

THE DEPRESSED STUDENT

Depression is an illness that involves the body, mood, and thoughts, that affects the way a person eats and sleeps, the way one feels about oneself, and the way one thinks about things. Depressed students frequently show a multitude of symptoms, (e.g., guilt, low-self esteem, feelings of worthlessness, and inadequacy as well as physical symptoms such as decreased or increased appetite, difficulty staying asleep, early awakening, low interest in daily activities). These students typically demonstrate low activity levels because they have little energy and everything is an effort.

DO:

- Let the student know you're aware he/she is feeling down and you would like to help.
- Reach out more than halfway and encourage the student to express feelings because your attention helps the student feel more worthwhile.
- Tell the student of your concern.
- Refer the student to the Counseling Center for assessment and treatment.

DON'T:

- Say, "Don't worry", "Crying won't help", or "Everything will be better tomorrow."
- Be afraid to ask whether the student is suicidal if you think he/she may be.

* Adapted from: Helping the Emotionally Distressed Student. Organization of Counseling Center Directors in Higher Education; 1999