

Exercise 6.1: Identifying your symptoms of depression

It is very helpful to use red, yellow and green highlighter pens when completing this exercise. You will find a copy of this chart in appendix 1. Make some copies, as you will be asked to rate your symptoms in this way every week while you are following this self-help programme.

Go through the list in the chart below and pick out the symptoms that you have noticed in yourself during the last two weeks. If you have noticed other symptoms, which are not on the list, write them in the blank boxes at the end of the chart.

Use a red highlighter pen to mark the symptoms that bother you most or all of the time, a yellow pen to mark those that bother you some of the time and a green pen to identify those that do not bother you. If you don't have coloured highlighter pens, draw a circle around the symptoms your experience most regularly, underline those that you experience sometimes and leave the symptoms that don't bother you unmarked.

Sadness	Little interest	No enjoyment	Poor motivation
Waking up during the night	Cannot get to sleep	Do not want to see other people	Cannot concentrate
Hopelessness	Forgetful	Taking part in fewer social activities	Cannot make decisions
Helplessness	Lost weight	Fewer hobbies or interests	Feeling life is not worth living
Low self-esteem	Feeling slowed down	Neglecting my responsibilities	Difficulty at work
Feeling guilty	Feeling agitated or on edge	Think other people do not like me	Easily confused
Feeling irritable	No interest in sex	Feel I have let others down	Sleep too much
Cannot get started	Unexplained aches and pains	Feel intolerant	No appetite
Blame myself for everything	Tearful	Bored	Overeating
No energy	Reduced sex drive	Always tired	Feeling bad about myself
Anxiety	Waking early	Want to die	Napping during the day

- Can you identify five or more symptoms that have troubled you most of the time for at least two weeks and which have an impact on how you manage at home or at work or socially?
- Which symptoms trouble you most?
- Are there any symptoms that trouble you now which did not when you first started to feel depressed?
- Have any other symptoms improved over time?

Mark the chart with the date, to help you to monitor what happens to your depression over time. Tell the people close to you, who might be on your IPT team, what you can about your experience of depression. Appendix 4 has a description of depression that you can share with friends and family. It might be helpful for the members of your team to read this information as a way of introducing the ideas before you discuss your own experience.