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**MONOGRAPH**

**“DEPRESSION IN TEENAGERS”**

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### **Gratitude**

I thank God who gave me life. I thank my parents who have strived to educate me and thus forge an excellent human being, a responsible, honest and independent one. To my family and friends for being my shoulder on which I can cry, and being my support always in the good as in the bad times.

## Summary

Depression is a topic that is not as much discussed as it should be, and it is a matter of real importance and even more in adolescents. Today depression is the cause of many deaths in teenagers, this is because they do not receive the help they need to face their state. This monographic work aims to explain the causes of depression, what they are and why adolescents suffer from this, in addition to the cause and consequences.

The work will be based on books about depression and how to cope with this state. In order to give a clearer vision of the importance of depression and try to help many people who today suffer from it. Helping to raise awareness about the issue in order to achieve a change in people's perception of depression. Depression is not an issue that should be treated lightly so the objective of this monographic work is to change people's perception of this topic.

Throughout the chapters it will be explained in depth what depression is and its derivatives, that is, its types, symptoms, causes and consequences, depressive behavior in adolescents, substances or reasons that incite them or lead to depression. All of the above will be reflected in the research carried out of this monographic work. As this is a sensitive subject, of great importance, that is, not to be taken lightly, recommendations will be given on how to deal with people suffering from depression, especially teenagers, to whom this monographic work is directed. It is also agreed that depression in teenagers can become something considered normal during adolescence, which is not always the case. (300)

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## Introduction

The present monographic work is an investigation about depression in teenagers. Its purpose is to know not only the consequences, but also the causes, symptoms, of *Depression in teenagers*.

Depression in teenagers is a sensitive subject since it depends on several factors, and has different ways of manifesting itself, depending on the person.

The study of this topic has given very important data to understand correctly the depression in teenagers, the importance of the topic, and how to treat people who suffer from depression, because you need to know how to help these people the right way.

Several authors have spoken about this topic in different works, such as Roberto Mendez, in his book “*Depression in youth*”. Many of these books have helped the monographic work to be as good as possible.

This topic has been presented over the years, but it has not always been taken as a major problem, so in this monographic work, the goal is to show the true importance of depression in teenagers, as well as the ways in which it can be treated.

The monograph will consist of 3 chapters: **the first chapter** will focus on the origin, characteristics, effects and damages of depression in teenagers. **The second chapter** will deal with the most depressive generations, the millennial and the generation z, in this chapter the reasons why these generations are considered depressive are highlighted. **The third and final**

**chapter** culminates with the types of depression, the causes, the levels of depression, and the risks that can be run by abusing medications.

With all this monographic work, the reader is expected to understand, reflect and feel compelled to help people suffering from the disease, such as depression. Currently, with the new generations, there have been many more cases of depression, especially in teenagers, which tend to be weaker than adults, this is due to many factors. One of the main factors is academic stress, teenagers tend to become stressed, frustrated and depressed by thing from school, university, etc. Due to this stress, in certain cases get to be depressed most of the time, without wanting anything and without showing signs of happiness, this is the most common because in certain cases it has come to be considered as something that all teenagers sooner or later came to suffer. Another of the most common factors in teenagers are problems at home, many teens have the bad luck of living in dysfunctional homes, being orphans, or having divorced parents. In general, none of these cases cause a good reaction in the teen, which can affect the mental health of the teen. There are other factors that are not as common as the ones mentioned above, but they can also cause depression in teenagers. The best know would be the abuse of social media, and the consequences of this, often teenagers focus on highlighting in social media, either by acceptance or vanity, when social media are abused, we can have very bad consequences such as stress at a very high level, how it goes in social media, suffer bullying, and so on.

## **Chapter I**

### **Depression**

#### **1.1 Origin**

Major depressive disorder is a mental illness characterized by an invasive mood accompanied by low self-esteem and a loss of interest in entertaining activities. The two most plausible hypotheses say it is caused by a disorder in the functioning of serotonin receptors or a lack of brain-derived neurotropic factor. (Tarakanov, 2016, p.15)

In the study they analyzed both theories and found complexes consisting of receptors that organize the functioning of the nervous system and control the production of neurons. Similar complexes were discovered in the organism of the sponges.

We also have another versions of the origin of the depression.

Mendez (2016) on his article states:

We have spoken on several occasions about a possible origin of physical depression, and not only mental, caused by infections and even brain inflammation. Depression has been linked to malfunctioning areas of the brain, but it was not known whether it was a cause or a consequence of that depression. (p1)

#### **1.2 Characteristics**

Alvarez(2014) states: "Depression is a common mental disorder, characterized by the presence of sadness, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or lack of self-esteem, sleep or appetite disorders, feelings of tiredness and lack of concentration".(p.17)



This is how this and other mental disorders, increasingly affect the world population, both in direct biological, psychological and social effects of individuals who have it as well as in indirect effects which are the little or decreased productivity, absenteeism and increased risk of suffering and accident at work.

### **1.3 Effects of depression over people**

There are several effects of depression in people, if they don't get the necessary treatment such as the following:

Social isolation or withdrawal, increased risk of developing another mental health condition, poor performance at work or school, lack of control over impulses, making bad decisions, elevated anxiety levels, difficulties with interpersonal relationships, weakening of the immune system, chronic tension headaches and ulcers, high blood pressure, obesity, harmful substance use/abuse, self-harm behaviors, suicidal thoughts and death by suicide.

Depression is usually related to somatic problems and goes in two directions, depression produces diseases of the body and vice versa.

Apart from the emotional damage, those affected face health problems that interfere with their lives and affect their family relationships, their performance at work and studies. (Mendez, 2016)

#### **1.1.1 Damage to development and mental abilities.**

“Depression affects mental abilities to the extent that, among its diagnostic criteria, cognitive impairments are included. Memory, attention and executive functions among the most affected processes”. (Chappotin, 2016, p.1)

It means fatigue, irritability, getting away from those you care about and those who care about you. It means endless and negative emotions.

Those who suffer from depression or have witnessed it know that the person changes to the point that their intellectual faculties also change. For the worse, of course.

#### **1.4 Ways to deal with a depressed teen**

Talk to your child about bullying. Being the victim of bullying harassment is one of the causes of mental health problems in children. Watch for feelings of grief, misery or loss. Seek help for grief problems that do not get better. If you as a parent are suffering a loss, ask for help and seek additional support for your child.

##### **1.1.2 Ways to approach a teenager with depression.**

Talk with your child about his feelings and about things that happen at home and school that may be bothering him. Many times teenagers hide their problems for different reasons, some do it to don't involve or worry their parents, others out of grief or because they don't know how to ask for help, We always have to be attentive to the mood of our children and also look after their welfare, you never know when someone is going through a bad time.

##### **1.1.1.1 How to generate security and trust with the teenager.**

Brito (2016) states:

It is essential to establish open lines of communication with adolescents. Parents should know their children well enough to notice if they are just having a bad day or if they are experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety.

"Many parents will say, 'Let him stay in his room' or 'They need their space' but sometimes that causes more distance and children don't feel as comfortable talking to their parents about their problems. If they don't try and have conversations, then kids start to think their parents don't care. (p. 1)

Follow the treatment plan. Be sure your child attends the appointments, even if he or she doesn't feel in the mood. Even if your child is feeling better, it's important that he or she keeps taking the medicines as prescribed. If you stop taking your medicine, the signs of depression may come back, and that would be a serious problem. It is very important to support them in such difficult times as depression.

Getting information about depression can be very helpful. Education can help motivate your teen to stick with treatment. It can also be beneficial for you as a parent and other loved ones such as friends or family to learn about depression and understand that it can be treated so that you can provide you unconditional support and help to the affected teenager.

Promoting communication with the teenagers, talk to him about the changes you notice and emphasize your unconditional support. Create an atmosphere in which your child can share their anxieties while you listen him, generating better communication between the two and making the teen feel more confident and comfortable to tell their problems.

Remove or limit access to objects that your child could use to self-injury. This may include removing or putting weapons in a safe place away from the teen to avoid a disaster. Removing sharp objects, alcohol, or risky medications from the home if you live with a teen who has

depression, by doing this, we are protecting our children, a teen with depression is very unstable emotionally, capable of self-harm.

Pay attention to the warning signs. Work with your child's doctor or therapist to find out what might be the reasons for your child's depression. Make a plan so you and your child know what to do if the symptoms get worse and can manage the situation. Ask family or friends to also pay attention to warning signs and know what to do in these cases.



## Chapter II

### The millennial and generation Z

#### 2.1 Depression in these generations

Today, the society can enjoy great advances that until relatively recently we would not have imagined. We are more connected than before, more informed than ever, we have more possibilities than we have ever had, and yet it seems that in spite of all this each passing generation suffers more mental disorders than the previous one. It seems that as more information and advances are available, we become more vulnerable in terms of psychological, mental and emotional, there are many causes of this.

A new study by the American Psychological Association has determined that the vast majority of Generation Z youth suffer more stress, more anxiety and other disorders than the previous generations. At first one might think that perhaps this is only the case in the United States, where the study was conducted, but this idea cannot be further from the truth, as this problem is seen all over the world. By implying that the depression in the teenagers of this generation is no theory or a myth, it is a fact and it's something that must be addressed.

##### 2.1.1 The sad generation of millennial.

Carro (2018) in his article *Youth Depression* states the following:

The "sad generation", "the depressive generation" had thus begun to associate this group of people born between the 80s and the 90s. It was the generation that was more obsessed with



social networks, had more problems with self-esteem and the most problems had been found in the workplace. (p.1)

In addition, this group is said to be the least knowledgeable about personal relationships, how to deal with problems, failure, and basically the real world in general. This comes hand in hand with the dependence of technology on this generation, ignorance about the real world and the thought that they should receive everything without having made any effort.

### **2.1.2 The silent generation of generation z.**

When society already believed that it was practically impossible for a generation to have more problems, new studies show that every generation that passes is getting worse. Carro (2018) affirms: “After interviewing more than 3,000 people, not half of the Zs (45%) were in good mental health. Even the millennials had better results (56%), but nothing compared to the baby boomers who reached 74%” (p.3).

This confirms that we are going from bad to worse, at this rate the next generations will not reach even 40% of health or mental stability, this data is alarming because it is something real, not speculation. These data give us to understand why nowadays the majority of teenagers consider themselves as depressive, some doing it form fashion and others seriously.

## **2.2 Social media as an escape from reality**

Social networks are an increasing problem, as for example with low self-esteem, which is very booming. Many people base their satisfaction with life according to the number of likes and this affects their self-esteem and their emotions. (Carro, 2018)

If Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other social medias had a brutal impact on a generation (the millennial) that didn't grow up surrounded by smartphones, tablets and internet access that connects them to the world 24/7, it's easy to imagine how they can affect a group that has never seen a world without iPhones, 140- character phrases, or photos without filters. All this goes hand in hand with people's self-esteem, many seek acceptance, through likes, reproductions, becoming viral and other things, certain people not feeling accepted through social networks go into depression.

Due to this stress, in certain cases get to be depressed most of the time, without wanting anything and without showing signs of happiness, this is the most common because in certain cases it has come to be considered as something that all teenagers sooner or later came to suffer. Another of the most common factors in teenagers are problems at home, many teens have the bad luck of living in dysfunctional homes, being orphans, or having divorced parents. In general, none of these cases cause a good reaction in the teen, which can affect the mental health of the teen.

There are other factors that are not as common as the ones mentioned above, but they can also cause depression in teenagers. The best know would be the abuse of social media, and the consequences of this, often teenagers focus on highlighting in social media, either by acceptance or vanity, when social media are abused, we can have very bad consequences, such as stress at a very high level, how it goes in social media, suffer bullying, and so on

### **2.2.2 Lack of social skills.**

Teenagers who suffer from depression often isolate themselves from the world. Many are alone and head down, implying that they are not well at all and need help. In these cases the least there

is the existence of a social life for the affected, because he prefers to be locked up and alone rather than enjoy the company of friends or family. On the other side we have those who do not notice the depression, these people who smile all the time or it seems that everything is going well and they are happy, when in fact is just the opposite, these people often hide their depression to avoid certain things, either the opinion of people, or in certain cases do not want to worry their loved ones, many of these factors are important and must be identified. We always have to think about the welfare of youth because they are the future.

### **2.3 Solutions to the depression of these generations**

Both young people and old people should start working now, it is the emotional intelligence. To work on personal acceptance “to accept that we cannot always have what we want or what we thought we were going to have, and that sometimes it is not even necessary”.

Disconnecting and spending more time away from home and the office or school is also important. If we just close ourselves to a routine that is based on going from home to work and from work to home, in the end it can result in a life that is unrewarding and our minds can no longer cope. That is why is recommended doing pleasant activities that make us feel good. It can be sport, going out with friends, practicing some hobby, whatever. Whatever it is, as long as you disconnect at the moment and get distracted, so you can enjoy good things in life and not live submerged in suffering.



## Chapter III

### Stages of depression

#### 3.1 Depression caused by bad habits

If you believe that a drug you are taking could be doing you a lot of pain by causing your depression, you are probably right. Many of these medications prescribed for the sick people because unpleasant feelings that could affect our mental health, such as sadness, despair, anxiety, and being discouraged most of the time. These are usually the feelings that commonly associated with depression. Other of these types of medications prescribed for sick people can trigger the mania (excessive euphoria and energy) usually associated with bipolar disorder. A disorder that is associated with depression, because it has so much to do with the emotions and the mood of the people. Medications that cause mania or depression in people seem to alter brain chemicals in some way, causing great pain to those affected. And although medications may be necessary to treat the condition, the side effect is somewhat unacceptable and difficult to treat, because when using drugs medically, you never know the reaction they will have with people, these can sometimes cause an addiction, which only brings bad habits in the health of the person. For example, it has been

Discovered that isotretinoin (Absorica, Amnesteem, Claravis, Myorisan, Zenatane), which is prescribed to those who treat acne, in certain cases also causes depression. So are oral contraceptives, high blood pressure medications, and even statins that treat high cholesterol. All

of these drugs are not directly a drug like the ones we know that are sold illegally. They are drugs that are prescribed by a specialist in order to help the patient that is always the only end. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to control the use of these medications, since many people become addicted and decide to buy these medications for another purpose, other than that of their treatment.

### **3.2 Types of depression**

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that depression is the fourth most disabling illness in the world. Depression is the most common psychiatric illness. Nearly 20% of people suffer from depression throughout their lives. Depression can occur at any age.

#### **3.2.1 Dysthymia**

If you have depression that lasts 2 year or longer, that is called persistent depressive order. It's also called as Dysthymia, it is a continuous form of depression. You may lose interest in the normal activities of daily life, feel hopeless and discouraged, become unproductive, and have low self-esteem and a general sense of inadequacy. These feelings last for years and can greatly affect you relationships and you performance at school, at work and the daily activities.

You may have symptoms like this ones:

Change in your appetite, this is not eating enough. Sleeping too much or too little, this can affect your performance in the school, work and the daily activities. Also you can feel desperate, that is



another symptom. You may be treated with psychotherapy, medications, or a combination of both.

### **3.2.2 Bipolar disorder.**

Bipolar disorder, once called “manic depression” is a mental illness that causes extreme mood swings, with emotional highs like mania or hypomania and emotional lows like depression.

When you get depressed, you may feel sad or hopeless and lose interest or pleasure in most activities, feel anxiety attacks, or feel blocked, with no ideas and very little desire to do things.

When your mood changes to mania or hypomania (less extreme than mania), you may feel euphoric, energetic, or unusually irritable. These mood swings affect sleep, energy, activity level, judgment, behavior, and the ability to think clearly. All of this greatly affects our lives, in most areas.

“Episodes of mood swings may occur rarely or many times a year. Although most people have emotional symptoms between episodes, some may have none.” (Mayo, 2016, p.3)

Although bipolar disorder is unfortunately a lifelong condition, mood swings and other symptoms can be controlled by following a treatment plan. In most cases, bipolar disorder is treated with medication and psychological support. This is another reason why we should help more the teenagers in the psychological aspect, many have problems and need professional help.

### **3.3 Advanced stages of depression**

Teenagers face a host of pressures, from the changes of puberty to questions about who they are and where they belong. With all this confusion and uncertainty, it's not always easy to tell the difference between normal growing pains in adolescence and depression. But teenager's depression goes beyond bad moods. It's a serious health problem that affects every aspect of a teen's life. Fortunately, it's treatable and the parents can help. Your love, guidance, and support can go a long way toward helping your teen overcome depression and get his or her life back on track. That's why it's so important to talk to teens about these things.

#### **3.3.1 Signs to watch for a suicidal teen.**

Mayo (2016) states: While in adolescence one would expect a heavy character, bad mood, bad behavior, depression is something very different. The negative effects of adolescent depression go far beyond a melancholy mood.

Which is much more serious than any stage of adolescence. Depression can destroy your teen's personality by leaving behind customs or traits that characterized them, only because they now feel sad, causing an overwhelming sense of sadness, despair, or anger. Many rebellious are some of the ways teens act in an attempt to deal emotional pain and possible depression:

Problems in school. Depression can cause low energy and concentration at school. This is one of the most notorious cases in teenagers, the drastic drop in grades

Running away. Many depressed teens run away. These attempts are often cry for help that must be taken into account.

### **3.4 Risk of medication in depressed teens**

It states: “Antidepressant medications, while generally safe, can have unpleasant side effects, and recent warnings about teens and antidepressant use are worrisome. On the flip side, they can also dramatically improve your mood”. (Mayo, 2016, p.6)

Research shows that the strongest risk factors for depression in adolescence are a family history of depression and exposure to psychosocial stress.

Other factors that may trigger teenager’s depression include:

Bullying and other problems with peers, academic pressure problems, you might feel so much pressure even if there isn’t one. Chronic disease, alcohol or drug use, a lot of teenagers use this things as an escape from the reality. Family discord, lack of sleep, they will look a lot tired.

Confusion about sexual orientation and other mental health disorders can affect the teens.

Learning problems and ADHD, a low self-esteem and a history of violence, the witness or the victim.

## Conclusions

- Throughout this monographic work, many aspects of depression have been reviewed, analyzed and studied, especially in teenagers. Around all the work we could explain the most important points of this disease, which usually affects many people, but is more common in teenagers.
- By saying this, that teenagers are the ones who suffer the most in general, it is thought-provoking, especially to question the reason for this statement. Studies have confirmed this statement, and the reasons and causes for this are many. In the three chapters of this monographic work, has spoken about the origin of depression, which is said, according to specialist, that occurs due to the accumulation of certain factors, low self-esteem, insecurity, and other factors in terms of the psychological, these factors are some of those that cause depression, or take the first step.
- There are symptoms of this, the most notorious in a person who suffers from depression is when he loses the desire or interest in their daily activities, and this is considered the most notorious symptoms of depression.
- We can also notice that someone suffers from depression, when he does not look up, when he show a listless attitude, without giving importance to his responsibilities, cold, inexpressive, in many cases without showing a single sign of happiness or desire to do something. This is a very clear and easy to notice a symptom, since it fulfills most of the characteristics of depression. But not all the symptoms are like the previous ones, the



depression is not something simple and easy to overcome, it presents itself in all the possible ways.

- One of the most difficult symptoms to detect is when the person is aware that it is not right, and decides to hide that feeling and state to others, with false smiles and false desire, these people become the ones who suffer most, because by hiding that pain, they show others that everything is okay, when it is not so at all, hiding the pain is very bad, no one is aware of their suffering which makes them remain without a shoulder on which to cry or vent. All this causes a feeling of great loneliness, which causes them more pain than the normal one.
- Which is much more serious than any stage of adolescence. Depression can destroy your teen's personality by leaving behind customs or traits that characterized them, only because they now feel sad, causing an overwhelming sense of sadness, despair, or anger. Many rebellious are some of the ways teens act in an attempt to deal emotional pain and possible depression:
- Problems in school. Depression can cause low energy and concentration at school. This is one of the most notorious cases in teenagers, the drastic drop in grades
- Running away. Many depressed teens run away. These attempts are often cries for help that must be taken into account.



To conclude, what we hope to achieve with this monographic work is that people pay more attention to today's teenagers, many suffer and are not listened to, much less helped. This is why we must take action and help the teenagers more.

### **Recommendations**

Both young people and old people should start working now, it is the emotional intelligence. To work on personal acceptance "to accept that we cannot always have what we want or what we thought we were going to have, and that sometimes it is not even necessary".

- Disconnecting and spending more time away from home and the office or school is also important. If we just close ourselves to a routine that is based on going from home to work and from work to home, in the end it can result in a life that is unrewarding and our minds can no longer cope. That is why is recommended doing pleasant activities that make us feel good.
- It can be sport, going out with friends, practicing some hobby, whatever. Whatever it is, as long as you disconnect at the moment and get distracted, so you can enjoy good things in life and not live submerged in suffering.
- You should always help teenagers, they are the future and they have to be mentally well, no one deserves to suffer from a depressive disorder, everyone needs help from time to time and you have to be there for them. And those were all the recommendations.

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