

HOW TO OBSERVE NATIONAL DEPRESSION EDUCATION AND AWARENESS MONTH

Reach out

One of the best ways to observe this holiday is to reach out to friends, family, and those in your community. A listening ear, a comforting hug, empathy, and asking questions while withholding judgment can go a long way to comfort others.

Share your story

Don't be afraid to tell those who are struggling about your own experiences with depression. Depression is extremely common, and helping others know they are not alone can be very encouraging.

Educate yourself

One of the best ways you can help yourself (and those around you) is to learn about common symptoms and effects of depression. The more you know, the better you can recognize when someone may need your love and support.

3 SURPRISING DEPRESSION-RELATED TRAITS

Compassion

Those who suffer from depression often have more compassion for others, as they are able to more readily understand the hurt and sadness others feel.

Understanding

Those who struggle with depression are typically less judgmental of others, and tend to believe others when they say they're "doing their best."

Analytical Thinking

Studies show people with depression are able to break down complex problems into smaller segments more easily than those who don't (and they even perform better on certain tests).

WHY NATIONAL DEPRESSION EDUCATION AND AWARENESS MONTH IS IMPORTANT

It sparks conversations

Talking about depression and removing the stigma around it can do tremendous good. This also helps normalize depression (which is important, considering over 16.2 million people have experienced a major depressive episode). Chat with those in your community and use hashtags like #depressionawareness and #DepressionEducation&AwarenessMonth on social media to start the conversation.

It encourages others to reach out

Coping with depression is something nobody should have to do alone. By being open about the signs and symptoms of depression, and erasing the shame, we can encourage others to speak to a trusted friend, parent, doctor, or therapist about what they're experiencing.

It ignites national change

Countless celebrities, politicians, and average citizens alike struggle with depression on a daily basis. As such, this opens many doors to change. Donating to a depression support group/organization, joining an awareness walk (such as NAMI), and following celebrity mental health advocates on social media (such as Lady Gaga, Kristen Bell, Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson and Michael Phelps) can help us change the way our culture thinks about and responds to depression.