Depression & Suicide

Written by

Segun Matthew

(perceptionmodifier.com)

The Prevalence in Nigeria

In 2017 we had 1.5million cases reported in Nigeria *(College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, Nigeria).*

It’s reported by Word Bank (2018) that 22% of Nigerians suffer chronic depression

* And in the last one year, there have been over 80 cases of suicide reported in the country *(Guardian Newspaper; 12th June, 2018)*
* According to WHO; Nigeria is now the 30th most suicide prone nation in the world out of 183 nations and 10th in Africa.

What’s Depression:-

* Is a state of persistent feeling of sadness or loss of interest in activities, causing significant impairment in daily life.
* It is extremely complex disorder, no one knows exactly what causes it, but it can occur for a variety of reasons.

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of depression ranges from mild to severe

* Mood

Persistence feeling of sadness, lost of interest in pleasurable activities, anxiety, guilt, feeling of hopelessness & helplessness, feeling tearful, anxiety etc.

* Physical

Poor appetite, poor sleep, weight gain or loss, moving or talking slowly than usual, unexplained aches & pains, lack of energy, loss of libido,

* Behavioural

Agitation, restlessness, withdrawal (social isolation), excessive crying, irritability, intolerance of others, having low self-esteem, being persistently tearful, loss of motivation, struggle to make decisions, not getting enjoyment out of life, avoid contact with others, neglecting hobbies & interest, avoiding social activities etc.

* Cognitive

Poor concentration, thoughts of suicide or thoughts of harming others, negativity etc.

There could be some psychotic presentations.

Severity of Depression

At its most severe, depression can be life-threatening because it can be make someone feel suicidal or simply give up the will to live.

Depression Triggers

* GENETIC FACTORS
* BIOLOGICAL
* EXPERIENCES
* PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEMS
* SUBSTANCE MISUSE
* STRESS

Suicidal Feelings

* Suicide is the act of intentionally taking your own life.
* Suicidal feeling can be known when a person is preoccupied with thoughts of ending their own life or when a person is feeling extremely hopeless and helpless.

*Suicide Thoughts Determinants*

1. Suicide ideation/intention

2. Thoughts of plans and methods.

3. Suicide attempt

*Suicide feelings & thoughts*

* Individual experience of suicidal feelings is unique to them. Some may feel unable to cope with the enduring difficult feelings, some could feel like escaping their miseries. While some others may feel it's better to die and end it than living.
* Shame could also be a big risk factor
* Hopelessness; like there's no point in living.
* Tearful & overwhelmed by negative thoughts.
* Sense of worthlessness.
* Like everyone will be better off without you.
* Desperate, as if there's no other choice.

Suicide thoughts are not permanent, things sometimes improve, and the person can find motivation to live again.

The earlier a person let someone know how they are feeling, the quicker they can access support to help overcome those feelings.

**SUICIDE HIGH RISK GROUP**

1. **MEN**;- especially between the ages of 21-45years
2. **LGBT** ( Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender)
3. **Mental Health Sufferers**

INTERVENTIONS FOR DEPRESSION & SUICIDE

* The mainstay of treatment is usually medication, talk therapy or the combination of both.

Talking Therapy

* Talking Therapy can help modify or change how sufferers' think or it can enhance coping techniques so that the person can manage their life's stressors better.
* Talking therapy can really help in recovery process by enhancing awareness and insight in order to change unhealthy thoughts and behaviours.
* Recovery from depression can take time, so there is need for patience and family support to promote recovery.
* Recovery process is unique to each individual, and everyone goes through it differently. Timeline and suitable recovery approach differs for each individual.

Questions?