

PRESERVING OUR MENTAL HEALTH IN THIS CHALLENGING SEASON -

Depression



By
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PRESERVING OUR MENTAL HEALTH

- Imagine a very huge oak tree. It has many
- purposes. To provide shade for people, rest,
- home and protection for some animals. But
- even though the oak tree is so resourceful,
- it has to stand up to the earth's natural
- elements such as the wind, sun & rain.
- Many of the limbs will sway, bend and
- some may almost seem to break. But once
- the wind died down, the oak tree has the
- tremendous ability to return to its upright
- position. The strength of the tree, though
- tested by the daily challenges of life,
- because of its firm roots that are deeply
- planted in the ground, stand strong and sturdy
- and continue to be the purposeful tree that it
- was created to be. I see you as that oak tree.



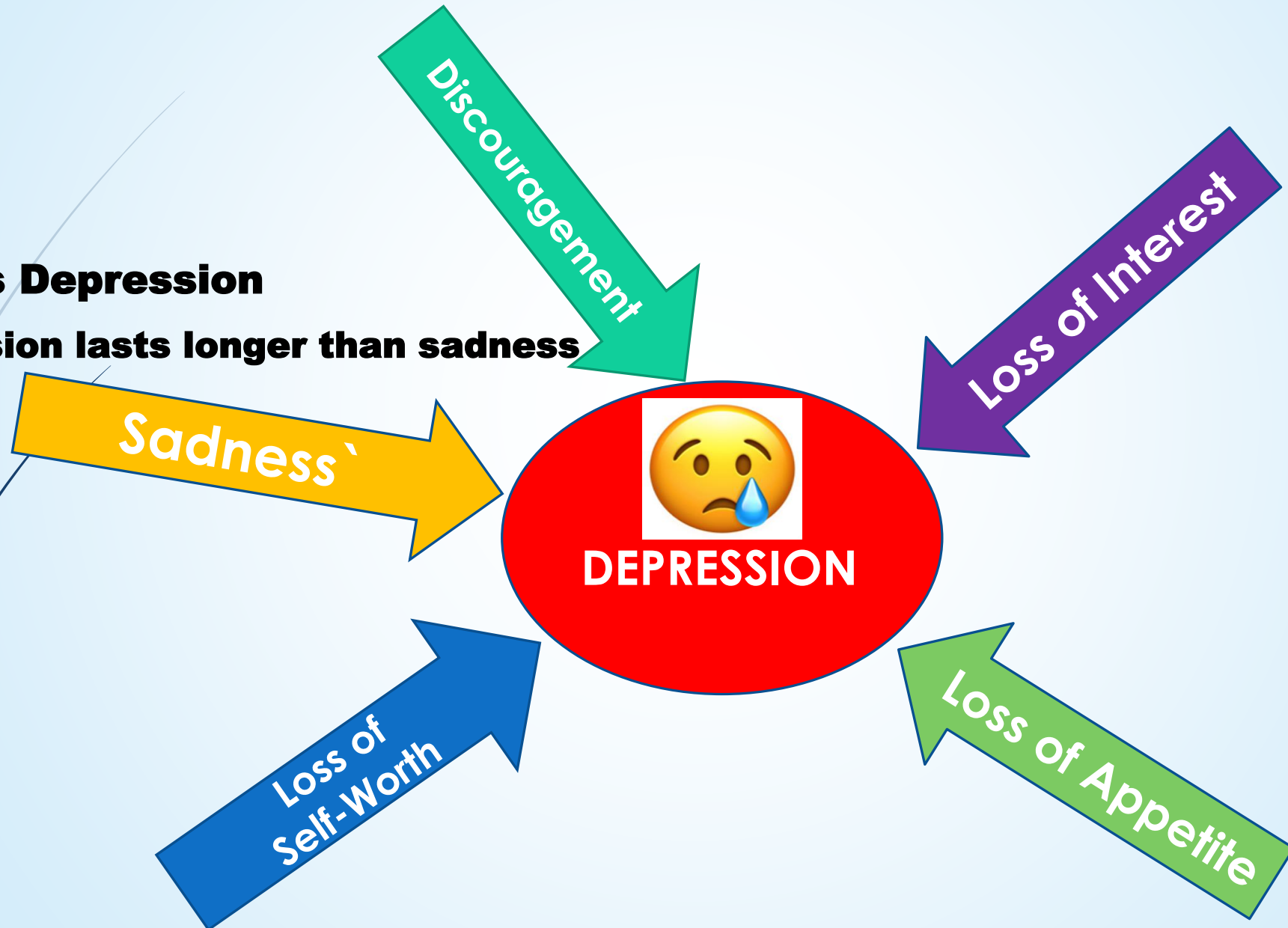
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- Life is not without adversities and challenges.
- This pandemic has proven to be one of the most
- difficult season, that even the strongest of us has
- had to learn new coping strategies in order to
- survive. The fact that you are still here, healthy
- and strong, means that you are an overcomer. This
- Does not mean that we are going to ignore the fact
- That we will be confronted with challenges.
- A major obstacle for students, is related to academic
- stress and distress as you try to navigate your way
- through what is now deemed the new normal, of
- Online Learning. Sad to say that, academic stress
- and distress, if not managed properly, can result
- in serious mental illnesses such as depression,
- anxiety and even suicide thoughts and acts.



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- **What is Depression**
- **Depression lasts longer than sadness**



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Depression is Real

Depression Statistics

- About 20% of young adults experience depression.
- 10 to 15% of young adults have symptoms of depression
- 5% of young adults are suffering from MAJOR depression
- 8.3 young adults have depression for a year • They might have a case of Dysthymia(mild long-lasting depression) • A small percent may suffer from seasonal depression
- 30% of depressed young adults develop substance abuse •
- > Depression affects about 19 million Americans annually. More than 2 million of them have not reached the age of 18.
- Young adults with untreated depression often engage in risky sexual activity
- Young adults with depression often lead to other illnesses • Untreated depression often leads to suicide

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Covid-19 Pandemic

Social
distancing,
death and
grieving

Personal Issues

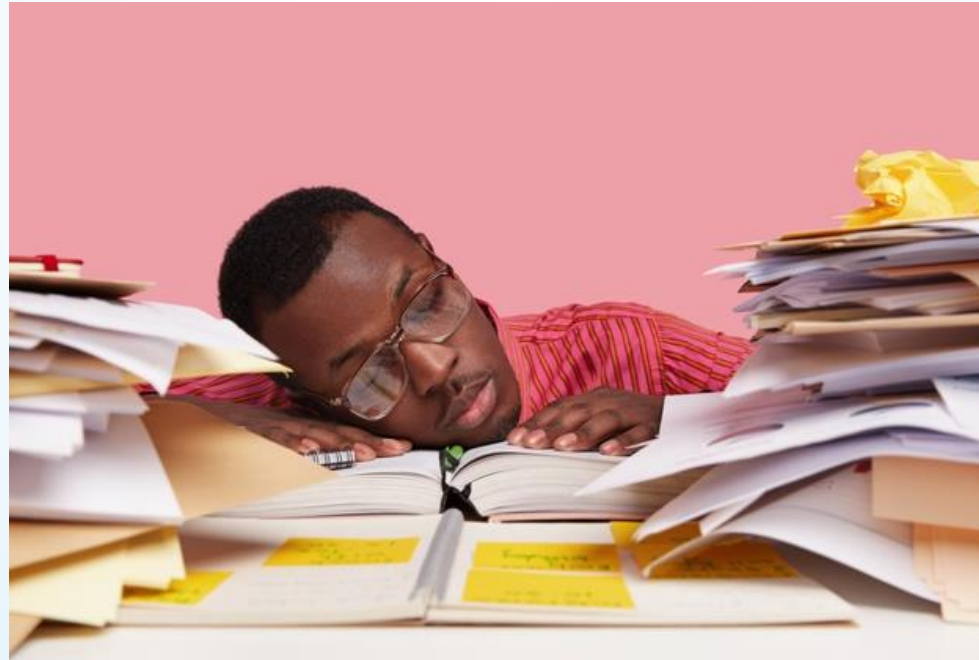
doubts, fears,
chronic illnesses,
self-esteem etc.

Family Issues

Heredity,
Divorce, death,
abuse

Peer Pressures

Isolation, drug
abuse
Relationship
break-up



Online Studies

Lack of data and
devices, poor
grades

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Personal Expectations

Parental Expectations

School's Expectations

Peer's Expectations

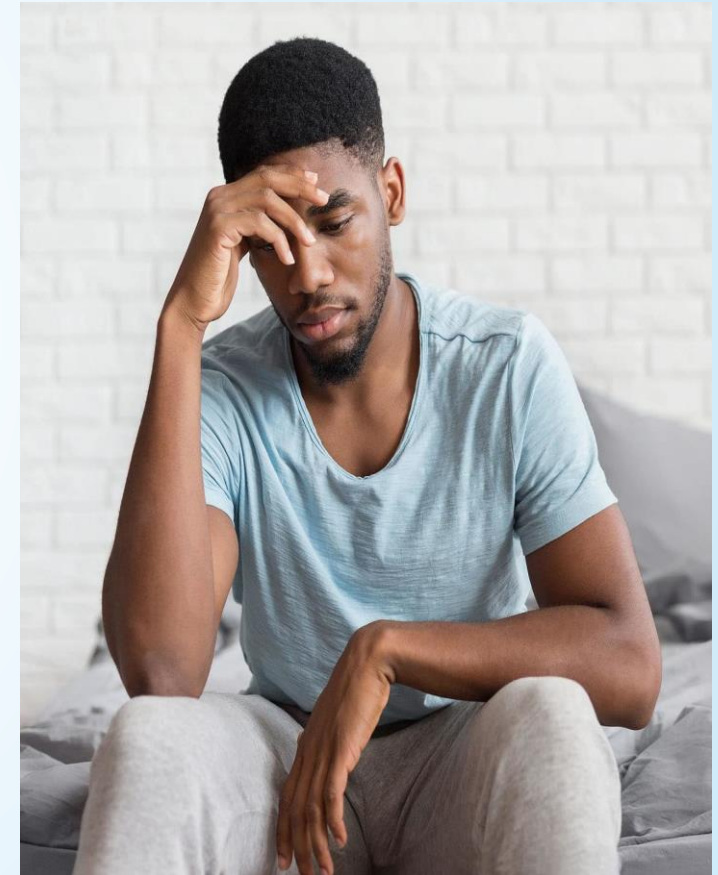
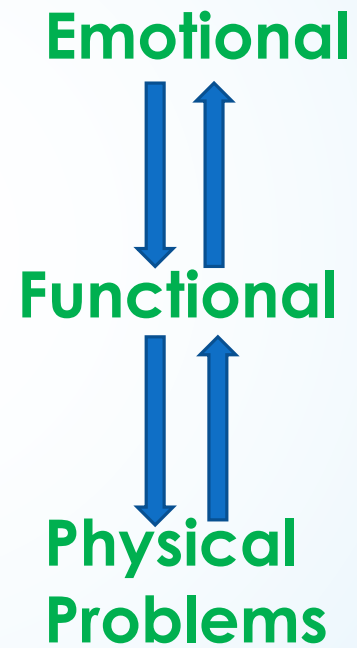
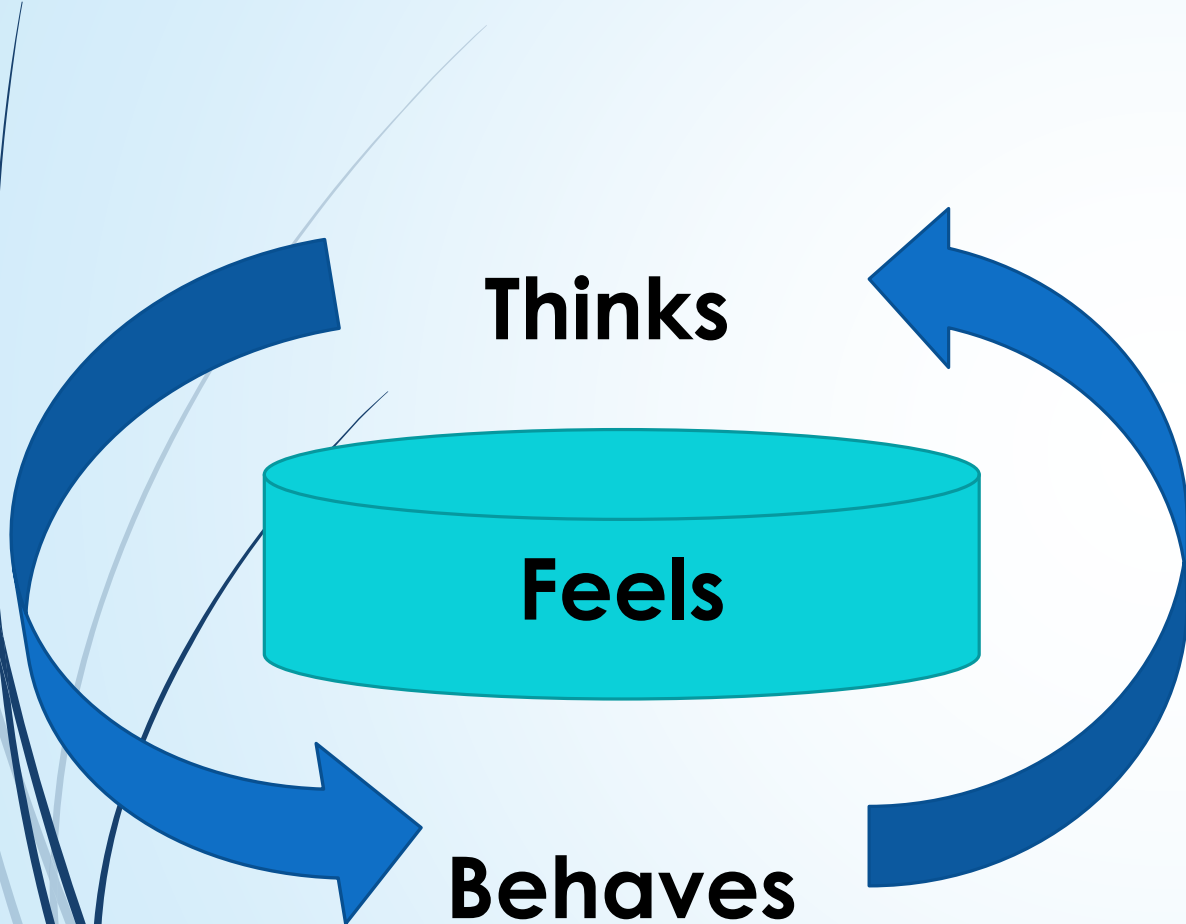
Community
Expectations



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- ➔ Depression is not a weakness or something that can be overcome with willpower. It is a mental disorder.
- ➔ It affects how we think, feel and behave, and it can cause emotional, functional and physical problems.
- ➔ It can have serious consequences and requires long-term treatment. For most teens, depression symptoms ease with treatment such as medication and psychological counseling.

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▶ Signs and symptoms of depression include a change from the individual's previous attitude and behavior that can cause significant distress and problems at school or home, in social activities, or in other areas of life.

▶ Emotional changes

Be alert for emotional changes, such as:

- Feelings of sadness, which can include crying spells for no apparent reason
- Frustration or feelings of anger, even over small matters
- Feeling hopeless or empty
- Irritable or annoyed mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities
- Loss of interest in, or conflict with, family and friends
- Low self-esteem
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Fixation on past failures or exaggerated self-blame or self-criticism
- Extreme sensitivity to rejection or failure, and the need for excessive reassurance
- Trouble thinking, concentrating, making decisions and remembering things
- Ongoing sense that life and the future are grim and bleak
- Frequent thoughts of death, dying or suicide

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- ➔ Suicide is an intentional act causing one's own death. It is the third leading cause of death between 15-24 years old.
- ➔ Thinking about suicide is scary.
- ➔ You may have strong feelings that are hard to deal with.
- ➔ You may feel like things will never be better, but you are not alone.
- ➔ Many people think about suicide. Thinking about suicide does not mean that you will do it. It does not mean that you are "going crazy." Thinking about suicide is often a sign that you want to escape.

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► What are warning signs of suicide?

- Some person speak openly about thoughts of suicide, but many people keep their feelings secret.
- There are warning signs to show that someone needs help. You often see many warning signs happening at the same time. Here are some warning signs:
 - They speak about wanting to kill themselves, will listen to music about death.
 - They use more drugs or alcohol than usual.
 - They says they have no reason to live.
 - They seem very scared or worried.
 - They says that he/she feels like there is no way out of a situation.
 - They cannot see hope for the future.
 - They will give away precious possessions to others.
 - They have a hard time controlling anger.
 - They do things that may be dangerous and does not think about what might happen.
 - Their mood changes in a big way.



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What Can I do to Help Myself

- Tell yourself, it is not your fault.
- Understand that you are not alone.
- Take steps to control stress, increase resilience and boost self-esteem to help handle issues when they arise.
- Reach out for friendship and social support, especially in times of crisis.
- Get treatment at the earliest sign of a problem to help prevent depression from worsening
- Maintain ongoing treatment, if recommended, even after symptoms let up, to help prevent a relapse of depression symptoms. Build resilience.

Stop, Shake It Off and Step Up

- ▶ There was an old farmer whose donkey fell into an empty well.
- ▶ The farmer knew he didn't have enough strength to pull the donkey out.
- ▶ So he reasoned to himself, "I am too old to get him out of this mess.
- ▶ It is better for the donkey and for me if I just bury him here in this hole.
- ▶ It is better to bury him and put him out of his misery."
- ▶ So the farmer grabbed a shovel and started throwing in dirt.
- ▶ The dirt fell on the donkey's face, was messy and it hurt a little.
- ▶ He wondered what was going on. He was already bumped and bruised from the fall. His body ached and he felt tired.
- ▶ Everything around him looked dark. He couldn't make sense of what was happening to him. He felt scared and alone.
- ▶ "What more could go wrong?" the donkey thought to himself.
- ▶ That's when the second pile of dirt hit him. "Why is this happening to me?"
- ▶ the donkey groaned. He was angry and confused.
- ▶ The donkey cried louder and louder with each pile of dirt he threw.
- ▶ And then the cries stopped. The farmer felt relieved. He didn't want the donkey
- ▶ to suffer and was glad he was no longer in pain. "This is for the best," the farmer reasoned. He continued to fill up the hole.



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• Stop, Shake It Off and Step Up

- The donkey stopped groaning for a moment. “All this complaining isn’t getting me anywhere,” the donkey reasoned. “I’m still in this mess and it is only getting worse. I need to do something different so that I can get out.” So the donkey thought, “I can’t do anything about the dirt being thrown at me, but I can change my attitude. I don’t have to let others put me down — or steal my hope. I do have a choice.” The donkey decided to shake off the dirt and not let it affect him.
- Something amazing happened. When he shook off the dirt, it no longer affected him the same way. The dirt fell down around him. He used the dirt to STEP UP and GET UP on top of it. In that moment, the donkey made Three Critical Choices.
 1. He chose to STOP letting others influence him and took back control of his life.
 2. He chose to SHAKE OFF any hurt feelings — negativity, discouragement or feeling overwhelmed — that kept him from moving ahead.
 3. He chose to STEP UP to the challenge, confront what was happening, and push past the obstacles facing him.

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- **STOP. SHAKE OFF. STEP UP.** He did it over and over again. With every step he got stronger and more determined. The more dirt he shook off, the better he got at not letting it affect him. The struggle built his confidence. “I can do this,” the donkey thought. “I can do this as long as I don’t give up.”
- The farmer couldn’t believe his eyes. Instead of being dead, the donkey was very much alive. With every pile of dirt he was getting closer and closer to the surface. The farmer mistook his silence as a sign he had given up. The farmer had underestimated the donkey. If the donkey had just stood there and done nothing, he would have surely died.
- The donkey refused to let a negative circumstance determine his outlook on life. He did not allow his feelings to influence his mood or steal his joy. He walked out of that hole one step at a time. The very thing that hurt him actually helped him get free. By not giving up, the donkey overcame a hopeless situation. The donkey left the struggle stronger and more confident, with a hopeful attitude toward the future and a different perspective on pain.

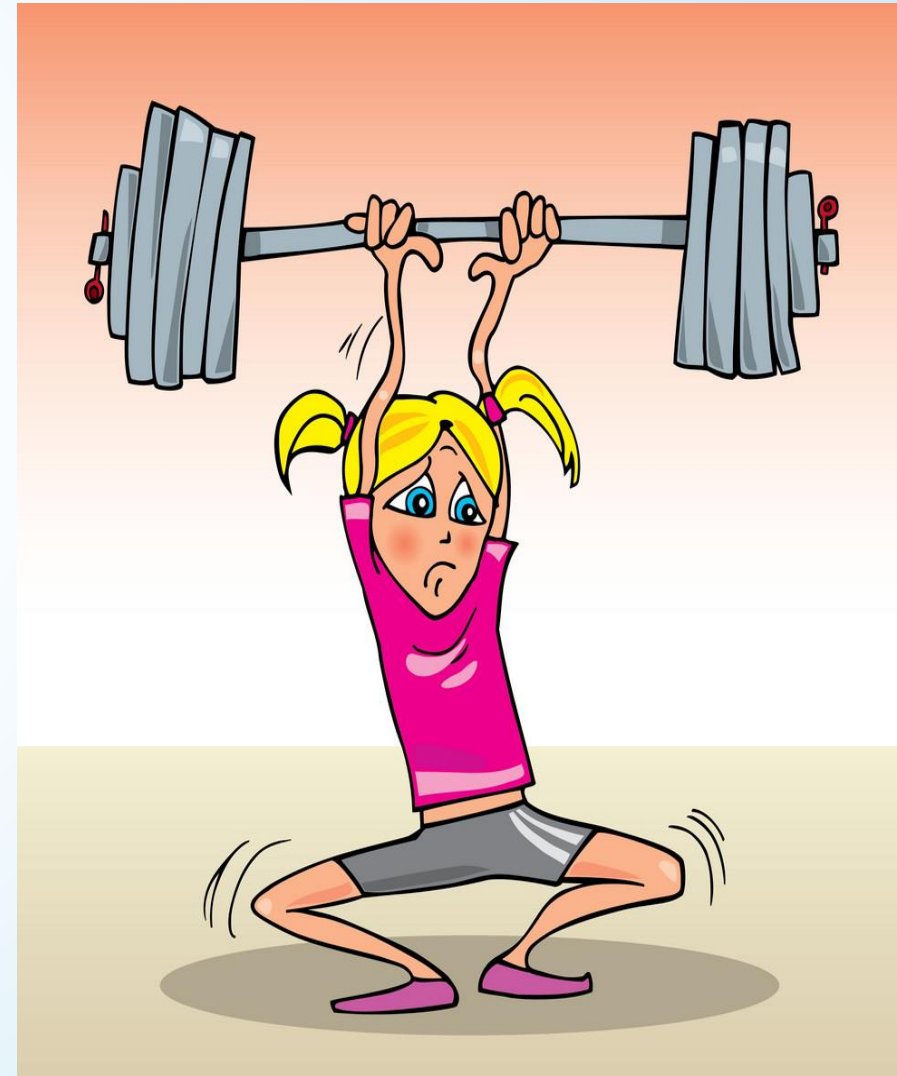
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➔ Build Resilience

- ➔ More than physical strength
- ➔ Resilience is the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult life events.
- ➔ Being resilient does not mean that we don't experience stress, emotional upheaval, and suffering. But demonstrating resilience includes working through emotional pain and suffering.
- ➔ Resilient people do experience stress, setbacks, and difficult emotions, but they tap into their strengths and seek help from support systems to overcome challenges and work through problems. Resilience empowers them to accept and adapt to a situation and move forward.

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- **Build Resilience** - In building resilience you will be going against the norm, so it will take time, effort and courage.
 1. **Competence** - develop a set of skills to help you trust your judgments and make responsible choices.
 2. **Contribution** - having a sense of purpose is a powerful motivator. It builds a sense of positive community spirit. Living behind the shadows will not test your capacity to withstand. There is so much to do, get involve.
 3. **Control** - an understanding of internal control helps individuals act as problem-solvers instead of victims of circumstance. Life is about choices.



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Who Should I turn to?



Your Guidance Counsellor



Share with a trusted friend



Your parent/s or guardian

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