



camh

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health  
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale

## ASKING FOR HELP WHEN THINGS ARE NOT RIGHT

*“At first I did not know what was happening to me. I cried all day. I could not sleep. Nothing was going right. I was lucky, a woman at my mosque noticed that I was unhappy and she kept talking and talking to me. It was because of her that I went to see a social worker. The next time it happened, I knew what to do. I called a psychologist right away. Depression is very, very bad.”*

### Farida, From Syria

It is hard to be alone in a new country. Starting all over again is exciting, challenging, and sometime scary. At times it may feel like too much work. You may find it harder to continue with your activities. You may begin to feel sad for days or even weeks at a time. You may begin to use alcohol or drugs to try to make the unhappy feelings go away.

If you find yourself feeling this way, you may be depressed. Being depressed affects your moods, your thinking, your level of energy, your appetite, and your sleep. People who are depressed find it hard to do ordinary things and to be with other people. If you have seen or experienced violent or frightening events, you may find that these memories make it harder to enjoy life in Canada. You are in a safe country, yet you may be haunted by the past.

Feeling sad or frightened can be part of the normal reaction to living in a new country, or to surviving situations that threatened your life. But, if you continue to feel this way for more than a few weeks, it is a good idea to ask for help.

In Canada, people are not seen as weak or crazy when they ask for help to deal with their feelings. They are seen as sensible and aware that something is not right. Doctors, social workers, psychologists, counsellors, and religious leaders help people who are having these kinds of problems. They can help you with your situation, and how to decide how and where to get help.

If you are thinking a lot about death, or feel that you want to kill yourself, go immediately to the emergency department of the nearest hospital. The staff there will help you.

Most cities also have telephone counsellors you can talk to in an emergency. Most of these services are open 24 hours per day, so you can talk to someone any time of the day or night. These services are called Distress Centres and their phone numbers are listed with other emergency numbers in your telephone directory.

Read through the following list. Do any of the statements apply to you? If yes, have they been going on for more than a few weeks? If so, you probably need professional help.

1. Most of the time I feel restless and unable to sit still.
2. I drink or get high on drugs to deal with stress.
3. I feel tired all of the time, no matter how much I sleep.
4. I have missed days from school or work because of drinking or using drugs.
5. I find myself thinking a lot about death and suicide.
6. I am having problems concentrating, thinking, remembering, or making decisions.
7. If I am honest with myself, I know that I am using too many drugs or too much alcohol.
8. I feel worthless or guilty most of the time.

9. Most of my friends are people I drink or have drugs with.
10. I am anxious and worried about many things most of the time.
11. I am angry a lot of the time.
12. I depend on medication to get me through each day. I buy this at the pharmacy.

You don't have to suffer alone. Help is available.

**Where to get help or more information:**

McLaughlin Addiction and Mental Health Information Centre

1 800 463 6273

In Toronto 416 595 6111

Your local Public Health Unit – look in the blue pages of your local telephone directory or call 411.

Your local Community Information Centre – look in the blue pages of your local telephone directory or call 411.

Your local Settlement Services

[www.settlement.org](http://www.settlement.org)

[www.ocasi.org](http://www.ocasi.org)

[www.camh.net](http://www.camh.net)

[www.211Toronto.ca](http://www.211Toronto.ca)