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BRITTA FROMBACH, RMT  
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## **Depression**

There are many adjectives to describe it: clinical, major, unipolar or bipolar. Depression, disorder, imbalance...whatever the term, whatever the diagnosis, whatever your beliefs systems, depression can wreak havoc with our selves, families, friends and other loved ones.

SIWC counsellor Richard Nevin is one of our members who specializes in proactive treatment for depression. "We experience depression when our life energy becomes blocked or depressed," he notes. Causes of depression can originate from early family conditioning, the effects of traumatic experiences, significant losses, or neurological imbalances. "Symptoms of depression in men often present with angry outbursts, negative outlook, excess use of alcohol, or overwork," he adds. "Women might experience more sadness, hopelessness or poor concentration."

It was interesting to note a 1999 study by the National Council on Aging, which found that hearing loss, when untreated, was linked with issues such as sadness, depression, anxiety and insecurity. "That can negatively affect one's quality of life," says Leslie Peterson, M.A., Aud(C) from Island Hearing.

Effective treatment of depression is possible and begins with awareness and a desire for change. One of the solutions another member uses for her clients is art therapy. Carolyn Hutchison reports that art therapy can facilitate the expression of painful feelings which are difficult to verbalize. "Some of my clients are in that state, yet have not yet reached conscious awareness," she observes. "This kind of therapy provides a mirror by which thoughts and feelings may be brought to light, offering a new perspective and the opportunity for change." Hutchison uses this approach as a collaborative exploration of the client's images. She advises that "The art therapist acts as a non-judgmental witness and catalyst for healing in an atmosphere of safety, acceptance, and support." The process of art making can provide the depressed client with a much-needed shift in focus, physical engagement with the world through the art materials, relaxation, and motivation. Self-esteem and feelings of self-worth are boosted through the discovery of one's personal creative process.

Even yoga can be used as a tool, as it stills the fluctuations of the mind. The Peninsula Yoga Centre operates on the premise that yoga plays a pivotal role in lifting the fog of depression and positively altering moods. It is a healing and preventative practice which is the foundation of a healthy balanced lifestyle. You learn that "what" you do with your body and "how" you move has great effect on

your mind and emotions. It moves energy through places in the body where feelings of grief or anger are stored using alignment and sequencing of the poses.

As many SIWC members attest to, most depression can be treated with counseling. Although SIWC counselors work closely with people to be free of depression and experience a renewed sense of their life energy Nevin suggests, in the case of more severe depression, a consultation with allopathic doctors who will assess the need for anti-depressant drugs.

For questions on health-and-wellness issues, please email [brittafrombach@gmail.com](mailto:brittafrombach@gmail.com).

*Britta Frombach is the president of the Sidney Integrated Wellness Community Society. She is also a registered massage therapist who founded Phi Massage in Sidney. She is a well-known healer and community leader in making conscious health-and-wellness decisions for the body, mind and soul.*