

**DEPRESSION IS FOR REAL**  
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Depression is not something a person can just get over, and not something caused by a life situation. With the recent death of Robin Williams, I feel this is the time to discuss depression. I was surprised by one of the comments I saw from a friend on facebook, “I don’t think I could force myself to be depressed if I was worth 130 million.” To which others replied, “People that don’t understand depression can’t grasp it...depression doesn’t care if you are rich or poor.” “Not sure what you mean? Dude had the disease bad.” “It is a disease and it doesn’t care who you are.” “Money doesn’t cure depression.”

A person with depression cannot just suck it up and make it go away. Depression is not just a bad day. A person who is sad for a few days after the loss of a loved one, is not depressed. This is just a normal response to a sad situation in your life. If you feel sad for more than two weeks, you probably have depression. Depression is caused by a chemical imbalance in your brain. Depression can and must be treated by a health care professional just like any other illness. Depression that is untreated is the number one cause of suicide.

The common physical symptoms of depression include: deep feeling of sadness, decreased interest in activities you once loved, sleeping too much or too little, weight gain or loss, fatigue, restlessness or irritability, feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt, difficulty concentrating or making decisions; and thoughts of death or suicide.

Depression also correlates with the following unhealthy behaviors: smoking, drinking alcohol, physical inactivity and sleep disturbances.

I think a comment that sums it up best is, “Some people die from cancer and others from depression.”

Please get help if you feel you are experiencing depression.

Information for this article was obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and [suicide.org](http://suicide.org).