



VOLUME 2

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A2 LIONS CLUB

THROUGH THE SHADOWS: SHEDDING LIGHT ON DEPRESSION



MENTAL HEALTH
NEWSLETTER

A2 MIND MATTERS



Meet THE EDITOR

Sharmmila Rajkumar

Happy

Summer

Holiday

summer

Dear Lions of A2,

As we step into August, our focus turns to depression—a silent struggle faced by many, often hidden behind everyday smiles. This issue aims to shed light, share stories, and remind each of us that help, hope, and healing are always within reach.

Together, let's continue to break the silence and walk the path of solidarity.

Thank you for being a Lion who listens.

In service and solidarity,

Sharmmila Rajkumar

District Chair – Lions Quest / Mental Health Initiatives



Do you have a story to tell?

A personal experience with mental health?

Tips that helped you cope or support someone in need?

We'd love to hear from you.

What You Can Share:

- Personal mental health journeys (with or without your name)
- Reflections or poems
- Artwork or photography
- Helpful resources you've discovered
- Club events promoting emotional wellness



Let's inspire, encourage, and lift each other up – one story at a time.!

lion@sharmmila.com

289 - 887 3217

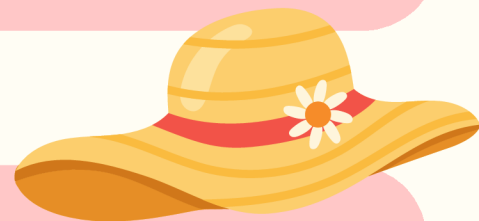


Let's Talk About Depression:

Breaking the Silence, Rebuilding Hope



Depression doesn't always look the way we think it does. Sometimes, it looks like tears. But often, it looks like someone smiling at a meeting, doing their work, and saying, "I'm fine." It hides in silence, behind heavy eyelids, forgotten meals, and unanswered messages. It can affect anyone—children, adults, seniors—even the strongest, kindest Lions among us. That's why this month, we are breaking the silence and shedding light on depression.



What Is Depression, Really?

Depression is not "just sadness." It's a medical condition that affects the way people think, feel, and function. It can make everyday tasks feel overwhelming. It can rob people of energy, motivation, and even the will to connect with others.

It is caused by a combination of factors, including:

- Brain chemistry and hormone imbalances
- Genetic or family history
- Past trauma or major life changes
- Ongoing stress or isolation
- Physical health issues or chronic illness



Signs and Symptoms to Watch For

You don't have to be a mental health professional to recognize when something isn't right. Some of the most common signs include: Persistent sadness or emotional numbness, Withdrawing from family, friends, or activities, Difficulty concentrating or making decisions Fatigue, low energy, or constant tiredness, Changes in eating or sleeping habits, Feeling hopeless, worthless, or like a burden, Physical pain without clear cause (like headaches or stomach issues), Thoughts of self-harm or suicide

If these symptoms last more than two weeks, professional help is needed.



Let's Bust Some Myths

MYTH: "Depression is just weakness."

FACT: Depression is an illness, not a character flaw.

MYTH: "If you have a good life, you shouldn't feel depressed."

FACT: Depression doesn't care how successful, wealthy, or loved someone is. It can affect anyone.

MYTH: "People with depression always look sad."

FACT: Many people appear "fine" on the outside while struggling silently on the inside.



How to Support Someone with Depression

You don't have to fix it. Just being there is enough. Here's how you can help:

- Listen without judgment. Avoid giving advice or comparing. Just say, "I'm here for you."
- Check in often. A quick call or message can remind them they're not alone.
- Be patient. Healing takes time. Celebrate small steps.
- Encourage professional help. Offer to help them book an appointment or go with them.
- Stay connected. Invite them to community activities—but don't pressure them.



Hope Starts With Us

The good news? Depression is treatable. With support, therapy, medication, and lifestyle changes, people can and do recover. But they need to know they're not alone—and that starts with us.

As Lions, we serve not only with our hands but with our hearts. Let's continue to foster clubs and communities where it's safe to talk, to ask for help, and to heal.

Let's talk about depression—because when we do, we remind each other that hope is still possible, even in the darkest times.

Lions' Role: Leading with Compassion

"You don't have to see the whole staircase—just take the first step."
— Martin Luther King Jr.

As Lions, we serve not only with our hands but with our hearts. When we talk openly about depression, we remind our community that **hope, healing, and help are all within reach.**



■ Helpful App of the Month

Calm



Bringing Stillness to Stormy Minds

Calm is one of the most popular mental wellness apps in the world – and for good reason. It's your pocket-sized guide to peace, offering tools to help reduce anxiety, manage stress, improve sleep, and support emotional health.

Top Features:

- Guided Meditations – Choose from 3 to 25 minutes; includes meditations for beginners and seasoned practitioners
- Sleep Stories – Soothing bedtime tales read by voices like Matthew McConaughey and Cillian Murphy
- Breathing Exercises – Simple visuals to guide you through calming breathwork
- Mood Check-Ins – Log how you feel daily and receive tailored recommendations
- Music & Soundscapes – Gentle background sounds and melodies to relax your mind

Best For:

- Managing daily stress
- Falling asleep faster
- Creating a calm morning or bedtime routine
- Coping with anxiety and emotional overwhelm

Lions' Takeaway:

We often give so much of ourselves to service, we forget to pause. Calm reminds us that just 5 minutes of stillness can restore the energy we need to keep serving. Whether you're overwhelmed, exhausted, or simply in need of quiet – this app is your personal mental health toolkit.





5-Minute Mental Health Activity

The "Mood Mirror" Check-In



Why this activity matters:

Depression can cloud our awareness of how we're really doing. The "Mood Mirror" is a daily check-in to help you pause, notice, and respond to your emotional well-being—just like checking the weather before stepping outside.

What you'll need:

- A notebook or your phone's notes app
- 5 quiet minutes (maybe right after you wake up or before bed)
- Honesty and kindness to yourself



Bonus: Mood Tracker Calendar

Use the printable mood calendar (or draw your own) with simple color codes:

- = Good day
- = Meh/Neutral
- = Hard day

Tracking helps spot patterns and shows progress over time—even if healing feels slow.

What to do each day:

Step 1: Name your feeling.
What am I feeling right now? (One word is enough—tired, hopeful, anxious, calm, numb...)

Step 2: Name your need.
What do I need today? (Rest, connection, movement, space, reassurance...)

Step 3: Make a micro-plan.
What's one small thing I can do today to support myself? (e.g., go for a walk, drink water, call a friend, say no to something)

Step 4: Reach out.
If today feels extra hard—who can I message or call? (You don't have to go through it alone.)



**"You check your mirror before leaving the house.
Check your mind before facing the world."**



MOOD TRACKER

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Happy



Sad



Upset



Confused