

Psychoeducation for dealing with dejectedness

Everyone feels sad, dejected and tired sometimes. It's part of life and of being human. And it's natural to react with sadness, disappointment or dejectedness when something difficult or painful happens. In most cases these feelings pass after a while, but there are things you can do to help yourself feel better. And if the feelings don't pass, help is available.

Causes of dejectedness

Sometimes you can feel in low spirits for no particular reason, but sometimes there will be a specific thing that makes you feel sad and dejected.

Here are some examples of things that can make you sad and dejected:

- When your life changes in some way, such as moving to a new house or changing schools.
- When there are problems in your relations with family, friends and others. This might be when you fall out with someone or your love relationship with someone ends.
- When something feels difficult, such as if your parents or guardians fight, or if someone you care about is unwell.
- When you've been under stress or haven't slept enough for a long time.
- When you're worried or anxious about something, such as your sexuality, how your body is developing or what the future will bring.

Some people feel more low-spirited at certain times of the year. In wintertime, for instance, because it's so dark outside and because it can be harder to find things to do that make you feel good. Many women feel more sad and dejected a few days before their period comes.

Dejectedness usually passes

When you feel in low spirits it's easy to think that you'll always feel that way. You may not even remember the last time you felt happy. It's worth reminding yourself then that dejectedness usually passes. Once you feel better again you may even have difficulties remembering what it was like to feel down in the dumps.

What can I do to feel better?

You can do things yourself to influence how you feel. By consciously doing positive things you can begin to feel better. Doing **physical exercise** such as taking walks, dancing or training is a good idea.

It's also important to **eat healthy food** at regular times and to **sleep enough, but not too much**. That can make it easier to deal with things that would otherwise feel difficult. Bear in mind that you can feel tired from sleeping too much as well as too little. **Avoid alcohol and other drugs**. Alcohol and drugs often make dejectedness and anxiety worse.

There are other things that may be a good idea to do when you feel dejected. Some suggestions:

- Talk to someone about how you feel.
- Do things that you like to do when you're feeling well, and spend time with people who usually cheer you up.
- Do something creative, such as paint, write poetry or play music.
- Try to be outdoors in the middle of the day when it's light outside.
- Listen to a podcast or watch a TV series if you need a rest from difficult thoughts.

Am I dejected or depressed?

A depression is something else than being temporarily dejected or sad. A depression can either arrive suddenly or develop over a longer period. You may be depressed if you've been feeling dejected almost all of the time for at least two weeks, and if your dejectedness has brought on other problems. These might be:

- That you withdraw from contact with other people or that you are no longer interested in doing things you usually like doing.
- That you feel tired, sullen, angry or irritated.
- A depression may also affect your sleep, your appetite and your ability to concentrate, making it difficult to follow lessons at school.
- You may also have very negative thoughts, including thoughts about death and about not wanting to live. If you have thoughts about suicide or make plans for suicide, you have to seek help straight away.
- Bodily complaints such as stomach ache or headaches.

Help is available

Even if things can sometimes feel hopeless, help is available if you have a depression. At the beginning of the treatment you will often be taught how depression works and what you can do to begin to feel better. Your care worker you will teach you various techniques for managing your thoughts and feelings, breaking negative patterns and finding your way back to positive routines. Even though it may take time and be hard work, most people feel better after a treatment.

As a family member or close friend of someone who is dejected, you can give support by being there and listening. You can also be supportive by encouraging them to do things or plan enjoyable activities you can do together. And you can help them by lowering your demands on them for the time being.

Sources and reading suggestions:

- 1177.se
- umo.se