Digging Out of the Tunnel

By Marty Marsh Jacobs, LPC-S

Have you ever felt like you are trapped in a tunnel and can’t find your way out? The tunnel seems dark and frightening. No matter which direction you turn or how hard you dig, nothing seems to work. Depression can be like that. Depression feels like there is no way out of that dark tunnel. There appears to be no hope.

Depression and hopelessness can lead to thoughts of suicide. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide is the 10th leading cause of death among Americans. The rate for young people (ages 15 – 24) is especially high, affecting the college population. For each suicide, it is estimated that there are at least 6 survivors. A survivor is a family member or close friend affected by the loss of someone they care about to suicide. The most important factor to keep in mind is that depression is treatable and recovery is possible. There is hope.

On Wednesday, October 5th, the Counseling Center will be in the Atrium of the Rayburn Student Center from 10 AM until 2 PM raising awareness through Strings of Hope. Postcards about hope will be provided for those interested in writing an individual message of hope. You might want to say something to someone you have lost, someone you know who is struggling, or to yourself. The postcards will be placed on display to share these messages of hope. Participants can also make a bracelet symbolizing hope. Information will be provided about depression, and most importantly, participants will have an opportunity to participate in our annual Depression Screening. The screenings are anonymous and confidential. Counselors will be available to discuss the results of your screening with you. If you are unable to come in person for a screening, go to the Counseling Center’s web page and click on the online screenings.

Some of the symptoms of depression are as follows:

Feeling sad for no apparent reason
Tearfulness
Losing interest in activities that you once enjoyed
Sleeping too little or too much
Fatigue
Trouble concentrating or focusing
Restlessness
Changes in weight or appetite
Feelings of worthlessness or guilt

Depression can be situational such as the result of a loss, divorce, poor health, loss of a job, or fear of failure. Depression can also be the result of a chemical imbalance in the brain. It doesn’t matter what the cause is, you can’t simply “snap out of it”. You need help and help is available. There’s a light at the end of the tunnel and a rescue crew is available to help you dig your way out. The Counseling Center is located at 204 Halladay Student Services Building. Come by or call 903-886-5145 for an appointment. It just might be the best thing you have ever done for yourself.