

## WHY A SUNFLOWER?



- Sunflowers grow towards sunlight with their faces tracking the sun. We need those with depression to seek light instead of responding to the natural instinct of hiding in darkness during a depressive episode.
- Sunflowers are yellow; the color of joy, happiness and hope—symbolizing depression successfully treated. We think this symbol, if used similar to the pink ribbon for breast cancer or red dress for heart disease, serves as a much more hopeful and positive icon for depression survivors than each organizations unique symbology can alone.
- Sunflower seeds and oils contain antioxidants, Vitamin E, and Omega 6's. This kind of brain nutrition is incredibly important for those with depression.



The mission of International Foundation for Research and Education on Depression (iFred) is to shine a positive light on depression and eliminate the stigma associated with the disease through prevention, research and education. Its goal is to ensure 100% of the 350 million people affected by depression seek and receive treatment.

iFred is creating a shift in society's negative perception of depression through positive imagery and branding—establishing the sunflower and color yellow as the international symbols of hope for depression. To further its mission, iFred engages with individuals and organizations to execute high-impact and effective campaigns that educate the public about support and treatment for depression.

[iFred.org](http://iFred.org)



Become a member of 'INSPIRE,' our online community support group where people share insights, feelings, challenges, and triumphs related to depression.

This project was made possible by funding from the sale of Happiness Mood-lites available at Lowe's Home Improvement stores.



The information contained in this brochure is for informational purposes only and is not intended to replace the recommendations of your physician or other mental health professional.

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**Shine a**  
*Light*  
**on Depression**





## WHAT IS DEPRESSION?



Depression is a common and serious medical condition. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 350 million people worldwide are affected by depression.

Depression is a debilitating condition that, if left untreated, often causes you to feel “empty,” worthless, lonely, guilty for no reason, and hopeless about your future.

Depression can impact anyone regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or educational level.

Depression affects your ability to concentrate, remember, or make decisions, all of which can have a negative impact on your ability to be successful at work.

Depression is a condition that can lead you to isolate or withdraw from the people you care about and who care about you.

Depression, in its worst state, can cause you to become preoccupied with thoughts of death or even lead to an attempt to commit suicide.

Depression is a complex disease that we are just beginning to understand. It is thought to be caused by underlying chemical imbalances, severe emotional trauma, family history, or sometimes for no clear reason at all.

## SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION



Depression should not be confused with the feelings of sadness or the “blues” that most of us feel from time to time. Rather, depression is characterized by its duration, the intensity of its symptoms, the affects on your personal and professional life, and its often unexplained origin.

Below is a list of common symptoms:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Feelings of guilt and worthlessness
- Loss of interest in activities that were once enjoyable
- A decrease in normal energy levels or feelings of constant fatigue
- Trouble concentrating or making decisions
- Unexplained restlessness or irritability
- Difficulty with sleep, such as an inability to get to sleep, stay asleep, or excessive sleep
- Changes in appetite evidenced by weight loss or weight gain
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide, attempts to commit suicide
- Persistent physical symptoms, such as backaches, headaches, or stomach problems that do not respond to treatment

*There are more suicides than homicides every year (1.5x as many suicides).\**

*\*US Center for Disease Control, 2002*



# Help us!

*You*  
can change everything...

Depression is treatable in up to 80% of cases, yet less than 25% are getting assistance due to stigma and lack of funding. It can affect your daily life, work environment, relationships and more.



Depression is on track to be the second leading cause of global disease burden by 2030. We can and must change this. Help us help others shine a positive light on depression.

