

Chapter 5

Mental and Emotional Problems

1. Dealing with Anxiety and Depression
2. Mental Disorders
3. Suicide Prevention
4. Getting Help

#OnedayIwokeup #Doppitup

Lesson 1 — Dealing with Anxiety and Depression

Understanding Anxiety

Anxiety is a condition of feeling uneasy or worried about what may happen. Brief worry before a big test or presentation is completely normal. When anxiety becomes constant, overwhelming, or out of proportion to what's actually happening, it may be time to talk to a trusted adult or professional.

Many stress-management techniques from Chapter 4 — deep breathing, physical activity, positive self-talk, talking to someone you trust — also help with anxiety. Avoid alcohol or drugs to cope; they make anxiety worse over time.

Understanding Depression

Depression is different from normal sadness — it's a prolonged feeling of helplessness, hopelessness, and sadness that seriously interferes with daily life. About **18% of teens ages 12–17** experienced a major depressive episode in the past year, and **40% of high school students** reported persistent sadness or hopelessness.

Warning Signs of Depression

Five or more of the following symptoms lasting two weeks or longer may indicate major depression:

- Persistent sad or irritable mood
- Loss of interest in activities once enjoyed
- Significant changes in appetite or weight
- Difficulty sleeping or oversleeping
- Low energy or constant fatigue
- Feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

Depression is serious, but it is **treatable**. If you recognize signs in yourself or a friend, talk to a trusted adult right away. A health professional can develop a treatment plan involving therapy, medication, lifestyle changes, or a combination of all three.

Lesson 2 — Mental Disorders

A **mental disorder** is an illness of the mind that affects thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. More than **1 in 5 U.S. adults** experience some form of mental illness each year. Despite how common they are, many people don't seek help because of **stigma** — the shame that causes people to feel embarrassed or judged. Mental disorders are medical conditions, not moral failures.

Types of Mental Disorders

Anxiety Disorders	Include phobias, OCD, panic disorder, PTSD, and generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)
Mood Disorders	Involve extreme mood shifts — including major depression and bipolar disorder (dramatic swings between mania and depression)
Impulse Control Disorders	Difficulty resisting urges that can harm oneself or others (e.g., kleptomania, compulsive gambling)
Conduct Disorder	Repeated violation of others' rights or basic social rules — stealing, lying, aggression, vandalism
Schizophrenia	Loss of touch with reality; affects ~1% of the population. Requires professional treatment and medication.
Personality Disorders	Difficulty regulating emotions, often causing intense distress in social situations

■ *A Note on Self-Harm: Non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) is always a sign that someone needs support. If you or someone you know is engaging in self-harm, reach out to a trusted adult or call/text 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline) for free, confidential, 24/7 help.*

Lesson 3 — Suicide Prevention

Suicide is the **second leading cause of death** for people ages 10–34, and the third for teens ages 15–19. About **1 in 5 high school students (20%)** reported seriously considering suicide in the past year.

Warning Signs — Take All of These Seriously

- Direct statements like 'I wish I were dead' or 'I want to kill myself'
- Indirect statements like 'Everyone would be better off without me'
- Writing, drawing, or posting about death or dying
- Withdrawing from friends and family
- Giving away prized belongings
- Dramatic changes in personality, appearance, or hygiene
- A sudden, unexplained calm after a period of depression
- Substance abuse or increasingly reckless behavior

How You Can Help

- ✓ Take it seriously — never dismiss or joke about suicidal statements
- ✓ Talk to them — be calm, compassionate, and direct. Listen without judgment.
- ✓ Remind them help exists — all problems have solutions, depression is treatable
- ✓ Don't keep it secret — if a friend mentions suicide, tell a trusted adult immediately
- ✓ Connect them to help — encourage them to talk to a parent, counselor, or adult

■ *If someone is in immediate danger, call 911. For confidential support anytime, call or text 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline) — free, 24/7, confidential. You can also chat at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org).*

Lesson 4 — Getting Help

Signs it's time to seek help: feeling trapped or hopeless, struggles affecting sleep/eating/school/relationships, turning to substances to cope, becoming increasingly aggressive or withdrawn. Asking for help is not weakness — it's one of the most responsible things you can do for your health.

Treatment Methods

■ ■ Psychotherapy	Ongoing dialogue between patient and mental health professional to find the cause of a problem and develop solutions
■ Behavior therapy	Focuses on changing unwanted behaviors through positive reinforcement and new habits
■ Cognitive therapy	Identifies and corrects distorted thinking patterns that lead to harmful feelings or behaviors
■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Family therapy	Helps the whole family communicate more effectively and support one another
■ Group therapy	People with similar experiences meet regularly with a trained counselor in a confidential setting
■ Drug therapy	Medication to treat or reduce symptoms — often combined with other therapy for best results

■ *Resources: Call or text 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline) anytime. Text HOME to 741741 (Crisis Text Line). Talk to a school counselor, your family doctor, or a community mental health center.*

Chapter Vocabulary

Lesson 1

Anxiety	A condition of feeling uneasy or worried about what may happen
Depression	A prolonged feeling of helplessness, hopelessness, and sadness that interferes with daily life
Apathy	A lack of strong feeling, interest, or concern

Lesson 2

Mental disorder	An illness of the mind that affects thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, preventing a person from leading a healthy and productive life
Stigma	A mark of shame or disapproval that causes people to be avoided or treated differently by others
Anxiety disorder	A condition in which real or imagined fears become difficult to control
Mood disorder	An illness involving mood extremes that interfere with everyday living
Conduct disorder	A pattern of behavior in which a person repeatedly violates the rights of others or basic social rules

Lesson 3

Alienation	Feeling isolated and separated from everyone else
Suicide	The act of intentionally taking one's own life
Cluster suicides	A series of suicides occurring within a short period of time involving several people in the same school or community

Lesson 4

Psychotherapy	An ongoing dialogue between a patient and a mental health professional designed to find the cause of a problem and develop solutions
Behavior therapy	A treatment process that focuses on changing unwanted behaviors through rewards and reinforcement

Cognitive therapy	A treatment method designed to identify and correct distorted thinking patterns that lead to harmful feelings or behaviors
Family therapy	Treatment that helps the whole family function in more positive and constructive ways
Group therapy	Treatment involving a group of people with similar problems who meet regularly with a trained counselor
Drug therapy	The use of medications to treat or reduce the symptoms of a mental disorder