



Coping with loss & grief

It is normal to feel intense sadness, grief and loss in response to sexual assault. If you are feeling like you are not coping with these feelings it may be helpful to talk to your doctor or counsellor.

Some people who have experienced sexual assault may feel depressed and may experience one or more of the following symptoms:

Sadness, lacking in energy, helplessness, worthlessness, difficulty making decisions, difficulty concentrating, loss of interest in life, difficulty in sleeping, changes in weight, relationship problems, thoughts of death, feeling anxious, unusual fear or panic attacks.

If you have any of these symptoms, it might be helpful to discuss with a counsellor or your doctor whether you are experiencing depression.

What might help?

Therapy/counselling

Talking to a doctor, psychologist or counsellor about what you are feeling can be helpful. Sometimes just talking about it is enough to help you feel better, as well as finding ways to deal with the issues and to get more support for yourself. Feeling depressed can be a lonely experience, and sometimes being able to talk to a sympathetic person can be a relief on its own.

Community support programs

This support can include getting information, getting help with housing or finding work, training and education and support groups. Feeling that you are part of the community and accepted by those around you can also help you feel better.

Useful websites

www.beyondblue.org.au

Information, resources, frequently asked questions, information about depression research, news and events.

www.sane.org

Information about a range of mental illnesses, including factsheet on depression

www.depressionadvice.com.au

List of depression symptoms and self-assessment; facts about depression; information for those caring for people with depression; where to get support.

www.depressionet.com.au

Description of depression symptoms; information about treatments; support groups; personal stories; links to other sites; books and articles about depression