



KASHMIR CARE[®]
FOUNDATION
Humanity Always....Education First!



“Self-Help” Manual

Depression

Developed by:



(Brain and Behavior Science Academy)



Designed by:
Dr. Mir Zahoor Gul

September, 2025

Manual prepared by:

► **Prof. (Dr.) Mushtaq Margoob**
(MD Psychiatry)

► **Dr. Syed Bushra Imtiyaz**
MD Psychiatry

► **Ms. Aeiman Rafiq**
M.Phil. (Clinical Psychology)

Illustrations Designed by:

Dr. Syed Juvaria
PhD Literature, IIT-Delhi

Acknowledging team SAWAB

► Clinical Psychologists

► **Dr. Huda Mushtaq**
(M.Phil Clinical Psychology, Ph.D)

► **Dr. Ajaz Ahmad Khan**
(M.Phil; PhD Clinical Psychology)

► **Dr. Mudassir Hassan Pandith**
(M.Phil Clinical Psychology, Ph.D)

► **Ms. Iqra Amin**
(M.Phil Clinical Psychology)

► **Psychiatrists**

► **Prof. (Dr) Abdul Majid**
(MD Psychiatry)

► **Dr. Yuman Kawoos**
(MD Psychiatry;
IACAM fellow - Child & Adolescent Psychiatry)

► **Dr. Deeba Nazir**
(MD Psychiatry;
IACAM fellow - Child & Adolescent psychiatry)

► **Dr. Imtiyaz Mansoor**
(MD Psychiatry)

HOLISTIC EDUCATION EXPERT

► **MR. TARIQ MARGOOB**



The Self-Help Depression Manual has been developed by the SAWAB exclusively for educational and self-awareness purposes. The Kashmir Care Foundation has provided support to SAWAB for the production of this manual.

The contents of this manual are designed to provide a basic understanding, awareness, and guidance on mental health-related topics. However, it should not be considered a substitute for seeking professional mental health care, diagnosis, or treatment.

If you are experiencing persistent sadness or low mood, we strongly encourage you to seek support from qualified mental health professionals, including psychiatrists and clinical psychologists. Your well-being is of utmost importance, and timely professional help is available.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or feedback regarding this manual, please contact SAWAB at officialsawab3@gmail.com.

If you have comments about the ongoing and planned initiatives of the Kashmir Care Foundation (KCF), please contact KCF at info@kashmircarefoundation.org

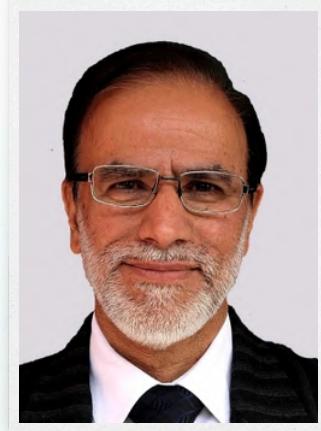
**SAWAB &
Kashmir Care Foundation**

Please Note:

While the copyright process is pending, we acknowledge that the source of this content is not fully verified; we are committed to giving credit where due and ensuring proper attribution wherever possible.

Taking Care of your Mental Health

In Kashmir, where the beauty of the land is shadowed by conflict, education becomes more than a right—it is a path to healing. Mental health and learning are intertwined; in safe and nurturing spaces, young minds not only acquire knowledge but also grow, recover, and imagine resilient futures. This Self-help Depression manual offers compassionate, evidence-based guidance for students, educators, caregivers, and community leaders dedicated to restoring hope and strengthening well-being.



May it inspire the creation of spaces that nurture both learning and the enduring strength of the human spirit.

Prof. (Dr.) Mushtaq Ahmad Margoob
Founder, SAWAB



Important Note

This manual is designed to support your learning and self-help. It is not a substitute for professional mental health diagnosis or care. If you are struggling to manage your symptoms or finding it difficult to function in daily life, we strongly encourage seeking support from qualified mental health professionals, such as psychiatrists or licensed clinical psychologists. You can always reach out to a trusted adult as a first step.

Adults supporting children are encouraged to review and explore this manual together, and maintain open conversations about feelings and mental health.

If you have any queries or concerns please feel free to reach the authors via Kashmir Care Foundation.

Your well-being matters, and help is available. Below are a few reliable sources of support:

- ▶ Tele-MANAS (Toll-free, 24x7, Mental Health Helpline, India): **14416**
- ▶ Center for Child Guidance and Well-being (CGWC) at SMHS Hospital, Srinagar, 190010, J&K
- ▶ Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS), Rainawari, Srinagar, 190003, J&K
- ▶ Advanced Centre for Mental Health, JVC Hospital, Bemina, Srinagar, 190017, J&K

Remember, seeking help is a positive and courageous step, you are never alone.

Table of Contents

Page No.	Content
07	<i>Introduction</i>
08	<i>Sadness vs Depression</i>
09	<i>What Does Having Depression Look Like?</i>
11	<i>What Causes Depression?</i>
13	<i>Overcoming Depression: Scientific and Practical Ways</i>
19	<i>When and where to seek professional help</i>
21	<i>Safety net plan for self harming thoughts</i>
22	<i>Tips for Caregivers</i>
23	<i>Case Vignettes</i>
26	<i>Worksheets</i>

▶ Introduction

The human brain is quite complex. It can think, plan, remember things, solve problems, and also feel emotions. We often talk about our mood in daily life, but what does it really mean? Simply put, mood is the way we feel inside. You might have noticed that sometimes you feel cheerful and excited and say, "**azz chhu mood asal**," and other times you feel sad or low and might say, "**mood chhu kharab**." Much like the weather, our mood keeps changing, and that's completely normal and expected.

In this manual, we'll talk about what happens when low mood doesn't get better with time and starts to affect your daily life.

We'll explore:

- The difference between normal sadness and a condition called depression
- How depression can appear in everyday life
- Simple ways to care for your mood and start feeling better

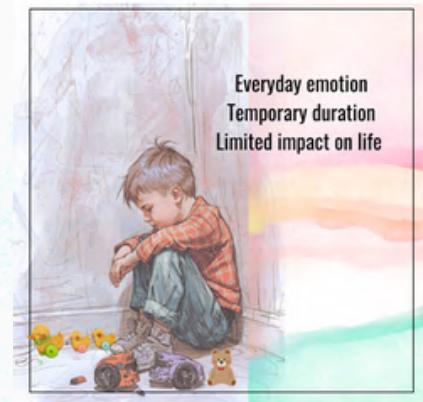
You will find that throughout the text, we have included common Kashmiri terms and phrases related to mental health. These familiar expressions have been used to help young readers understand emotions more easily and recognize how people express them in everyday conversations in Kashmir.

▶ What is Sadness or "Ghamgheeni" ?

Sadness is when we feel low inside and don't feel like doing things or talking to anyone. Often, it makes us want to be alone, cry, or have negative thoughts. In Kashmir, people usually call being sad as being '**ghamgheen**' or '**dukhi**' or simply having a '**mood off**'.

▶ Is Sadness normal?

Yes, sadness is a feeling we all know well. It is a normal response to difficult situations or bad news, for example losing a match or breaking off with a friend. Usually, sadness tends to fade as time passes. Sometimes it gets better with reassurance, or sharing your thoughts with someone you trust, or hearing positive news. Feeling sad is unpleasant, but it is a natural part of life. It helps us understand what matters to us, feel the pain of others, and notice when something needs our attention.



► Is Sadness the same as Depression?

No, sadness and depression are not the same thing. Sadness is a normal feeling that comes and goes. Sometimes people say "I'm depressed" when they actually mean they're sad or upset. Depression is different. It's when that sadness stays for a long time and doesn't go away, even after weeks. And it's not just about feeling sad, it can make you lose interest in things you once enjoyed, change how you sleep or eat, and make it hard to feel hopeful or confident.



► Sadness vs Depression



Imagine a football player who feels sad after losing a match. He might feel upset for a day or two, but soon he starts practising again and looking forward to the next game — that's normal sadness.



But if the same player stops playing completely, stays home feeling sad every day, thinks they'll never win again, or believes everyone dislikes them just because they lost, then that sadness has turned into something bigger. That could be depression, and it means they need help and care.

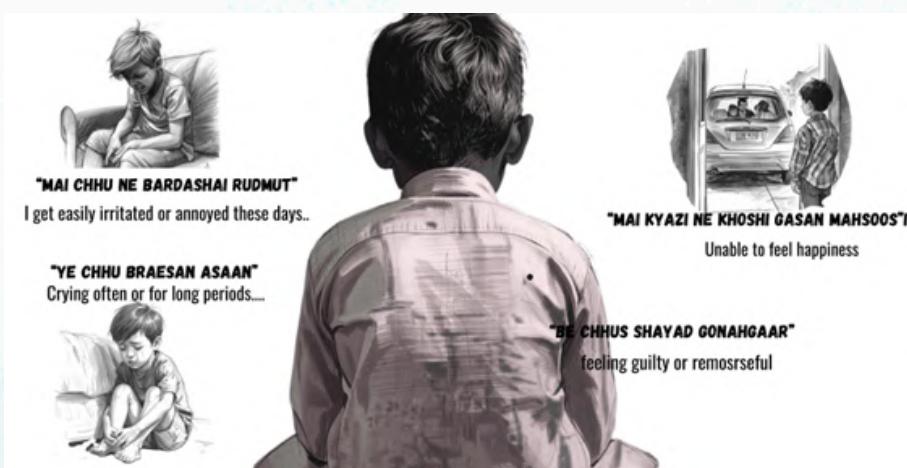
► What does having Depression look like?

In our society, the word depression is often used as a blanket term for many kinds of emotional or mental struggles. That's why it's important to understand what depression really means, so that the right kind of help can reach people at the right time.

Depression is a disorder of mood, specifically low mood. You can think of it as "Ghamgheeni Hund Doadh", when the feeling of sadness doesn't lift by itself. This lasting sadness can affect how we feel, think, and act—and even how our body works. Someone with depression may experience several of the following for more than two weeks:

► Depression in feelings

- Sadness that doesn't go away — '**ghamgheeni, udaasi, dil-malooli**'
- Feeling more irritable or short-tempered than usual — '**jaldi tang gasun**,' '**wael wael shararat yin**'
- Wanting to cry often or for long periods — '**dil wadnas kun gasun**'
- Losing interest in hobbies or things once enjoyed — '**mazz ne lagun**', '**dil ne lagun**', '**sourie kharun**'



► Depression in thoughts

- Feeling hopeless about the future — '**na-womedh gasun**'
- Feeling worthless or low in confidence — '**paan baasun kamtar**'
- Feeling helpless, like nothing can make things better — '**be-bassi**'
- Feelings of guilt or remorse—'**kasoorvar basun**' , '**Khatakaar basun**"
- Having thoughts of wanting to die or harm oneself — '**paanas noqsaan watnav-nik khayaal satavin**'



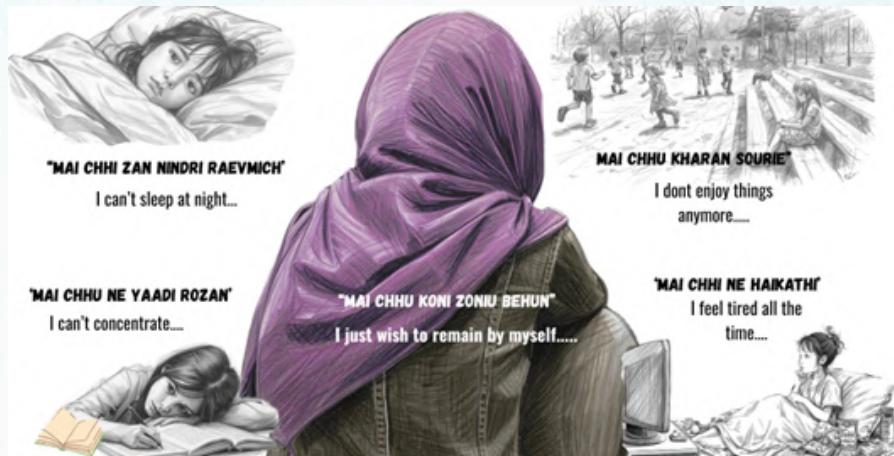
When these thoughts occur, it is important to tell a trusted adult immediately or call **14416** for help. Other things to do is follow a safety net (**Page 21**). Always remember, you are not alone. There are people who will listen and help without judgement. Asking for help is a sign of strength and bravery!

► Depression in behaviour

- Staying alone most of the time or not talking to anyone, even friends or family — '**kuni zoni rozun**'
- Forgetting things or finding it hard to focus — '**zhon ne dyun**', '**sabakh ne yaad rozun**'
- Difficulty making a decision — '**ath wath ne yinn**'

► Depression in the body

- Feeling tired or low on energy — '**thakavat**' , '**behaikathi**'
- Eating much more or much less than usual — '**mael raavin ya zyade gasin**'
- Sleeping too little or too much — '**nendir kam ya zyade**'
- Moving or speaking very slowly— '**susti hish basin**'



► What causes Depression?

Depression may not always have an external cause. Scientists tell us that multiple factors work in combination to make a person more prone to having depression than others. Some factors we are born with (biological factors), some factors we are born into (social or environmental factors) and others may be learned as we grow (psychological factors). Regardless of the cause, all feelings are valid and worthy of attention.

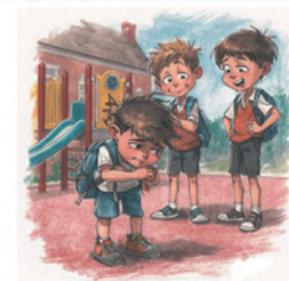
► Biological reasons:

- If someone in the family has depression, close relatives may have a higher chance too, but it is not certain.
- Changes in hormones (during growth, sickness, or stress) can influence mood.
- Chemicals in the brain (neurotransmitters) control mood, sleep, appetite, and energy. If these messengers are out of balance, it can make someone feel sad, tired, or low for a long time.



► Social reasons:

Difficult events in life can increase the risk of experiencing depression. Losing someone you love, fights with friends or family, being teased or bullied can make some people experience depression.



► Psychological reasons:

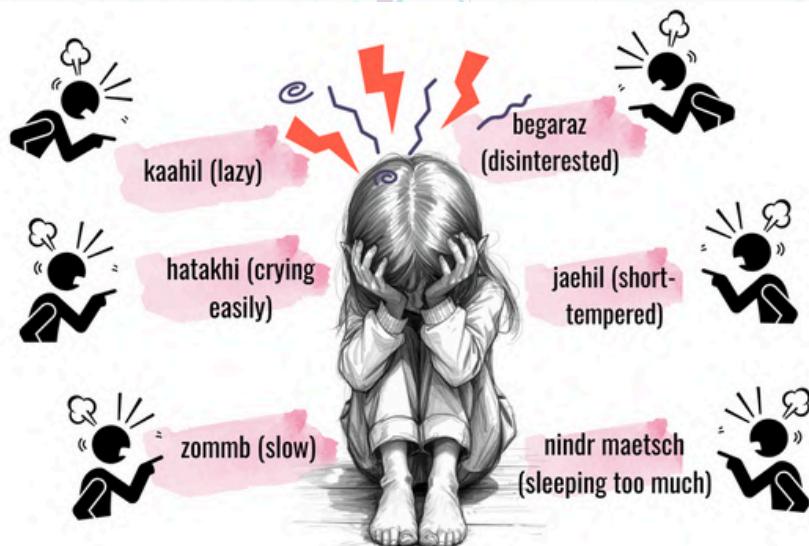
Certain thinking patterns make worries grow stronger. Psychologists call these worry traps. (See image for different types and table for examples)



S. No	Worry traps	Example
1	Focus only on the negative.	Focusing on the 10 marks one missed when they scored 90/100.
2	Assume you know what others think or what will happen.	Thinking a friend is upset without asking.
3	Blame yourself for everything.	Thinking a mistake at work is entirely your fault.
4	One bad event means everything is bad.	Failing once and believing you'll always fail.
5	Give harsh labels based on one action.	Forgetting something and thinking, "I'm useless."
6	Make small problems huge.	Spilling a drink and feeling like it's a disaster.
7	Feelings = truth.	Feeling anxious and believing something bad is going to happen.

► How others might see Depression

Depression is not visible to others in the way a fractured arm is, even though it might feel equally disabling. While everyone rushes to sympathise with someone who breaks their arm, unfortunately, people struggling with depression have to face criticism especially from close family and even teachers. Sometimes, people use words, which can sound harsh.



If you hear these words, remember: they are labels used by people who do not understand depression. Feeling tired, slow, or uninterested can happen when you are struggling with depression, and it doesn't mean you are "weak" or "bad." People who are going through depression deserve care, kindness and help, just like someone with a broken arm. In the next section, we will explain how you can take care of your mood in general and in particular when you are depressed.

► Overcoming Depression: Practical and Scientific techniques to feel better

Depression can be treated, and there are small steps you can take every day to help yourself feel a little better. These steps don't replace professional help, but they do make a big difference. Getting help early is important because depression can make you feel miserable and take away your time that could be spent learning, playing, and enjoying life. Support for depression is available and useful.

► A. General tips:

1. Talk It Out : don't keep it inside



Keeping feelings bottled up makes them grow heavier. You can talk to someone you trust: a parent, teacher, counsellor, or a friend.

You can start with: **“mai chhu paan basan na-theek. Dilas chhe ne khoshi basan. Soruie chhum kharan”**

(I don't feel well. My heart doesn't feel happy. I don't enjoy anything)

Science says: Sharing feelings reduces burden on the emotional part of the brain and helps you think more clearly.

2. Move Your Body.

This might feel difficult to accomplish when you are feeling low but even small movement can help.

Start Small: Begin with activities you enjoy, like dancing, walking with a friend, or playing a sport.

Consistency Matters: Do something active every day, even for 10–15 minutes.



Science says: Exercise releases “feel-good” brain chemicals like serotonin and endorphins, which lift mood.

3. Establish a Routine

A consistent daily routine provides structure and a sense of control.

Set Regular Sleep Times: Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day. Avoid screen time at least an hour before bedtime. Read a book, have a warm glass of milk.

Plan Daily Activities: Include time for schoolwork, hobbies, and relaxation.

Science says: Routine keeps your body clock steady, which improves energy and mood.



4. Do One Enjoyable Thing Daily

Paint, watch a show, read a book or help someone at home. Even if you don't feel like it — try anyway.

Science says: Doing things you used to enjoy re-awakens the brain's "reward center," slowly bringing back joy.



5. Build and Maintain Social Connections

Strong relationships with family and friends provide support when needed and reduce feelings of isolation. Depression makes you want to isolate, but connection is the best medicine.

Spend time with family or friends, even quietly sitting together.

Join a group, hobby, or club — being around others can make you feel supported.

Science says: Social connection releases oxytocin, the "**bonding hormone**" that lowers stress and lifts mood and can enhance feelings of belonging and self-worth.

6. Set achievable goals, Celebrate small wins

Setting and achieving small goals can build confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

Start with Simple Goal: For example, "I will complete my homework before dinner."

Celebrate Successes: Acknowledge and reward yourself for completing tasks. Notice your small wins: "**I got ready today**," "**I made my own bed**"



Science says: Accomplishing goals, even small ones, can improve mood and motivation, countering feelings of helplessness. Self-kindness reduces stress

7. Rest and Reset

Our bodies need charging just like our phones. Regular rest and nutrition helps the brain stay charged. Go to bed and wake up around the same time daily. Keep phones and screens away 30 minutes before bed. Eat balanced meals and drink enough water.

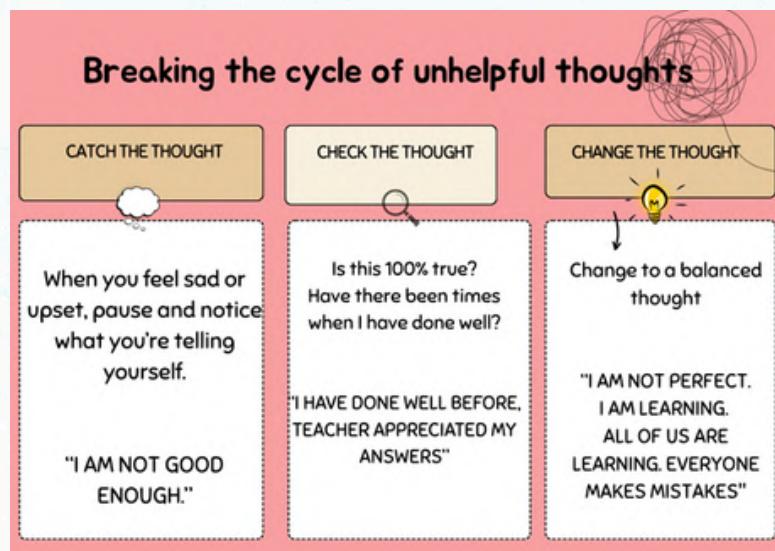


Science says: The body and brain work best with regular sleep, food, and rest — they keep your mood stable and energy steady.

► B. Specific tools that help with Depression

1. Working with the thoughts.

When you're depressed, your thoughts, feelings, and actions get tangled up, each affecting the other. Here are practical techniques to break the cycle:



Step 1: Noticing the thought makes it less powerful

Step 2: Checking your thoughts helps you see the whole picture instead of only the sad part. Ask yourself gentle questions.

Step 3: Replace the unhelpful thought with a kinder, more balanced one

Science says: Changing thoughts changes feelings and breaks the cycle of negative thinking.

2. Do the Opposite of Depression

Depression says: "Stay in bed. You are too tired to play"

You can answer back by doing the opposite — getting up, stepping outside, or doing one small task. Even if you don't *feel* like it, action comes first; feelings follow.

Science says: This is behavioural activation — doing small, positive actions restarts your brain's reward system and pushes you to do more actions.



3. Name your feelings

Step 1: Notice how you feel. Are you sad, angry, frustrated, or worried?

Step 2: Give it a name. Saying "I feel sad" helps your brain understand the emotion.



Science says: Naming emotions makes them less overwhelming and helps you choose the best coping strategy.

4. Sunlight therapy

Our bodies have internal clocks which are regulated by sunlight exposure. Sunlight helps set the natural rhythm of the clock and improves mood and energy, thus reducing depression

- Try to get some sunlight every morning — even sitting near a bright window for 15 minutes helps.
- Avoid staying in dark rooms for too long.
- Limit screen exposure



Science says: Sunlight boosts serotonin and helps regulate sleep, both of which are important for mental health. Too much exposure to artificial light and screen light especially at night confuses the internal clock.

5. Find Strength in Spirituality

Spirituality means feeling connected to something bigger than yourself. It can bring peace and hope when you feel low. Spend a few quiet minutes praying, thinking, or just breathing calmly. Read or listen to comforting verses or stories.

Do a small act of kindness — it helps your heart feel lighter.

Science says: Faith and reflection can calm the mind and give a sense of strength and comfort.



6. Positive Affirmations and Gratitude

Kind words and thankful thoughts can brighten your day.

- Say to yourself: "I'm trying my best," or "Things can get better."
- Write three good things that happened today.
- Tell someone what you're grateful for.



Science says: Positive thoughts and gratitude help your brain focus on hope and happiness.

7. Problem solving :

When children feel sad or low, solving problems can feel particularly hard. Learning problem solving skills helps them handle challenges and build skills for their whole life.

Here are step by step instructions:

STEP 1: Identify problem and name it.

STEP 2: List all possible solutions without judgement about being good or bad yet

STEP 3: Weigh positives and negatives of each solution

STEP 4: Pick the easiest and safest solution

STEP 5: Apply and evaluate how helpful it was

NAMING PROBLEM		I AM BEHIND IN MY SCIENCE PROJECT	
		Positives	Negatives
MY SOLUTION 1	I will not do it	No stress about deadline	I can fail
MY SOLUTION 2	I will ask an adult for help	I can finish in time	They can be busy
MY SOLUTION 3	I will request my teacher for extension	She can grant this, and I will be relaxed	She can refuse, I can fail
I CHOOSE SOL 2	I will ask an adult for help		
APPLY & RESULT	I asked mama for help and we finished it in time		
LESSON	Make a time table for next project. Asking for help works!		

8. Make a "Feel-Better" Plan

Create a small list of things that usually help you. Keep it where you can see it or find easily during times of need.

Example:

- Talk to Mum
- Recite holy verses
- Walk near the garden
- Read or draw

9. Seek Professional Help When Needed

Therapists can provide many scientific strategies to help manage depression.

Professional treatment, including therapy and, in some cases, medication, is effective in treating depression. There is no need to suffer when treatment can make life better.

► When to Seek More Help

You would not rely solely on self-help if:

- Symptoms do not go away, despite using self-help techniques or symptoms are just too difficult to manage on your own.
- Symptoms are not letting you carry on with your daily activities like school, play, eating, sleeping etc.
- You feel like you have gained or lost a lot of weight.
- Physical symptoms like tiredness, headaches etc. need a medical evaluation first before attributing them to depression.
- You are experiencing thoughts about not wanting to be alive or harming yourself.

► Where to seek help?

If you experience any of the above, tell a trusted adult or seek professional mental health help. The government has established facilities that provide both psychiatric and psychological care.

Here are a few places to find reliable support:

- Your nearest District Hospital
- Specialized mental health services for children and adolescents (upto 18 years of age) are available at the Centre for Child Guidance and Well-being (CGWC) at SMHS Hospital, Srinagar.
- Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS), Kashmir, near Badamwari, Rainawari, Srinagar
- Advanced Centre for Mental Health, JVC Hospital, Bemina, Srinagar
- Call **14416**, free, 24x7, government mental health helpline
- Reaching out for help is a brave thing to do. You are not alone, and help is available!



If you cannot find a Trusted person to confide in, you can call a mental health helpline. In India it is called **TELE MANAS** and the number is **14416**. This is a free mental health helpline which will connect you to a counsellor, a psychologist or psychiatrist at any time in the day or night.

TELE MANAS – 14416
FREE,
Confidential
Available 24x7

Safety net : What to do if you are having self-harming thoughts

- **Tell a trusted adult immediately:** Talk to a parent, teacher, school counsellor, or relative you trust. Keeping it secret can make the feelings stronger.
- **Stay safe in the moment:** If you feel like hurting yourself, move to a safe place and remove anything you could use to harm yourself.
- **Use calming tools:** Try breathing exercises, grounding, or calling a friend to distract yourself until the intense feeling passes. You can also use your calm plan
- **Call for help:** If you can't reach someone close to you, call 14416.
- **Make a support list:** Write down names and numbers of people you can call when you're feeling unsafe—family, friends, teachers, helplines. Keep it somewhere easy to find.
- **Remember you are not alone:** Many people have these thoughts at some point. Talking and asking for help is the strongest step you can take.

My Safety Net Plan

This is your personal safety net plan. Use it whenever you feel very upset or have thoughts of hurting yourself. It is a reminder that you are not alone and there are steps and people who can help you stay safe.

1. Trusted Adults I Can Talk To:	_____
2. Friends or Family I Can Call:	_____
3. Safe Places I Can Go:	_____
4. Helplines I Can Use:	India TELE-MANAS: 14416 (24/7, Free, Confidential)
5. Calming Activities That Help Me:	_____
6. One Reason to Stay Safe:	_____

Remember: You are not alone. Keep this sheet in a place where you can see it. When you are struggling, reach out to the people or numbers on your safety net plan.



For Caregivers:

Caring for children is both rewarding and challenging. We see you! We understand the struggles, and we are here to support your journey! Here are a few ways you can engage with your child and support the development of healthy emotional regulation:



- **Listen patiently.** Allow them to share their worries without rushing to fix or dismiss them.
- **Acknowledge their feelings.** Simple phrases like "That sounds really hard" or "I understand you're feeling sad" can be very comforting.
- **Stay calm yourself.** Children learn by examples more than words. They model how to cope by observing how adults handle difficulty. Recognising your own emotions and managing them in healthy ways shows them that feelings can be managed effectively.
- **Maintain routines.** Regular routines, meal time, sleep, and play keeps uncertainty at bay and allows the brain to feel more in control.
- **Emotion coaching.** Name the emotion and coach through it. Help children label their feelings (e.g., "You seem angry") and guide them toward small next steps, like a calm-down plan or a manageable problem to act on. This builds emotional literacy and problem-solving skills.
- **Boundaries are important, but enforce them with compassion:** acknowledge the child's feeling and then state the rule calmly. This keeps safety and teaches self-control.
- **Normalize feelings, Avoid Shame.** Reassure children that sadness, anger, or frustration is normal and everyone needs help sometimes. Encourage open, everyday conversations about feelings and mental well-being, just as you would about physical health.
- **Explore this manual together.** Encourage your child to apply what they learn and discuss it with you as a part of everyday conversation.

Please Note:

These tips are intended to support your child's emotional well-being. They are general in nature and should not replace professional advice tailored to your child's individual needs. Please consider seeking support from a qualified professional when needed (see next section) Early help is consistently recommended by experts.

Case Vignettes

Case 1: AEMIS KYEMUK DEPRESSION AASI ?



A 10-year-old girl, usually lively and full of laughter, had become unusually quiet and withdrawn over the past few weeks. She played with her friends less often and even refused activities she once enjoyed. She often cried over small things and felt tired even on days when she hadn't done much. Her parents were worried but couldn't see any clear reason for her sadness. Thinking it was nazar, they took her to a respected Pir Sahab in the community. Pir Sahab understood the girl's condition and knew that she would benefit from professional mental health consultation in addition to spiritual guidance. He referred her to CGWC, SMHS for further support.

At the clinic, a psychologist helped them understand that depression does not always have an external or apparent reason. Sometimes, it is due to internal factors like imbalance of brain chemicals, hormonal shifts or even due to long standing physical illnesses. A doctor's consultation is always a wise decision. The little girl was evaluated and diagnosed with depression. She was taught to express her feelings through drawing, emotion cards, and a "mood diary," and explained that sometimes our minds can feel "cloudy" even when nothing bad has happened.

Together, they made a simple plan: morning sunlight, sharing one happy thing from her day with her parents, and spending time with friends even when she didn't feel like it. Her parents were guided to listen patiently and gently praise her efforts. With continued therapy and family support, she gradually regained her natural cheerfulness and learned coping skills that she could use any time — like deep breathing, talking to someone she trusts, and remembering that "feelings do pass."

► Case 2: AEMIS CHHI KAHALAT AAMICHH



When a 13-year-old girl's father got transferred from Srinagar to another city, she had to leave behind her school, her friends, and the home where she grew up. At first, everyone thought she was just missing her old life and would soon adjust. But even after months passed, she still felt low and tired all the time. At her new school, she didn't feel like talking to anyone. Even when classmates tried to be friendly, she stayed quiet and thought they wouldn't like her. At home, she lay in bed for hours, thinking about her old friends. She ate very little, cried easily, and often told her father she was too tired to go to school. Even though her step mother was caring, the girl felt alone, ruminating about past and missing her mother, who had passed away long ago. Her father grew worried but also frustrated, thinking she was just being lazy. Then one day, her teacher suggested that the girl meet the school counsellor.

The counsellor listened carefully and explained it was important to talk about feelings. Through counselling, the girl began to share her thoughts and feelings, follow small routines like going for walks, and call her old friends again. The counsellor also helped her father understand that depression isn't about being weak or lazy. Slowly, her mood lifted. She started smiling more, joined class discussions, and even made a few new friends. She knew she would still feel sad sometimes, but now she also knew what will help — talking about it, staying connected, and asking for help when needed.

► Case 3: MADAD CHHE HAMESH NAZDEEK :14416



A 19-year-old NEET aspirant from had always been disciplined and hardworking. When he didn't qualify for the exam, he felt like a failure. Over the next few months, he became irritable and would snap at his parents and siblings on small things. He stopped studying, avoided friends, and barely slept or ate. He often had thoughts like "Maybe it would be better if I wasn't here."

Weeks passed and while his other friends who had also not qualified, were able to restart their preparation, he felt completely lost, hopeless and helpless. One night, feeling desperate, he called 14416 — the national mental health helpline — where a counsellor listened patiently and encouraged him to visit the nearest mental health clinic. There, he met a psychiatrist who started him on medication to lift his mood and improve sleep, and a psychologist who guided him through therapy sessions.

In therapy, he learned to challenge negative thoughts, rebuild his daily routine, and set small, achievable study goals. His therapist and family worked together to create a safety plan — including trusted contacts he could call when feeling low, safe spaces to spend time, and calming activities that helped him cope.

With consistent treatment, he gradually regained motivation, rebuilt confidence, and started preparing again — this time with a healthier balance. Thereafter, he talked openly about his experience, encouraging friends to seek help rather than suffer in silence.



Worksheets

Worksheet 1: My Gratitude Journal

Every day, write three things that made you smile or feel thankful. They can be big or small kind word, your favorite meal, or time with friends.

Day	1	2	3	4
Things I am thankful for				

Worksheet 2: My Calm plan

Use this when you feel upset or sad. Write or draw what helps you feel calm.

When I feel	What I can do to feel calm
Angry	
Sad	
Worried	
Lonely	

Worksheet 3: My Positive Thoughts

Write down your unhelpful thoughts and replace them with kinder, more positive ones.

Unhelpful thought	Helpful thought

Worksheet 4: My Support Circle

List the people you can reach out to when you need support or just want to talk.

Who can I talk to	How they help me
Parent/Caregiver	
Friend	
Teacher/School Councilor	
Helpline (14416)	Listen and guide me to help



Reference:

- Adrian College. Overcoming depression workbook [Internet]. [cited 2025 Oct 20]. Available from: <https://www.adrian.edu/files/assets/overcomingdepressionworkbook.pdf>
- Boston Children's Hospital. Guided self-management tools for depression: Children 6–12 [Internet]. 2022 Nov [cited 2025 Oct 20]. Available from: <https://test.childrenshospital.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/Guided%20Self-Management%20Tools%20for%20Depression%20-%20Children%206-12.pdf>
- Centre for Clinical Interventions (CCI). Depression self-help guide [Internet]. 2019 Oct 28 [cited 2025 Oct 20]. Available from: <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/resources/looking-after-yourself/depression>
- Centre for Clinical Interventions (CCI). Self-help resources for mental health problems [Internet]. 2024 Jan 16 [cited 2025 Oct 20]. Available from: <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/resources/looking-after-yourself>
- National Health Service (NHS). Self-help therapies [Internet]. 2022 Nov 1 [cited 2025 Oct 20]. Available from: <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/talking-therapies-medicine-treatments/talking-therapies-and-counselling/self-help-therapies/>
- NHS Inform. Depression self-help guide [Internet]. 2025 Aug 26 [cited 2025 Oct 20]. Available from: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health/mental-health-self-help-guides/depression-self-help-guide/>
- Smith A. Gratitude: A mental health game changer [Internet]. Anxiety and Depression Association of America; 2023 Nov 22 [cited 2025 Oct 20]. Available from: <https://adaa.org/learn-from-us/from-the-experts/blog-posts/consumer/gratitude-mental-health-game-changer>



You can download the soft copy of this manual & other manuals by scanning the below QR code



Please don't hesitate to contact us with your ideas & feedback

© **Kashmir Care Foundation**

931 Monroe Dr, NE, Suite A -102-292, Atlanta, GA, 30308, USA
Registration No.:501(c)(3)EIN 85-3538446
info@kashmircarefoundation.org