



How to recognise when someone struggles with depression?

Mental health issues are often treated as very private matters. Sometimes people skillfully conceal their feelings and experiences of depression, can often smile and engage in activities while having severe emotional struggles.

When you think of someone with depression, you can have the picture of someone consistently sad, avoiding social contact or failing to achieve success in various parts of their life. It might be challenging to imagine depressed people differently, as often people and specialists describe depression in a very general, stereotypical way.

However, as opposed to common thinking, depression has multiple 'facets' and some common symptoms of depression might surprise you. This is why in this guide we describe some common, but not widely acknowledged characteristics of depression.

**Some people seem strong and look happy.
That does not mean they do not suffer inside!**

Depression often feels like a lack of emotion (numbness), anger at one self or feelings of guilt, sometimes without clear reasons for the sufferer. Whenever you think your friends are achieving well and are happier remember that you never know what is really going on in their lives. Moreover, success does not necessarily prevent or cure depression.

Here are some basic yet not widely recognised signs of depression:

- Feeling very emotional, being irritable or edgy.
- Often fatigued or overwhelmed.
- Physical symptoms - headaches or stomach problems (e.g. nausea or a feeling of uncomfortable fullness).
- Overusing technology (marathons of social media posts and hours spent gaming).
- Exercising too much or too little.
- Sleeping too much (hypersomnia) or too little (insomnia).
- Increased appetite or decreased appetite (also noticeable weight gain or loss).
- Large consumption of substances: alcohol, caffeine, painkillers or recreational drugs.
- Being sensitive to rejection, criticism and challenging circumstances.
- Problems with concentration or decision-making.

RESPECT THAT EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT, SO IS DEPRESSION. AND PRACTISE ACTIVE LISTENING!

For more resources and counselling support visit www.thesignificantyou.org