

**Unit: Mental Illness
Depression**

Objective

Ps will identify depression, its symptoms, causes and treatment

Materials

- **Depression Symptoms Sentence strips**
- **Jigsaw puzzle**
- **Managing Depression Flashcards**
- **Teacher Notes**

Step 1 Warm Up (15 minutes)

Introduce the topic of mental illness:

- Ask the participants “What is mental illness?” Ask them to brainstorm. Record any of their responses on the board.
- If any negative responses are suggested (such as crazy, weak, nuts) write them on the board but then immediately after the brainstorm activity is finished address these negative words. Cross them out and explain we do not use such negative definitions in Canada. Refer to the true definitions if they had been suggested or add them yourself - such as:

Mental illness refers to a wide range of **mental** health conditions — **disorders** that affect your mood, thinking and behavior.

- Discuss this with them and put the word *depression* on the board. Explain that depression is a type of mental illness and the topic for today. Ask them what they know about this. Record their answers being mindful once again to discourage any negative responses.
- Explain that for today’s class you will discuss depression.

Step 2 Work out (45 minutes)

All about depression:

- Write the word *depression* on the board. Write the following words below it:

What is it?
Symptoms

Causes

Help for Depression

- Ask the participants to look at the question *What is it?* If any of the definitions they gave in the warm up activity were correct write that answer beside the *what is it* question. If not, write the following definition:

Depression is feeling really really sad for an extended period of time. It can affect emotions, physical health, work and relationships. Depression must be reported to your doctor.

- Discuss this definition for a moment to ensure they all understand it.
- Explain that depression is not something to be ashamed of. Explain that in Canada we talk about mental illness openly. Explain that we know it is genetic and not weakness.
- Put the class into appropriate groupings and hand out the **jig saw puzzle**. Have the groups discuss their portion of the jigsaw and then proceed according to the instructions on the Entry website under jig saw puzzles.
- Ask what are the *symptoms* of depression. Write the word on the board. Hand out the **depression symptoms sentence strips** - if possible one to each student or in whatever manner it divides them up for your class and have them read them out loud. Discuss.
- Refer to the *causes* word on the board. What do they think causes depression. Write the following words on the board: **Hormones, genetics, some medications, some health problems, a tragic event**. These can all cause depression in seniors. (refer to teacher notes)
- Put them into pairs and give each pair one of the **Managing Depression Flashcards**. Ask the pairs to discuss what they think the flashcard means. What does the picture show about how you manage depression?
- Have them return to the main group and one by one go over what they came up with about each flashcard. If they are not correct write the correct answer on the board. Discuss.

Step 3 Cool Down (10 minutes)

Check their progress:

- Ask them to tell you the symptom/possible causes/ and management for depression. What else did they learn? Discuss.