

## November 2010 *LifeSolutions* Corner

*I think I'm depressed. I'm nervous about seeing a professional, and I don't like the idea of taking medications. Can EAP help?*

Yes, we can. People don't always need medication to lift a depressed mood. Sometimes symptoms go away without any formal treatment.

The first step is to figure out what's going on. If you've been feeling down most of the day every day for two weeks or more, it's time to pay attention. You may be finding it difficult to take good care of yourself ... eating healthy food, getting exercise, making sure you are getting enough sleep, getting to work on time, talking with others, etc. Food, sleep, exercise, social support, and mood are all related.

If this describes you, call *LifeSolutions* and let us help. We are available by phone 24/7. So don't hesitate, do call us!

Here are some other "antidepressant" suggestions to consider. They don't have side effects, and they won't cost you a thing.

1. You can meet with one of our experienced counselors about your concerns, by phone or in person.
  - There is no copayment for EAP sessions ... they're free.
  - Our counselors can coach you on ways to counter depressive thinking. We will also help you work through any problems you are having. Working with a counselor is very helpful, especially when you're depressed.
  - EAP staff can also make referrals to doctors, counselors, mental health services, support groups, and other resources in your area as needed, taking your financial situation into account.
2. See our website ([www.lifesolutionsforyou.com](http://www.lifesolutionsforyou.com)) for resources: articles and tips for dealing with depression, audio information, a depression assessment, and other types of information.
  - Click on *WorkLife* Portal, enter your company code. (Don't know your company code? Call us.)
  - Check out the left-hand column on the website (see Mental Health) or use the Search feature on the right-hand side and type in "depression." You'll find free resources popping up.
3. Walk regularly at a moderate pace. For some people, walking can be as effective as medication in relieving depressive symptoms.
  - More recent research has also compared the "antidepressant" effects of doing a form of yoga vs. walking. The research found that although both can be effective in lifting depressed mood, for some, yoga may be even more effective than walking.
  - If you like to walk and have stopped, or if you have taken yoga classes in the past or enjoyed using a yoga DVD at home, consider doing either or both. They may help lift your depressed mood.
4. Write down three things you are grateful for each day. For some people, this exercise is effective in lifting their depressed mood. According to at least one study, doing this for one week resulted in decreased depression and increased happiness levels as long as 6 months later.

Even if you have limited finances, you can get support and feel better. We're here and will be glad to talk (24/7, if needed). Give us a call at 1.800.647.3327.

### Sources:

- Seligman, Martin E. P. *Authentic Happiness*. NY: Free Press, 2002.
- Seligman M., Steen T.A., Park N., and Peterson C. "Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions." *American Psychologist*, 60:410-421, 2005.
- <http://www.bu.edu/today/science-tech/2010/09/01/your-brain-yoga-calmer-more-content>

Nothing in this information is a substitute for following your company policies related to information covered here.

