



Employee Assistance of the Pacific

Is it Just the Blues or is it Depression?

Winter 2007



Depression is a medical illness that affects your mood, behavior, thinking, and health. Depression is relatively common and is experienced by nearly 1 in 10 Americans. It effects young and old, men and women, and people of all races, cultures, and incomes.

It is normal to feel grief and sadness after we experience a loss or tragedy. But sadness and depression are not the same thing. While feelings of sadness and grief will diminish with time, depression, if not treated, can go on for months or even years. Depression is not a "bad day" or a character weakness.

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Depression can effect your home, work, and how you feel about yourself. Someone who is depressed may find it difficult to engage with others, or be unable to find enjoyment in previously enjoyed activities. Communication with family, friends, and co-workers may be strained. Work performance can suffer, as you may work slower. If depression is severe you may even have

difficulty getting out of bed and going to work.

Symptoms of depression include:

- ◆ Persistent feelings of sadness or anxiety
- ◆ Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities that lasts more than 2 weeks
- ◆ Sleeping too little or too much
- ◆ Fatigue, restlessness, or irritability
- ◆ Feelings of worthlessness
- ◆ Difficulty thinking, concentrating, or making decisions
- ◆ Thoughts of death or suicide, or attempted suicide.
If this is the case you should seek help immediately

Is Depression Treatable? Depression is a serious but treatable illness. Seventy to 80 percent of people with depression improve significantly with appropriate treatment. The most common treatment includes medication, counseling, or a combination of both.

For a free, confidential, on-line depression screening go to: <http://www.depression-screening.org/>



If you think you have depression, seek help from EAP, a mental health professional, or your doctor. It just takes a phone call to schedule an appointment at EAP, and all services are completely confidential.

Ready to Quit?

On November 13, 2006, the day of the Great American Smoke Out, Hawaii's new law prohibiting smoking in the workplace took

effect, giving smokers another good reason to consider quitting. Your EAP can help! Did you know that you can use your EAP benefit to meet with a professional counselor who will provide you with tools and resources to help you give up smoking? Give us a call. We can help. Or call the free Hawaii Quit Line: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669).

Employee Assistance of the Pacific

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Want Help Keeping Those New Year's Resolutions ?

How are you doing with those New Year's resolutions from a few months ago ? Whether you decided to make an effort to exercise regularly, improve your relationships, quit smoking or have more fun, EAP can support you in the behavioral changes you want to make. We can be your motivational coach.

Call today to make an confidential appointment with EAP. Professional counselors are available across the Islands to help you with your goals.

“You are never a loser until you quit trying.”
...Mike Ditka

Improve your Health and Well-Being – Easily!

Researchers have discovered a single treatment that improves memory, increases people's ability to concentrate, strengthens the immune system, and decreases people's risk of being killed in accidents. Sound too good to be true? It gets even better. The treatment is completely free, even for people who have no health insurance. It also has no side effects. Finally, most people consider the treatment highly enjoyable. Would you try it?

For most people, this treatment would consist of getting an extra 60-90 minutes of sleep each night.

According to the American Psychological Association, one of the most significant and overlooked public health problems in the U.S. is that



many adults are chronically sleep deprived. That is, very few Americans regularly obtain the 8 or more hours of sleep that almost all adults need each night. The consequences

of this chronic sleep deprivation can truly be disastrous.

Laboratory experiments on the effects of sleep deprivation have shown that failing to get enough sleep dramatically impairs memory and concentration while increasing levels of stress hormones and disrupting the body's normal metabolism. Research outside the laboratory further suggests that long term sleep deprivation leads to greater susceptibility to motor vehicle accidents and may even lead to premature aging.

Exercise Helps Keep Your *Mind* Fit, Too

You know that exercise is good for your body. Among other facts, exercise decreases the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke, decreases the risk of various cancers, lowers blood pressure, improves metabolism, reduces problems related to diabetes, assists in the maintenance of bone density, and improves your

immune system.

But did you know that exercise is also good for your head?

Research findings repeatedly point to the power of exercise in the treatment of clinical depression. Other studies indicate that exercise can be important in the treatment of various types of anxiety,

issues of self-esteem, weight loss and weight loss management; and addictions. Research is emerging on the effectiveness of exercise in the maintenance of cognitive or mental functioning and the treatment of serious mental illness.