

Feeling Sad or Down: Understanding Your Emotions

A Teen Guide to Feeling Low, Overwhelmed, and Finding Ways to Feel Better

Everyone feels sad sometimes. You might feel down after a difficult day, an argument with someone you care about, disappointment, stress at school, changes in your life, or when things do not go the way you hoped.

Sometimes sadness passes quickly. Other times, feeling low can stick around and make everyday life feel harder. You may lose interest in things you usually enjoy, feel tired, want to be alone, or wonder why you feel this way.

If you have been feeling this way, you are not alone. Many teens experience periods of sadness and emotional ups and downs. Learning to understand your emotions is the first step toward taking care of yourself.

What Does Feeling Sad or Down Mean?

Feeling sad is a normal human emotion. Emotions give us information about what is happening inside us and around us.

Sadness may show up as:

Thoughts

- “Nothing is going to get better.”
- “I should be doing better.”
- “Nobody understands me.”
- “I don’t feel like myself.”

Body Feelings

- Feeling tired or low energy
- Changes in sleep
- Feeling heavy or slowed down
- Crying more easily
- Feeling restless or uncomfortable

Actions

- Spending more time alone
- Losing interest in hobbies
- Avoiding friends or activities
- Having less motivation
- Finding it harder to complete tasks

Why Do We Feel Sad?

There are many reasons you might feel down. Sometimes there is a clear reason, and sometimes sadness appears without an obvious explanation.

Common reasons teens feel sad include:

- Stress or pressure at school
- Friendship problems
- Family challenges
- Breakups or relationship changes
- Feeling left out or misunderstood
- Comparing yourself to others
- Big life changes
- Feeling overwhelmed or exhausted

Your feelings are important. They are messages from your brain and body that something may need attention.

The Difference Between Feeling Sad and Feeling Stuck

Feeling sad does not mean something is wrong with you. Everyone experiences difficult emotions.

However, it may be helpful to reach out for support if you notice:

- Feeling sad most days for several weeks
- Losing interest in things you normally enjoy
- Feeling hopeless or worthless
- Struggling to complete daily activities
- Wanting to isolate from everyone
- Feeling like things will never improve

Talking to someone you trust can help. You do not have to handle difficult feelings by yourself.

Understanding My Feelings Worksheet

1. What Am I Feeling Right Now?

Circle or write the emotions that fit:

Sad

Lonely

Disappointed

Angry

Overwhelmed

Tired

Worried

Frustrated

Numb

Other: _____

2. What Happened Before I Started Feeling This Way?

Something that may have affected my mood:

3. What Is My Mind Saying?

When I feel down, my thoughts are:

Is this thought:

☐ Helpful

☐ Unhelpful

☐ Somewhere in between

A kinder and more balanced thought could be:

4. What Does My Body Need Right Now?

When we feel low, basic needs can become harder to notice.

Have I had:

☐ Enough sleep

☐ Something nutritious to eat

☐ Water

☐ Movement or fresh air

☐ Time away from screens

☐ Connection with someone I trust

Something my body needs today:

5. My Mood Boosting Plan

Small actions can help improve your mood over time.

Things that help me feel better:

- ☐ Listening to music
- ☐ Spending time with someone I care about
- ☐ Going outside
- ☐ Moving my body
- ☐ Creating something
- ☐ Journaling
- ☐ Practicing mindfulness
- ☐ Doing something I enjoy

My plan for today:

"I will take one small step by..."

6. Who Can Support Me?

People I can talk to when things feel difficult:

Examples:

- A parent or caregiver
- A friend
- A teacher
- A coach
- A counsellor or mental health professional

Remember

Feeling sad does not mean you are weak. Emotions come and go, and difficult feelings can be worked through.

You do not have to fix everything at once. Start with one small step, one conversation, or one moment of taking care of yourself.

You matter, and support is available.

How KALM Psychology Can Help

If you are struggling with feeling sad, overwhelmed, stressed, or having a hard time managing your emotions, you do not have to figure it out alone. KALM Psychology provides evidence-based therapy and skills-based support to help teens better understand their emotions, build coping strategies, improve relationships, and develop confidence.

Our **Teen DBT Skills Group** teaches practical skills based on Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), including emotion regulation, distress tolerance, mindfulness, communication, and coping strategies for managing intense emotions. DBT skills can help teens learn how to handle difficult moments, respond instead of react, and build a stronger relationship with themselves and others.

To learn more about teen therapy and upcoming DBT skills groups at KALM Psychology, visit our website or contact us.

Disclaimer

These resources are provided for educational purposes only and are not a substitute for professional mental health assessment, diagnosis, or treatment. Completing these worksheets does not create a therapist-client relationship with KALM Psychology. If you are experiencing significant distress, ongoing low mood, thoughts of self-harm, or difficulty managing daily life, please reach out to a trusted adult, a mental health professional, or appropriate emergency support services.

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