



**SKYLAR
VELDHOUSE**

HEALTH LITERACY GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

Depression can be something anyone you know is battling with and that battle is not always an easy win. My goal from this guide is to give you direction, tips, and information but also to let you know that you are not alone. There are many others fighting with depression and we all have the strength to overcome hard things that come our way.

Understanding depression and knowing the resources you have available to you is my main goal for this guide, as well as educating and informing you on how to be health literate in many aspects of depression. This guide is for those struggling with depression and wanting to learn more but also for those who know of someone struggling. I encourage you to take what you learn from this guide and share it with someone else, let everyone know they are never alone in any battle they may be fighting.

ABOUT ME



My name is Skylar Veldhouse, a soon to be graduate of Iowa State University with my Bachelor's degree in Food Science and Human Nutrition. I have created this health literacy guide for you as my final project for Special Topics in Communication: Health Community class with Dr. Katherine Rafferty.

As a college student, I have struggled with anxiety and depression all throughout my years at ISU but the most crucial thing I learned was that you are never alone. Help can always be found at Iowa State no matter who's door you go knocking on.

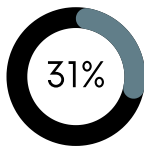
FACT SHEET

Depression definition |

a mood disorder that continually causes feelings of sadness and leads to loss of interest, most often depression interferes with the ability to function daily, symptoms and causes may vary person to person as well as the treatment

Signs & Symptoms

- Sad, hopeless, anxious mood
- Irritability
- Restless feeling
- Trouble sleeping, waking, oversleeping
- Death or suicide thoughts
- Difficulty moving or talking a lot
- Guilty, helplessness, worthless feelings
- No interest in hobbies or activities



of Iowa State students suffer from moderate to severe depression



of Iowa State students who have depression or anxiety do not use any type of medication

Treatment varies for each individual but the most common are



JOURNALING



EXERCISE



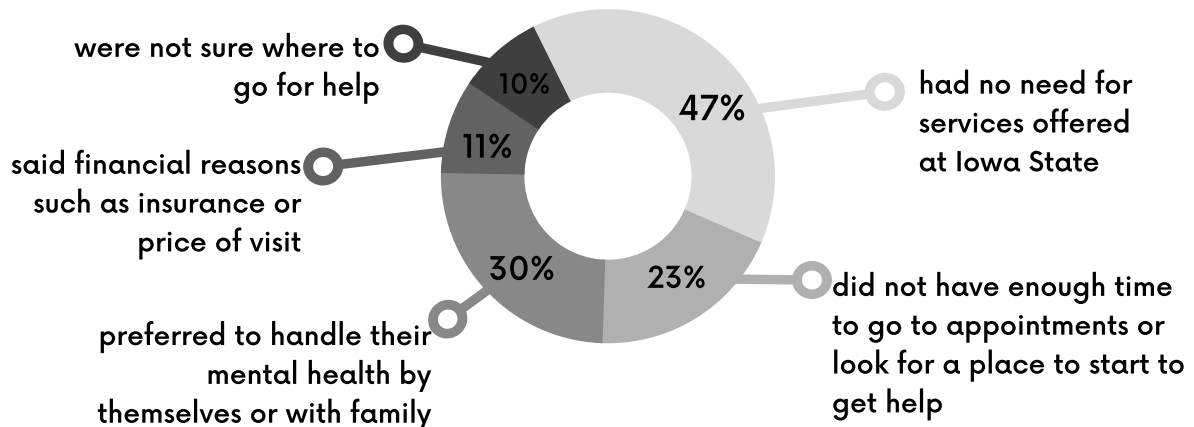
THERAPY



MEDICATION*

*all medications have possible side affects and should be discussed with a primary care physician

Student Barriers to Getting Help



E - RESOURCES

01 — Therapy Assistance Online

<https://www.counseling.iastate.edu/resources/tao-self-help/>



Free self-help too that is online and available to use for anyone in the Iowa State community, sponsored by ISU. There is an online library full of engaging reading, programs that help to build life skills and interaction sessions. This option relevant to those who are wanted to educate themselves on their own time

02 — Student Counseling Services

<https://www.counseling.iastate.edu/services/counseling/individual-counseling/>



Short-term counseling services for individualized therapy and support. Iowa State students are offered free appointments with a counselor on campus at one of the multiple locations. Student counseling services is for those who are wanting help with substance misuse, trauma, loneliness, stress, and many other concerns.

03 — Community Mental Health Center

<https://yourlifeiowa.org/community-mental-health-centers-cmhcs>



Designed by the Department of Human Services, the CMHC aims to provide mental health help to people of all ages. Funding is not a worry when seeking help at CMHC, as it is their requirement to serve Iowans who are experiencing a crisis in mental health, chronic mental illness, emotional disturbance and many other disabilities.

04 — National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>



Lifeline, sponsored by the SAMHSA provides free and safe support over the phone as well as online in chat format. You have the availability to reach out at your own convenience as well as reach out on behalf of someone to learn mental health help practices. This platform is an option to those who need emotional support during a time of distress or crisis.

05 — National Alliance of Mental Illness

<https://nami.org>



NAMI is an Iowa based help service for those with mental illnesses as well as for the family members and friends of those struggling with their mental health. There are support groups online in addition to education classes for the person struggling and the family members. NAMI is for people who are wanting to better themselves and others to strengthen their mental health.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups are a good way to start the conversation on depression and it is a simple option for students in their undergraduate college program. Talking in an open and honest way to strangers helps overcome the barrier of embarrassment as well stigmatization. Support groups are often directed by a psychologist aiming to help others in an impactful way, there is also the benefit of bettering yourself to the best possible version that you can. Overcoming the barrier of joining something you have not done before is the first step in proving the strength you have to yourself and your loved ones. Joining a support group is great to do for others but it is even more beneficial and empowering when you join for yourself.

01 — Ames Psychological Wellness Center



3510 Lincoln Way
Suite 300
Ames, IA 50010
(515) - 505 - 1997

Nicole Olson is a psychologist, PhD, LP located in Ames and hosts a support group weekly at scheduled times in the Ames Psychological Wellness Center. The group covers trauma focused topics such as PTSD, traumas, eating disorders and depression.

02 — Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

<https://www.dbsalliance.org/support/chapters-and-support-groups/online-support-groups/#national>



DBSA has support groups that are online based as well as in person; both give people who are struggling the place to safely share their thoughts, feelings, experiences and offer one another strength and hope. Topics such trauma, depression, and bipolar disorder are often covered in the group. To join the groups you simply follow the link listed above, create an account and sign up for the group you would like to join in on; the meeting times and dates are listed on the signup sheet.

10 ADVOCACY TIPS

1 Organize Take the tasks you do daily and create an **organizational process**(2) for what you do throughout the day.

2 Prioritize Put tasks in order of importance to know what is needed to be done first. Structuring your days in order of priorities allows for goals and rewards to be implemented(13).

3 Communicate Speaking to family, friends, peers, and creating **normalcy**(2) in the aspect of your needs is important.

4 Exercise This allows a time for you to **cope** with the difficulties you may have been going through, it also give you a break in thinking, as you are putting your attention into something else fully(16).

5 Nutrition Fueling your body with healthy fruitful foods allows for **harmonic balance perspective**(2) in all aspects of your body; foods have natural antidepressant compositions.

6 Clean Cleaning your environment allows for you to see the progress you make with each area you finish and helps to start feeling better about yourself.

7 Goals Creating goals, not matter how big or small gives you something to look forward to and work towards in addition for decreasing your chances of **burnout**(2).

8 Rewards Give yourself the drive you need to work on accomplishing the things you need to get done for the day while also celebrating the accomplishment.

9 Routine Having a daily routine for yourself can help you commit to doing certain practices each day and give yourself something to get out of bed for.

10 Help Everyone needs help at some point in their lives and there are many **informational support**(2) resources out their to get the help needed(7).

(2) du Pre, A. & Cook Overton, B. (2020).

(7) <https://www.counseling.iastate.edu/resources/tao-self-help/>

(13) Nebbe, C. (2021, November 23).

(16) Wang, L., Li, J., Bai, S., Liu, T., Pei, T., Liu, Z., ... & Ruan, C. (2019, February).

INTERVIEW


Carver Nebbe, MD Psychiatrist



Carver is an Iowa resident who went to Iowa State for his degree in biology and then to Iowa for his Degree in psychology. After graduating, he took a job at Thielen Student Health Center because of the impact that ISU had on his life, he wanted to give back to the community. Carver's interests outside of working include things like animals, running, exercise, and reading; he feels that he relates easy to the college aged students because of his journey through Iowa State and the growth he has went through during his degree here. In our interview he pointed out some key things he thinks every Iowa State student should know and I will share them.

 cnebbe@iastate.edu

 (515) 294 - 5801

 Thielen Student Health Center
Iowa State University
2647 Union Drive
Ames, Iowa 50011

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THERE IS NO WRONG DOOR

Every door at ISU will help you when you need it and that door will direct you to the best place for you.

S

MANY SERVICES ARE OFFERED AT ISU

From Student Counseling Services to the Thielen Student Health Center and many others, there is a place anyone can go to get the help they are seeking.

U

MANAGE YOUR STRESSES

The main reason depression rises is due to stressors in ones life, it is important to prioritize and organize the things you have on your place to ensure you do not overload your mental health capacity.

SCHOLARLY SOURCES

The Effect of Different Exercise on Anxiety and Depression of College Students

[Wang, L., Li, J., Bai, S., Liu, T., Pei, T., Liu, Z., ... & Ruan, C. \(2019, February\). The effect of different exercise on anxiety and depression of college students. In AIP Conference Proceedings \(Vol. 2079, No. 1, p. 020033\). AIP Publishing LLC.](#)

The objective of this article was to find out if different types of exercise would help to alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression specifically in college students. The method of the study a group of 218 college students that were then randomly split into three groups and assigned a type of physical activity to participate in for three months. The first group, group A, consisted of 60 individuals with 30 being men and 30 being women who were to do aerobics exercises. Group B had 82 students, 52 of which were male and the other 30 were females and they all participated in basketball as their method of exercise. The last group, group C has 76 participants with 40 of them being male and 36 being female, all students in group C has table tennis as their method of exercise. The exercises each group did was moderate, three times a week for 1 hour and 30 minutes and their changes in heart rate were noted during the activity using a Polar Meter. The results between the three groups showed the changes in anxiety and depression were significant and had value, this meaning that various types of exercise were a great method to help treat anxiety and depression. The results of this study are relevant to my particular audience because it shows that exercise is a way to help alleviate some of the buildup stress that leads to anxiety and depression, specifically in college students. Implementing various types of activities into your lifestyle are an easy addition to your everyday habits that have been show through this study to help with your anxiety and depression.

Quality of Sleep and Depression in College Students: A Systematic Review

[Dinis, J., & Bragança, M. \(2018\). Quality of sleep and depression in college students: a systematic review. Sleep Science, 11\(4\), 290.](#)

The objective of this systematic review was to look further into the relation between how good college students are sleeping in retrospect to depression levels. The methodology used for the sleep data was the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Score (PSQI) and for depression levels the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) was used. The results found that there was an association between the sleep quality and symptoms of depression, leading to both feeding off of one another. Meaning that when the quality of sleep was worsening for participants, this resulted in depressive symptoms also worsening. This systematic review relates to my audience because of the changes in depression linked to not sleeping and college level students, typically ages 18-22 are usually running on low levels of sleep. The low sleep coupled with a heavy class load, work, and for some people childcare, this often increases symptoms of depression and anxiety.

SCHOLARLY SOURCES

Substance Use, Anxiety, and Depressive Symptoms Among College Students

[Walters, K. S., Bulmer, S. M., Troiano, P. F., Obiaka, U., & Bonhomme, R. \(2018\). Substance use, anxiety, and depressive symptoms among college students. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Substance Abuse*, 27\(2\), 103-111.](#)

The study focused on the association between depression and anxiety coupled with substance abuse in undergraduates at a university. The method of this study was done using a CORE Alcohol and Drug Survey as well as a Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI), the age range was 18-24 which is stated as undergraduate students in the study and there was a total of 1,316 participants. The results of the study showed that both depression and anxiety were not affected by the consumption of alcohol whereas there were greater depression symptoms for students who used tobacco, cannabis, amphetamines, sedatives, and cocaine. This study as well as the results found are relevant to my audience because most college ages students whether they are of the legal age or not, often consume alcohol along with some type of substance such as cannabis or tobacco. Depressive symptoms worsen when using substances such as the ones previously listed, which adds additional stress to already stressed college students.

Changes in Depression and Physical Activity Among College Students on a Diverse Campus After a COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Order

[Jalene, S., Pharr, J., Shan, G., & Poston, B. \(2019\). Estimated cardiorespiratory fitness is associated with reported depression in college students. *Frontiers in physiology*, 10, 1191.](#)

This study looked at the change in depression scores in relation to physical activity changes due to the stay-at-home order during the COVID-19 pandemic. The sample group was mainly females, 73%, with a mean GPA of 3.4. Participants provided their age, sex, class standing, and GPA along with other generic information. They were asked to report on their physical activity before the stay-at-home order as well as their physical activity minutes while being in the stay-at-home order in addition they were also questioned about their depression levels using a Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9). The results of the 194 participants showed that before the stay-at-home order students were avidly doing physical activity whereas once the order was made participants had significantly lower minutes of physical activity per week. The PHQ-9 scores from before the order were at 5.58 and the score while in the stay-at-home order was 9.61, this was a vast change from the previous PHQ-9 score. This study and the results are relevant to my particular audience because student currently in college or have just started college have experienced the shutdowns from the COVID-19 pandemic. Seeing that physical activity decreased during the pandemic and then the depression levels also increased, associate that physical activity in your daily habit's attributes to better managing depression and mental health overall.

SCHOLARLY SOURCES

Work-Life Balance as a Predictor of College Student Anxiety and Depression

[Sprung, J. M., & Rogers, A. \(2020\). Work-life balance as a predictor of college student anxiety and depression. Journal of American college health, 1-8.](#)

The objective of this study was addressing the work-life balance and how it leads to student depression and anxiety symptoms. The method of the study was a cross-sectional design to assess the balance of work-life and depression and anxiety symptoms. There was a total of 111 participants in the college level age range and they were studied from October to November in 2017. Work-life balance was studied by using a 15-item measure that was developed by Hayman. This was a scale that included work-life as current employment in addition to any school-related demands, in addition anxiety was measured by the 7-item General Anxiety Disorder Scale and depression was studied by the 9-item Patient Health Questionnaire. The results showed that the balance of work-life and depression/anxiety symptoms were related in terms of a heavier load of work-life demands lead to worsening symptoms of anxiety and depression. This study and the results relate to my particular audience because a large portion of college aged students are having to work and do other things that take up time in the day which leads to stress in their lives. This stress and work-life balance causes a higher level of depression and anxiety symptoms. Taking this information and using it to educate my target audience on lightening their workload as a way to better manage anxiety and depression.

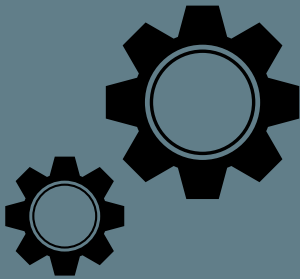
CONCLUSION

Depression can be something anyone you know is battling with and that battle is not always an easy win. My goal from this guide is to give you direction, tips, and information but also to let you know that you are not alone. There are many others fighting with depression and you have the strength to overcome hard things you are given.



THERE IS ALWAYS SOMEONE

Someone to talk to, to reach out for help, someone you could lend a hand to - you are never alone.



USE YOUR RESOURCES

I have added both in person and online resources for you to utilize as you wish. They all have the same goal in mind of making your mental health better.



GIVE YOURSELF CREDIT

We all have many things on our plate, some more than others but never forget to give yourself credit when you accomplish things - big or small.

GLOSSARY

Burnout - A combination of factors, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment.

CMHC - Community mental health center

DBSA - Depression and bipolar support alliance

Harmonic balance perspective - The perspective that health is not simply the absence of physical signs of disease, but rather is a sense of overall well-being and equilibrium.

Informational support - A form of action-facilitating social support that involves finding and sharing information.

ISU - Iowa State University

NAMI - National alliance of mental illness

Normalcy - The sense that things are comfortable, predictable, and familiar.

Organizational process - Habitual or prescribed ways of doing things (e.g., what people typically talk about, when, and with whom).

PTSD - Post-traumatic stress disorder

SAMHSA - Substance abuse and mental health services administration

SCS - Student Counseling Services

TAO - Therapy assistance online

REFERENCES

All references are in APA format, excluding direct website links to the online resource groups listed on pages 5 and 6.

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