



National University
Hospital

JOURNEY TO RECOVERY

For teens with depression



WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

While sadness is a normal emotion and a natural reaction to difficult experiences, depression lasts longer. It can cause us to withdraw from others and make it difficult to carry out our usual activities. Other lesser-known characteristics of depression include:

- **Smiling depression:** appearing happy on the outside while experiencing low mood and hopelessness internally
- **Loss of interest** in things you usually enjoy
- **Difficulty concentrating** in school
- **Anger and irritability**
- **Feeling distant** from your emotions



IS THERE HOPE?

When we face difficult emotions and have already tried to get help without much success, it is normal to feel hopeless. Going for therapy may even seem pointless!

Sometimes, being told to stay optimistic feels like others are minimising your personal experiences. However, hope is not about forcing yourself to "stay positive". It is about keeping the belief that **a better situation for you exists** while acknowledging your current state. Maintaining hope is a key aspect of recovery!

A VISION FOR RECOVERY

What is important to me?

- Friends and relationships
- Family
- Hobbies
- School
- Personal identity (Who am I?)
- Religion



Figuring out what you value most can help you visualise your future. This provides direction in recovery and a reason to maintain hope. Psychotherapy can help you clarify these values and goals, and create a realistic plan to achieve them!

WHAT TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE?

- Psychotherapy (Group/Individual)
- Medications
- Case management
- Parenting support
- Family therapy



A combination of the treatments above are often recommended for holistic and stable recovery.

WHY GROUP THERAPY?

Along with other treatments such as individual therapy and medications, group therapy can support you in your recovery journey. You can:



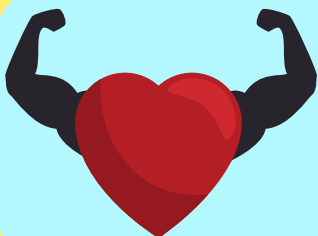
- Understand your condition better
- Learn skills and coping strategies
- Know you are not alone
- Share in a safe environment
- Learn to interact with others effectively
- Learn from others in the same situation
- Support one another's recovery journey

MAKING THE BEST OF MY TREATMENT

- Take medications as prescribed
- Attend therapy sessions as scheduled
- Practise skills learnt in therapy
- Keep in touch with case managers
- Be patient. Treatment takes time, and recovery is an ongoing journey with its ups and downs



STAYING COMMITTED



It is normal to notice little improvement after your first few sessions. Staying open and committed to treatment greatly improves your chances of recovery. It is essential to talk to your healthcare professional if you have concerns about your treatment.

IPMDA

Integrated Programme for Management of Depression in Adolescents

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE

National University Hospital

5 LOWER KENT RIDGE ROAD, SINGAPORE 119074

TEL (65) 6779 5555

www.nuh.com.sg

The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your doctor or a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical conditions.

Information is correct at time of printing (January 2020) and subject to revision without prior notice.

Copyright (2020). National University Hospital

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission in writing from National University Hospital.