

Depression in Women

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Tell me about you...

- How many of you know someone who has had low self-esteem?
- How many of you know someone who has been depressed?
- What is the impact of being Asian on having low self-esteem or depression?

Cultural Dynamics Affecting the Mental Health of Asian Americans

(Kramer, Kwong et al., 2002)

- **Collectivist Tradition:** individuals submit to the larger needs of the family.
- **Saving Face:** the ability to preserve public appearance.
- **Obligation** and **shame** reinforce societal expectations and proper behavior.
- These dynamics contrast with American culture, which is individualistic.

Gender-Related Factors Among Asian Americans

(Kramer, Kwong et al., 2002)

- Major decision making in a family is generally the purview of the father.
- Preferential treatment is often given to the oldest son under the assumption he will accept greater responsibility in the care of the family.
- Female children may have lower status in the family than male children.
- In Asia, a disproportionate number of female children are available for adoption.

Asian-Americans

- Asian-American females have the lowest mean self-esteem scores of any subgroup, and Asian-American males generally score lower than other males (Self Identity, 2011).
- Asian American college students have a higher rate of suicidal thoughts than white college students (National Latino and Asian American Study).
- Asian women aged 75 or older are at the greatest risk of suicide than any other racial group (National Center for Health Statistics, 2014)
- Asian Americans are less likely to seek help for mental health problems than whites (National Latino and Asian American Study).

Depression Amongst Women

(National Institute of Mental Health)

- Approximately 12 million women in the United States experience clinical depression each year.
- One in eight women can expect to develop clinical depression during their lifetime.
- Women experience depression at roughly twice the rate of men.

What is depression?

A change from previously normal mood and functioning to persistent feelings of dejection (sadness, hopelessness, worthlessness) and loss of interest, causing a noticeable impairment in functioning. Depression can be episodic or chronic.

Signs of Depression

- Feelings of sadness, hopelessness, emptiness, worthlessness
- Tearfulness or frequent crying
- Irritability, anger, or hostility
- Loss of interest, inability to focus, decrease in energy-level
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Changes in attitude or behavior
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Poor work performance

Protective Factors

- Physical and psychological safety
- Social support system (family, friends, church)
- Positive, supportive relationships
- High self-esteem
- Personal spirituality

Risk Factors

- High levels of stress
- Major life changes (having a baby, unemployment, divorce)
- Grief or loss
- Conflict with spouse or family
- Abusive relationships
- Traumatic experiences or mistreatment
- Family history of mental health conditions
- Low self-esteem (possible spiritual attack)
- Depressive thinking (possible spiritual attack)

Spiritual Warfare

Ephesians 6:12

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

The Power of Deception

Timothy 4:1

The spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

Low Self-Esteem

- Persistently negative view of oneself.
- Believing there is something innately wrong with oneself, that you can't do anything right, and you're a failure.
- Feeling ugly, inadequate, incompetent, unworthy, and/or unlovable.
- Negative self-perception is often projected onto others, with the belief that others have the same negative view of oneself.

Some Possible Causes of Low Self-Esteem

- Unrealistic standards portrayed by the media
- Unrealistic expectations set by family/culture
- Harsh or disapproving authority figures
- Uninvolved or preoccupied caregivers
- Significant challenges without support
- Trauma or abuse

Depressive Thinking

- Thoughts that lead to depression.
- Harsh self-criticism.
- Negative thinking about oneself, one's situation, or the future.
- Thoughts of hopelessness that lead to self-destructive behaviors (alcohol and drug use, cutting, eating disorders, excessive gaming, pornography).

Lies of the Enemy

- Both low self-esteem and depressive thinking deceive people into forgetting God's love for us.
- They fulfill Satan's desire to defeat us.
- When people believe negative thoughts about themselves, they do Satan's work for him.

Other Tools of the Enemy

Stigma: a mark of disgrace associated with a circumstance, such as mental illness.

Shame: a painful feeling of humiliation arising from the consciousness of something seen as embarrassing, dishonorable, or improper.

How do they work?

- Stigma and shame keep those who suffer from seeking help.
- They keep people trapped in a prison of loneliness, despair, and self-destruction.
- They ensnare people in the lie that they are not loved.
- Without help, they cause people to lose hope.

The Goal of the Enemy

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy...

1 Peter 5:8

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

God's Love for Us

Romans 8:37-39

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The analogy of the street lined with
buildings.

How to Fight the Battle

James 4:7

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Matthew 10:1

And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction

How you can help if someone you know is depressed . . .

- Pray for God's intervention.
- Be ready to listen attentively and with empathy.
- Use positive affirmation and avoid judgement or criticism.
- Talk about self-care.
- If there is little improvement, encourage the individual to seek help from a professional.

If you are experiencing depression . . .

- When seized by negative thoughts, deliberately focus on God's love for you and pray for his peace, love, and comfort.
- Get support from our Pastors, the Stephen Ministry, and people who will pray for you.
- Spend time on self-care.
- Seek help from a professional.

Why does God allow depression?

- To draw us closer to Him
- To be saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ
- To teach us to fully rely on Him
- To give us compassion for the suffering of others
- So that through our brokenness, we can become a source of light for others

Suicide Statistics

- Mental illness is the leading risk factor for suicide; 90% of those who die by suicide have a mental illness and/or substance use disorder (National Institute of Mental Health).
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in the United States among 10-24 year olds (National Vital Statistics Report, 2016).
- Most people who take their lives exhibit one or more warning signs, either through what they say or what they do (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention).

Warning Signs: What They Say

- I want to kill myself.
- Life isn't worth living/What's there to live for?
- I wish I could die/I wish I were dead.
- My life is unbearable/It's never going to get better.
- Everyone would be better off without me.
- Nobody would care if I were dead.
- Nothing matters anymore.
- I might as well just give up.

Warning Signs: What They Do

- Engaging in risky behavior.
- Obtaining a weapon or other means of self harm.
- Becoming preoccupied with death, researching ways of dying.
- Totally withdrawing from life, loved ones, or activities.
- Being devastated by a relationship problem or breakup.
- Increasing drinking/drug use.
- Giving away prized possessions, getting affairs in order.
- Visiting/calling people to say goodbye.

Stop a Suicide Today

- A suicide prevention program that has experienced success with a documented reduction in self-reported suicide attempts.
- Teaches people how to recognize the signs of suicide.
- Emphasizes the relationship between suicide and mental illness.
- The key step in reducing suicide is to get those in need into mental health treatment.
- Developed by psychiatrist Douglas Jacobs, who wrote the *Harvard Medical School Guide to Suicide Assessment and Intervention*.

Important Facts for Suicide Prevention

(Stop a Suicide Today)

- You don't give a suicidal person morbid ideas by talking about suicide. The opposite is true. Bringing up the subject of suicide and discussing it openly is one of the most helpful things you can do.
- Almost everyone who dies by suicide has given some clue or warning. Do not ignore threats of suicide. Statements like "You'll be sorry when I'm dead," or "I can't see any way out" - even if said casually or as a joke- may indicate serious suicidal feelings.
- Even the most severely depressed person has mixed feelings about death, wavering until the very last moment between wanting to live and wanting to die. Most suicidal people do not want death; they want the pain to stop. The impulse to end it all, however overpowering, does not last forever.

Suicide Prevention: Learn to ACT

1. Acknowledge
2. Care
3. Treatment

Acknowledge

- Take it seriously. If you recognize warning signs in a loved one, it is very important to take them seriously. In fact, the majority of people who die by suicide gave some indication of their intention to those close to them.
- Listen attentively. Even if professional help is needed, your loved one will be more willing to seek help if you have listened carefully and non-judgementally to them.

Care

- Voice your concern. Take the initiative to ask what is troubling your loved one, and attempt to overcome any reluctance on their part to talk about it.
- Let the person know you care and understand. Continue to be available to the loved one and show interest and support.
- Remain calm. Although it might upset you to hear thoughts about suicide, assure your loved one that you will be there for him or her and that help is available.
- Ask if the person has a specific plan. (Note: asking about suicide does not cause a person to think about or complete suicide)

Treatment

- Get professional help immediately. If your friend or loved one is exhibiting any suicidal warning signs, assist them by contacting a mental health professional, or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). You can also call 911 or assist them with getting to the nearest emergency room.
 - If for any reason you are unsure, uncomfortable, or unable to take action, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).
 - If the person seems unwilling to accept treatment, call the police, your local hospital emergency department, or 911 if you feel that he or she is in immediate danger.

The Lord's Saving Grace

Romans 10:13

For “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Resources

- Montgomery County Crisis Center
240-777-4000
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
800-273-TALK
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- CentrePointe Counseling (Ashton, MD)
800-491-5369
- Treatment Referral Hotline (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)
800-662-HELP
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

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