

### Where can I get help?

It is important to seek help from a professional if you think you may be depressed. Your GP can assist you or you can contact New Life Counselling for counselling support.

Anti-depressants may be suggested by your doctor. These work by altering the brain's chemical balance, which can ease symptoms such as sleep difficulties, concentration problems and lack of motivation. This then can restore day-to-day functioning and make it more possible to deal with any issues which arise.

However, anti-depressants obviously cannot change your circumstances therefore if there is a particular issue which has triggered the depression it can be helpful to speak about this in counselling. Some examples of issues which may cause or contribute to depression are bereavement, relationship breakdown, loss of employment or abuse. For teenagers, a house or school move, uncertainty around sexual identity, parental separation, bullying or self-image could be factors in depression. Talking things through in counselling may help you come out of the depression feeling stronger and seeing situations or relationships more clearly. This then could mean you are more able to make important changes in your life which you may have previously avoided.

### How could counselling help me?

If you are affected by depression, counselling can provide you with the opportunity to talk on a one to one basis with a professionally trained counsellor about it and provide you with some support.

### What can I expect?

- What I talk about will be respected and treated in confidence.
- I won't be judged
- I can be myself
- I will be listened to
- My side of the story will be heard
- To learn new ways of dealing with difficult thoughts or feelings

### How do I get Counselling?

You can either contact us yourself and we will arrange to meet with you or someone else can contact us on your behalf. This may be your GP, social worker or another person who is concerned about you.

If you are interested in finding out about us you can contact us at the office or visit [www.newlifecounselling.net](http://www.newlifecounselling.net) for more information and where you can fill in our online form. We will then be in touch to set up an initial appointment.

## "we're listening"

### Contact Details

For further information or to make a referral, please contact:

25 Ardoyne Road Belfast BT14 7HX  
**Tel: 028 9039 1630**

Unit 20 North City Business Centre  
2 Duncairn Gardens Belfast BT15 2GG  
**Tel: 028 9074 6184**

# Hello.

We're New Life Counselling,  
we're here to help you.

Are you depressed?





## What is depression?

Depression is more common than you might think – statistics suggest that as many as one in four of us experience depression at some point in our lives. Nevertheless, there can be a stigma attached to admitting these feelings and unfortunately the advice of others who tell you to “snap out of it” can reinforce this.

## What are the signs and symptoms of depression?

Our moods can be affected by all sorts of experiences and all of us at sometimes feel “down”. However it is generally when this feeling persists and starts to interfere with everyday life that we begin to wonder if we have become depressed. Signs of depression often include:

### Feelings:

- Feeling low for most of the day, on most days
- Feeling “weepy” and emotional OR finding it hard to feel anything at all
- Being anxious or panicking
- Being angry or having mood swings

### Thoughts:

- Lacking in confidence
- Finding it hard to focus or make decisions
- Expecting the worst to happen
- In more severe cases, thoughts of suicide

### Physical:

- Having trouble sleeping OR sleeping more than normal
- Not eating enough OR comfort eating
- Not taking care of your appearance
- Finding it hard to relax

### Behaviour:

- Withdrawing from people
- Not being interested in or enjoying things you used to like
- Feeling bored
- Putting things off



## Why me?

No-one knows the exact cause of depression. Some possibilities are:

- Hereditary factors, such as having family members who have suffered from depression
- Difficult times in childhood, such as the death of a parent
- Experiencing a stressful or difficult time, such as the end of a relationship or family separation
- Current circumstances, such as loneliness or unemployment
- Connected to drug use, both prescription and illegal drugs
- Physical illness
- No apparent reason, as with any illness

Everyone is unique so depression can be caused by a number of reasons including those not listed here.

## Some suggestions of ways to help yourself

- Confide in some people close to you
- Try to spend time with others every day
- Think of one or two things to do each day – reasons to get up and out
- Exercise
- Eat regularly even if you don't feel like it
- Don't drink too much – alcohol exaggerates your low mood in the long run
- Remember that it is not a sign of weakness to be struggling or to seek help, the same as it wouldn't be to go to a doctor with a physical complaint such as a broken arm