

Major Depressive Disorder: An Interview with Therapist Elizabeth Sloan

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There are many people who have a difficult time functioning on a daily basis because they have a major depressive disorder. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, "Major depressive disorder affects approximately 14.8 million American adults, or about 6.7 percent of the U.S. population age 18 and older in a given year." To help understand major depressive disorder I have interviewed therapist Elizabeth Sloan.

[Tell me a little bit about yourself.](#)

"I am a licensed clinical professional counselor, which is a type of mental health professional, and I have a Master's degree in marriage and family therapy from U Maryland. I specialize in helping couples create happy, strong [relationships](#) that last. I have worked in mental health and substance abuse programs, and in executive positions have developed and managed mental health research and prevention programs. I have written articles and edited journals on mental health topics."

[What are the signs and symptoms of major depressive disorder?](#)

They vary from person to person. They can include:

- Sadness or low mood that gets serious or will not go away.
- Loss of interest and pleasure in life.
- Negative thoughts about the future, about not wanting to live or suicide.
- Lack of energy.
- Difficult concentrating or making decisions.
- No appetite and little sleep, or, eating more than usual and sleeping a lot.

[What type of impact does major depressive disorder have on a person's life?](#)

"Every person is different, but often people with depression don't function as well as they used to. They may have more aches and pains, and attend work or school less frequently. They may lose interest in things they used to enjoy, and avoid social activities with others. They may feel hopeless



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about their life situation and powerless to change it. They may not have enough energy to do the things in their normal routine. In the extreme, they may be unable to function very much at all, and they may attempt to hurt or kill themselves."

What type of help is available for someone who has major depressive disorder?

"Major depression is a success story in the field of mental health. It is highly treatable and most people find benefit when they get treatment. For many people, medication is an effective treatment alone. For others, talk therapy is the best option and can help their depression lift. A combination of medications and talk therapy may be the best option for some."

What advice would you like to leave for someone who has major depressive disorder?

"Don't suffer in silence. Help is available and there are many options for professional to help. The first step might be to tell a loved one just how bad you feel, and ask them to help you find professional help. Starting on the road to health can be as easy as going to see your regular physician, who can assess your symptoms and make recommendations. Or calling a counselor so you can start talking about the problems that are affecting you with a person who understands. This is your life, and you deserve to enjoy it."

Thank you Elizabeth for the interview. If you would like more information on Elizabeth Sloan check out her website at CaringCouples.com

Sources Sited:

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