1. Print the Facilitator’s Instructions and handouts for attendees

2. Play Video: “Intro to Caregiver Depression”

3. Play Video: “Madelyn Gets Depressed”


5. Play Video: “Depression - I’m Down and I Can’t Get Up”

6. Lead discussion by asking open-ended questions

7. Ask attendees to complete Journal/Worksheet pages 14-15,

8. Review and discuss Affirmation/Action Statement

9. Invite discussion
Depression - Session Goal:
The purpose of this module is to help your attendees understand that most caregivers experience two different types of depression:

- **Reactionary Depression** - is a temporary condition that is generally brought on as a response to a specific event or circumstance
- **Clinical Depression** is a medical condition that causes a severe mental disturbance.

The primary difference between the two types of depression is that with time and effort, a person can work his/her way through an episode of *Reactionary Depression*.

*Clinical Depression* is a chemical imbalance in the brain and recovery almost always requires medication. In addition, professional counseling is advised.

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Facilitator Tip:
Recognizing the signs of depression

Unless you are a licensed medical professional, you will not be qualified to diagnose depression, but recognizing the signs will help you identify attendees who may need professional help.

If anyone in your group talks about experiencing suicidal thoughts, if they have nothing to look forward to, if they cannot visualize that their lives will ever get better, and if they’ve been feeling this way for more than two weeks, please encourage them to contact their doctor immediately.

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Facilitator Tip:
Leading the discussion about the videos

When you have finished watching all three videos, invite discussion by asking open-ended questions.
Open-ended questions

- Has anyone here ever had an experience similar to Madelyn’s where some seemingly insignificant event sent you into an emotional funk?
- Can anyone describe how depression affects the way your body feels? Has anyone experienced similar or different physical symptoms described in the video - such as headaches, backaches, or digestive disorders?
- Does anyone have any thoughts on whether most caregivers would associate those physical problems with depression?
- Apparently, Madelyn’s faith and her ability to process her feelings by writing letters helped her get through this particular episode of depression. Faith may not be a factor for everyone here, but can anyone comment on how you’ve been able to work through your own experience with an episode of Reactionary Depression?
- Does anyone have any thoughts on how you would identify whether you were in a state of Reactionary Depression or Clinical Depression?
- Does anyone agree or disagree with the statement that Clinical Depression is a medical condition that requires medical attention?
- Does anyone here think there’s a stigma attached to depression that would prevent a person from admitting that he or she is depressed?
- Does anyone have any thoughts about the comment that depression could be a reaction to stuffing feelings of anger and guilt?
- The video suggests that when we’re depressed it affects the way we think, and our ability to concentrate and make decisions. Has anyone here ever had any difficulties in that area that you’d be willing to share with the group?
- Does anyone have any feedback on the statement that someone who feels like things will never get better, who has no hope for happiness in the future, and has nothing to look forward to, needs to get medical attention immediately?

Facilitator Hint:
When you have finished the discussion, invite anyone who thinks he/she might be suffering with Clinical Depression to see you at a break or after the meeting. If you believe they might do harm to themselves or to anyone else, please help them make arrangements to see a doctor as soon as possible.
Creative Indifference toward Depression

Completing Steps 1 & 2: Awareness and Acceptance

Your attendees may not be aware of the fact that they are depressed. They may or may not know how it’s affecting their bodies, their relationships, and their ability to cope with their circumstances.

Your goal is to help them identify how they have responded to upsetting events in the past, and then recognize if they are currently experiencing physical or emotional pain at a level that requires medical attention: Review the Awareness and Acceptance steps of Creative Indifference toward Depression on Journal/Worksheet #14 & the top half of #15, and then ask your attendees to complete both segments.

Events that can initiate depression:

- A response to bad news
- A loss or rejection
- A broken relationship
- Stuffing feelings of anger and guilt
- Other

Ask your attendees to consider getting medical attention if they are experiencing any of the following physical symptoms on a frequent basis:

Symptoms of depression

- Lack of energy
- Headaches
- Backaches
- Digestive problems
- Difficulty sleeping
- Change in weight
- Other physical or emotional symptoms
Creative Indifference toward Depression
Completing Step 3: Action

Review the statements on the bottom half of Journal/Worksheet #15 and ask your attendees if they would be willing to commit to taking any of the following Action Steps:

- Get involved in some kind of regularly scheduled exercise program
- Seek respite care
- Stay connected socially
- Listen to or perform music
- Get out in nature
- Exercise
- Respite Care
- Social Interaction
- Music
- Nature

If their feeling of being “down” seems like a reasonable response to their circumstances and appears to be temporary, then encourage them to focus on the Action steps listed above. Brainstorm other ideas that could help alter their routine and bring some positive energy into their lives.

Get them to talk about activities and situations that energized and invigorated them before they became caregivers. Talk about how some of those activities could be duplicated or modified to elevate their current emotional state. Try to get them to commit to doing at least one thing that would bring some positive energy into their lives.

If you suspect that any of your attendees are clinically depressed, they may be feeling overwhelmed and immobilized. The Action List for Clinical Depression is very short. They need to see a doctor. Do whatever you can to encourage them to get professional medical help.
Discuss Action/Affirmation Statement

If I am experiencing Reactionary Depression, I will take Action Steps to work my way through it. If I am having "suicidal thoughts", if I can’t see anything "positive" in the future, and if I have felt this way for more than "two weeks", I will call my doctor immediately.
Module 4 : Session 1 : Printed Instructions
“Understanding Depression” PDF

1. **Watch Intro Video**
   Understanding Depression Module 4, Session 1

2. **Download and Print this PDF**

3. **Watch Video**
   “Understanding Depression”

4. **Watch Video**
   “Depression: Action and Reaction”
   *Complete Workbook Page 14-15*

5. **Read Action Step**

6. **Finish Button**
Dealing with Depression

Applying the three steps of Creative Indifference to your experience with depression, complete the following statements:

I am AWARE that my feelings of sadness, despondency, and hopelessness may be:

- Reactionary Depression: A response to a particular event or situation
- Clinical Depression: A chemical imbalance that requires medical attention

I ACCEPT that depression is a condition frequently experienced by caregivers and the affects can be debilitating. My experience with depression may have started with:

- A response to bad news
- A loss or rejection
- A broken relationship
- Stuffing my feelings of anger and guilt
- Other

It’s possible that depression is contributing to the following physical symptoms:

- Lack of energy
- Headaches
- Backaches
- Digestive problems
- Difficulty sleeping
- Change in weight
- Other physical or emotional symptoms
I Accept I may be Clinically Depressed if:

- When I look into the future, I can’t imagine anything positive happening in my life
- I feel that life just isn’t worth living
- I sometimes have suicidal thoughts
- I have felt this way for more than two weeks

* If you checked any of these statements, please take Action by contacting your doctor immediately

If I am experiencing Reactionary Depression, I will take Action by implementing one or more of the following strategies:

- I will get out in nature
- I will set aside quiet time for meditation or prayer
- I will engage in some kind of exercise or physical activity
- I will start a project
- I will listen to uplifting music
- I will visit a friend
- I will attend a caregiver support group
- I will volunteer to help someone else
Notes : Module 4 : Understanding Depression :