

Figure 14.1 Are You Clinically Depressed?

Changes in Eating Habits	You experience an increase or decrease in appetite; you have a weight gain or loss of more than 5% in a month; you find yourself bingeing on unhealthy foods; you begin to abuse drugs and/or alcohol.
Changes in Attitude	You experience negative feelings about the future; you see no hope; there seems to be a dark cloud over everything; you find yourself feeling pessimistic more than optimistic; you have thoughts of suicide or death.
Change in Activity / Energy Levels	You experience a loss of energy; your normal activities are harder to accomplish; you are constantly tired throughout the day; you see no value in setting and working toward goals; you lose interest in sex.
Changes in Temperament	You experience extreme highs and extreme lows; you do not feel like your “normal” self; you find yourself constantly agitated; you are more short-tempered and agitated than usual; your tolerance level is very low.
Changes in Self-Esteem	You experience feelings of worthlessness; you negatively judge yourself and your abilities; you easily find fault with others; you feel “empty.”
Changes in Concentration and Memory	You experience loss of memory; you find it hard to concentrate; you find it difficult to remember small details and tasks; you are more indecisive than usual.
Changes in Sleep Patterns	You experience difficulty sleeping or you find that you cannot sleep enough.
Changes in Physical Conditions	You experience constant aches and pains; you have headaches more often than usual; you have digestive problems; you cry for no reason.
Changes in Relationships	You experience negative changes in personal and work relationships; you begin to cut off people who once mattered to you; you prefer to be alone.

If you are feeling depressed or your anxiety has reached a level where you cannot control it, but your depression seems minor or situational, try some of these helpful hints for picking yourself up out of the blues:

- Get physical exercise because it causes the release of endorphins, which help to stimulate you and give you a personal high.
- Spend time talking with a good friend; share your thoughts and feelings.
- Control your self-talk. If you're feeding yourself negative words, change to positive thoughts.
- Do something special for yourself: take a long walk in the park, watch a favorite movie, listen to music, or visit a friend.
- Nurture yourself by doing things you love and enjoy and that bring you peace.
- *Never* be afraid or ashamed to seek professional assistance.

THE SOUL'S EFFECT ON WELLNESS

Is Your Well Running Dry?

The world is a tough place to be at times. You read the newspapers and see all the bad things that are happening around us. You listen to the evening news and hear about murder, war, gas prices, negative politics, and so on. You feel the pressures of trying to work, struggling to pay bills, finding time to exercise and eat right, studying for difficult tests, writing papers, keeping relationships going, communicating with others—the list of stressors goes on and on. According to Housden (2007),