
What Does a Depressed Person Look Like?

- Homeless
- Abused
- Unemployed
- Psych patient
- Atheist
- White person
- College student
- Doctor
- Professional athlete
- Lawyer
- Pastor
- Your friends
- Your siblings
- Your cousins
- Your children
- Yourself

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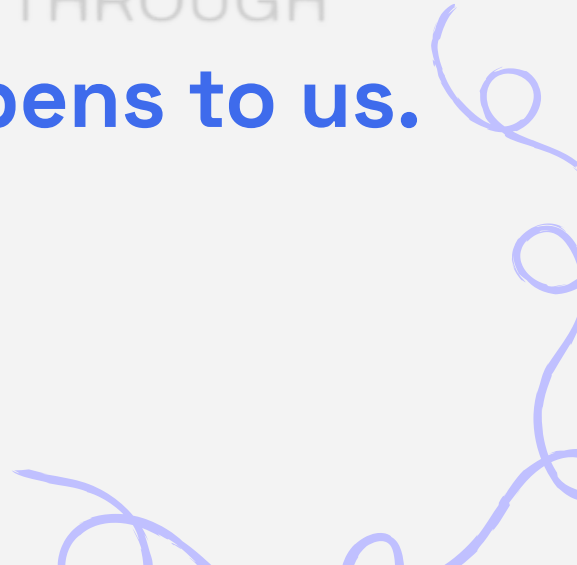
Depression doesn't have a stereotypical "look"



Anyone can experience depression

We never think it will happen to us...
...until it happens to us.

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Youth Mental Health Crisis

- We are in the middle of a global youth mental health crisis
 - Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the quality of youth mental health was already on the decline
 - Currently, 1 in 4 teens globally meet the criteria for clinical depression
 - In 2023, 50% of young adults (18-24) reported anxious and depressive symptoms
 - Though rarer in preadolescent children, depression in this population is also increasing



But That's Not Including Us, Right?

- According to the WHO, Nigeria has the highest rates of depression in all of Africa
- 3.9% of Nigerian citizens report experiencing depressive symptoms
 - 25% of Nigerian young adults
 - 21% Nigerian teens
- The general consensus is that these numbers are underreported and likely much higher
- Numbers have only been increasing since the pandemic started





Why are Youth Depressed?

- Different problems
 - COVID-19
 - Growing up in a racist country
 - Social media
 - Student loans
- Different understanding of mental health
 - We know more about depression now than before
 - Less stigma than in the past



The Effects of Depression

- Depression can affect many aspects of one's life:
 - Physically
 - Mentally
 - Emotionally
 - Socially
 - Practically
 - Spiritually

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The Effects of Depression

- Depression during youth can also potentially lead to
 - Substance use
 - “Acting out”
 - Disconnecting from friends and family
 - Educational challenges
 - Professional challenges
 - Adult depression

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Suicide

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02.

What is Suicide?

- The act of killing oneself
- Often occurs within the context of depression
- Can occur within other contexts too
 - Substance use
 - Psychotic disorder
 - Trauma
 - Difficult life transitions
 - Risk taking/accidental death
- Being depressed \neq considering suicide

Suicide Statistics

- Suicide is the 18th leading cause of death in the world
 - 2nd leading non-physical illness cause
- More than 700,000 people die due to suicide every year
- In 2021, there were 1.7 Million suicide attempts in the US
- Africa has a suicide rate of 11 people per 100,000
 - This is higher than the global average (9 per 100,000)
- 6 of the top 10 nations with the highest suicide rates are in Africa
 - Lesotho leads the world in suicide rate

Youth Suicide Statistics

- 2nd leading cause of death for US youth aged 10-25
- 2000-2021, youth suicide rates increased more than 50%
 - For Black youth, it has raised 144%
- In 2020, youth and adolescents considered suicide at high rates
 - 25.5% of young adults considered dying from suicide
 - 18.8% of high schoolers considered dying from suicide
- In 2022, 45% of LGBTQIA+ youth seriously considered suicide
- 90% of teens who consider suicide think their parents don't understand them



94%

believe that suicide is at least sometimes preventable





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03.

Dancing with the Blues



Preparation

Practicing techniques to manage depression before it happens



Management

Managing symptoms related to depression and suicidal ideation



Prevention

Putting things in place to prevent suicide from happening

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Preparing for Depression

- Depression often comes out of nowhere
- You can prepare by reducing risk
- Preparation is important for:
 - Youth who have never experienced depression
 - Youth who have been depressed in the past
 - Caregivers

Preparing for Depression

- Youth can prepare by:
 - Educating yourself
 - Self-care
 - Establishing a routine
 - Learning healthy ways to manage stress
 - Take care of physical health
 - Practice self-love and grace
 - Find your social supports

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Preparing for Depression

- Caregivers can help youth prepare by
 - Taking care of yourself first
 - Educating yourself
 - Helping youth prepare for depression
 - Creating space to talk about it (but not forcing it)

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Depressive Symptoms



Mood

Decreased mood for an extended period of time or at extreme levels



Fatigue

Fatigue or loss of energy in the day



Disinterest

Loss of interest in things that used to bring someone joy



Self-esteem

Feelings of worthlessness or guilt



Sleep Changes

Trouble sleeping or an increase in sleeping



Hopelessness

Feeling a loss of hope that things will get better

Overlooked Depressive Symptoms

- Overworking
- Self-isolation
- Anger
- Physical symptoms (especially unexplained)
- Change in personality
- Weight fluctuation
- “Forced happiness”

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Managing Depression

- For youth
 - Be okay with not being okay
 - Be kind to yourself
 - Ask for help
 - Take time for yourself (mental health day)
 - ROUTINE! ROUTINE! ROUTINE!
 - Movement
 - Practice healthy coping mechanisms/avoid negative ones
 - Consider medication and/or therapy

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Managing Depression

- For caregivers, how NOT to support
 - DON'T be dismissing/invalidating
 - DON'T offer unsolicited advice
 - DON'T be impatient/overpunishing
 - DON'T allow negative behavior
 - DON'T “pray the pain away”
 - DON'T say no to therapy
 - DON'T forget to take care of yourself

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Managing Depression

- Instead, try
 - Validating (even if you don't understand)
 - Listening (provide advice if asked)
 - Be patient (but also don't permit negative behavior)
 - Keep praying (but also take action)
 - Consider therapy (low cost options)
 - Increase your self-care (don't decrease it)
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Shame-free Suicide Management

- It's okay to think about dying from suicide
 - People cannot control their thoughts
 - We can control our response to these thoughts
 - Thinking about suicide \neq attempting to die from it
- People shouldn't punish themselves or others for having thoughts related to suicide
- Instead, take action against these thoughts

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Managing Suicidal Thoughts

- If you are thinking about dying from suicide
 - Find somebody to talk to
 - Take care of yourself
 - Allow yourself to feel
 - Become familiar with different resources
 - Consider therapy

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Suicide Prevention

- You can prevent youth suicide before it becomes a problem
 - Be aware of warning signs
 - Create space to talk about it (but don't force it)
 - Suicide proofing your environment

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Potential Suicide Warning Signs

- Depression
- Suicide notes
- Suicide threats
- Previous attempts
- Giving stuff away/final goodbyes

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Talking About Suicide

- Talking about suicide can be scary
- Not talking about suicide does not prevent suicide
- How to talk about suicide:
 - For youth
 - Find somebody safe to talk with
 - Only share what you feel comfortable sharing
 - Feel free to feel (it's okay to cry)
 - For caregivers
 - Create a safe space (don't get mad)
 - Don't force the conversation
 - It's okay to get help if convo is out of your scope

Suicide Proofing

- Many youth who attempt suicide will use objects accessible to them
- For caregivers it's important to consider the accessibility of these objects in your home:
 - Firearms
 - Medications
 - Poisonous chemicals
 - Sharp objects

Crisis Support Resources

- Call 911/go to emergency room for immediate risk
- National Suicide and Crisis Hotline: 988
- Local Suicide and Crisis Hotlines
 - Sacramento - (916) 368-3111
 - Auburn - (530) 885-2300
 - Roseville - (916) 773-3111
 - Lincoln - (916) 645-8866
 - *Google your local crisis lines*
- California Youth Crisis Line - (800) 843-5200
- Warm Line - (855) 845-7415 (for non-emergencies)
- **YOU CAN CALL OR TEXT THESE NUMBERS**

Thank You

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Questions? Comments? Concerns?

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