



# HeartLAND COUNSELING

*Life is difficult. Sometimes you need a caring professional to help you find your way. Heartland Counseling provides the full range of psychological services for all ages. We accept many health insurance plans. In addition, as a not-for-profit organization, we raise funds to assist those who could not otherwise afford mental health care.*

## We Can Help

### How Psychotherapy Helps People Recover From Depression

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According to the National Institute of Mental Health, an estimated 18.8 million adult Americans suffer from depression during any one-year period. Many do not even recognize that they have a condition that can be treated very effectively. This

question-and-answer fact sheet discusses depression with a focus on how psychotherapy can help a depressed person recover.

*How does depression differ from occasional sadness?*

Everyone feels sad or "blue" on occasion. Most people grieve over upsetting life experiences such as a major illness, loss

of a job, a death in the family, or a divorce. These feelings of grief tend to become less intense on their own as time goes on.

Depression occurs when feelings of extreme sadness or despair last for at least two weeks or longer and when they interfere with activities

of daily living such as working or even eating and sleeping. Depressed individuals tend to feel helpless and hopeless and blame themselves for having these feelings. Some may have thoughts of death or suicide.



People who are depressed may become overwhelmed and exhausted and stop participating in certain everyday activities altogether. They may withdraw from family and friends.

*What causes depression?*

Changes in the body's chemistry influence mood and thought processes, and

biological factors contribute to some cases of depression. In addition, chronic and serious illnesses such as heart disease or cancer may be accompanied by depression. For many individuals, however, depression signals first and foremost that certain mental and emotional aspects of life are out of balance. Significant transitions and major life stressors such as the death of a loved one or the loss of a job can help bring about depression. Other more subtle factors that lead to a loss of identity or self-esteem may also contribute. The causes of depression are not always immediately

apparent, so the disorder requires careful evaluation and diagnosis by a trained mental health care professional.

Sometimes the circumstances involved in depression are ones over which an individual has little or no control. At other times, however, depression occurs when people are unable to see that they actually have choices and can bring about change in their lives.

*Can depression be treated successfully?*

Absolutely. Depression is highly treatable when an individual receives competent care. There is still some stigma, or reluctance, associated with seeking help for emotional and mental problems, including depression. Unfortunately, feelings of depression often are viewed as a sign of weakness rather than as a signal that something is out of balance. The fact is that people with depression cannot simply "snap out of it" and feel better spontaneously.

Persons with depression who do not seek help suffer needlessly. Unexpressed feelings and concerns accompanied by a sense of isolation can worsen a depressive episode. The importance of obtaining quality professional health care cannot be overemphasized.

*How does psychotherapy help people recover from depression?*

Psychotherapy offers people the opportunity to identify the factors that contribute to their



*Depression is not the same as grief, mourning or bereavement.*

*Healthy grief leads through the pain back into life. Depression is like "getting stuck in the mud."*

#### Need to make a referral?

*If you are a pastor, physician, mental health professional, teacher, or other professional we value your referrals or requests for consultation. When you refer someone to Heartland encourage them to give us permission to allow you to be an integral part of their healing. We want you to be part of our team.*

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## Our Staff

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## Our Services

Individual Counseling  
Children and Adolescents  
Marital Enrichment  
Psychological Assessment  
Premarital Counseling  
Family Counseling  
Equine Assisted Therapy  
Team Consultation  
Bereavement/Grief Counseling  
Parent-Child Interaction  
Training  
Professional Consultation  
Workshops and Presentations  
Christian Counseling

### Give us a Call

Our professional staff would be glad to answer your questions and help you take the first step toward the help that you need.



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COUNSELING

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### Depression cont:

depression and to deal effectively with the psychological, behavioral, interpersonal and situational causes.

Skilled therapists can work with depressed individuals to

\* Pinpoint the life problems that contribute to their depression, and help them understand which aspects of those problems they may be able to solve or improve.

\* Identify negative or distorted thinking patterns that contribute to feelings of hopelessness and helplessness that accompany depression. For example, depressed individuals may tend to over generalize, that is, to think of circumstances in terms of "always" or "never." They may also take events personally.

\* Explore other learned thoughts and behaviors that create problems and contribute to depression. For example, therapists can help depressed individuals understand and improve patterns of interacting with other people that contribute to their depression.

\* Help people regain a sense of control and pleasure in life. Having one episode of depression greatly increases the risk of having another episode. There is some evidence that psychotherapy may lessen the chance of future episodes or reduce their intensity.

*In what other ways do therapists help depressed individuals and their loved ones?*

The support and involvement of family and friends can play a crucial role in helping someone who is depressed. Individuals in the "support system" can help by encouraging a depressed loved one to stick with treatment

and to practice the coping techniques and problem-solving skills he or she is learning through psychotherapy.

Living with a depressed person can be very difficult and stressful for family members and friends. The pain of watching a loved one suffer from depression can bring about feelings of helplessness and loss. Family or marital therapy may be beneficial in bringing together all the individuals affected by depression and helping them learn effective ways to cope together.

*Are medications useful for treating depression?*



Medications can be very helpful for reducing the symptoms of depression in some people, particularly for cases of moderate to severe depression. Some health care providers treating depression may favor using a combination of psychotherapy and medications.

Some depressed individuals may prefer psychotherapy to the use of medications, especially if their depression is not severe.

Depression can seriously impair a person's ability to function in everyday situations. But the prospects for recovery for depressed individuals who seek appropriate professional care are very good.

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