

acknowledge
care
TREATMENT

As upperclassmen, you probably know what to do if you or a friend is struggling with **DEPRESSION** or something else that has you concerned.

You know you need to **ACT** -- *Acknowledge* that you see signs of depression or suicide in yourself or your friend. Show you *Care* by listening to your friend and taking their concerns seriously. Then, *Tell* a trusted adult so you can get help. But, what about after graduation when many of those trusted adults may no longer be as close by? You are now becoming a trusted adult for yourself and your friends.

Whether you are heading off to college, the workforce, or the military, you're going to need to start advocating for yourself and your own mental health. It can be intimidating but remember: Just because you are an adult, doesn't mean that you have to figure everything out on your own. Everyone in your college, workplace, or military unit was once new there, too, and is likely happy to help you.

Remember that if you think you may be depressed, you do not need to be afraid to talk about it to someone. More than a quarter of all people over the age of 18 live with a mental health condition. Depression and anxiety are the most common, and they are treatable.

TAKING CARE OF *yourself*

Getting ready to leave the comfortable world of high school is exciting, but can be scary as well. With the new independence that your life beyond high school will bring, comes the responsibility of keeping yourself mentally and physically well. You won't likely have someone reminding you of ways to stay healthy, so here is a list of things you can do:



TAKE TIME IN NATURE / The healing power of nature has been proven by research, so make some time to take a quick walk, even if it is just in the local park.



SLEEP WELL / It's tempting to want to "seize the day" by staying up late and getting up early, but you will always feel better after a good night's sleep.



BE GRATEFUL AND FORGIVING / These are two traits that will keep you healthy, and serve you well in all areas of life. You can write something in notebook every day, or even download an application on your phone to jot down things for which you are grateful.



BREATHE / Take slow deep breaths at some point each day. You can download an app on your phone to help you practice breathing techniques.

AM I DEPRESSED or just sad?

There's a difference between depression and feeling sad or angry. Feelings of sadness or anger are not usually long lasting, and certainly occur in people's lives frequently. Teenagers in their last couple of years of high school are facing a lot of transitions. For many of them, these are the biggest changes they have ever encountered! Feeling sad about the change is understandable and not something you need to be concerned about. However, if you are not feeling any joy or excitement about the changes coming your way, or you feel like your situation is hopeless, you may have depression. Depression is more than just passing feelings of sadness; it is a medical condition that requires treatment. Depression is common and affects about 25% of adults. Luckily, treatment options are available and often successful.

Depression symptoms include:

- > **CHANGES IN SLEEP PATTERNS:** Some people with depression are so tired that they feel like all they can do is sleep, while others struggle to sleep at all.
- > **ANGER:** Depression can make people very irritable and even filled with rage. A person who is depressed may find that everything annoys them.
- > **LOW ENERGY:** Finding the energy to tackle something that once seemed easy -- taking a shower or leaving the house, going to the mall to buy a present or going to the movies, etc., can seem overwhelming to some people battling depression.
- > **SYMPTOMS ARE LONG LASTING:** If you have any of the above symptoms for two weeks or more, **ACT! Acknowledge** that you are struggling, show yourself you **Care**, and take steps to get **Treatment**.

UNDERSTAND *self-advocacy*

You may have heard your parents or teachers tell you that once you leave high school, you will have to become comfortable advocating for yourself. You may think "sure, no problem," but it's important to know exactly what that looks like. **Advocating for yourself means:**



In order to be an effective advocate, try these three steps:

- 1 EDUCATE YOURSELF.** Do a little research before you seek help for whatever you need. Knowledge is power, and being informed will help other adults take you seriously.
- 2 BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.** If you feel like you can be a good advocate and that you deserve what you are asking for, that will shine through.
- 3 KNOW WHAT YOU WANT.** Be sure that you know what you need before you ask for something.

GETTING MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN THE MILITARY

If you are planning to enter the military, either as an enlisted person or a member of the Reserves, you'll need to understand how to access health care services. **Enlisted military members usually have a health insurance called TRICARE.** Some Reserve members are eligible for TRICARE, but it depends on your Reserve status.

Most military installations have a military treatment facility, called an MTF, where service members can receive health care for physical or mental health needs. Many civilian health care providers (mental and physical) accept TRICARE as insurance, too.

In addition, **each military branch has its own substance abuse treatment and prevention program.** For example, the Army's program is called Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP).

Each military branch also has volunteers who help military families navigate the system. For example, the Army has "Family Readiness Groups" who help the members of their unit and their families with various parts of military life.



MYTHS & FACTS about college counseling

If you're getting ready to go to college and think you may access your college's counseling services, it's important to know the facts, and dispel the myths, that people often believe about college counseling.

Myth What I tell my counselor can influence my chances at getting accepted to graduate schools or getting a job.

Fact What you tell your counselor is completely confidential. The only exception to that is a counselor's duty to act if they are worried that someone is a danger to themselves or others.

Myth I know what I need to do to feel better, so a counselor can't help me.

Fact Change is hard! A counselor has experience helping people work through similar situations and can help you set goals and set up strategies on how to achieve them.

Myth A counselor can't understand what it feels like to be me.

Fact Counselors are trained to respect and understand people of different ages, cultures, and life circumstances. They learn from all their clients, so you might be surprised at how much they will understand!

For more information: <http://psychcentral.com/lib/who-needs-counseling-10-therapy-myths-dispelled/>

<http://www.upstate.edu/currentstudents/support/scc/myths.php>

going to the **WORKFORCE** or **SELF-EMPLOYMENT**

If you are heading into the workforce after high school, **you will have to figure out how to access health care, including mental health care if you need it.**

You'll likely be able to stay on your parent's health insurance plan if they are insured. However, if they do not have health insurance, or have a plan that doesn't work for you, you should look into getting your own insurance. The person at your organization who handles health insurance should be able to give you some good information on the plans available, but it's helpful to know a few key terms before you get started:

MORE INFORMATION:
[healthcare.gov/young-adults/
self-employed/](http://healthcare.gov/young-adults/self-employed/)

PREMIUM: This is the amount that you must pay for your health insurance plan. Most plans require payment monthly, but some are quarterly or yearly.

CO-PAYMENT: A co-payment is usually a small amount of money that you have to pay for a medical visit, above and beyond your premium.

DEDUCTIBLE: Some health insurance plans include a required deductible. That means you must pay "up to" a certain amount before the insurance company begins paying the costs. For example, if you were to accrue \$5,000 worth of medical expenses one year and your deductible was \$1,000, you would pay for the first \$1,000 and your insurer would pay for the remaining \$4,000.

PREVENTIVE CARE: Screenings, immunizations, and other preventive services are often covered without requiring you to pay your deductible.

However, if you are heading to **PART-TIME WORK** or will be **SELF-EMPLOYED** you may not have access to an employer-sponsored health insurance plan. If you cannot use a parent's plan, you can look into accessing health care from the federal system at HealthCare.gov.

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1-800-273-TALK
today to
save a life.

NATIONAL
**SUICIDE
PREVENTION
LIFELINE**
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

NEED TO talk?

Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. In addition to listening, they have access to local resources. Get support for yourself or someone you care about.



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