

Depression – Beware Too Much Time “Out”

2024

Thomas A. Burns PhD.

Klamath Falls, Oregon

If you have so little to do that you can focus mentally on the negativity in your life, you are suffering from the “privilege” of depression. Doing absorbs your attention in activity. That is why one of the antidotes for depression is to find something to keep you busy. Sure, it is nice if that activity is itself pleasant/rewarding/fulfilling, but it really does not matter so long as the activity requires your mind to be fully engaged. Any activity will do, but it seems that physical activity/exercise tends to be more fully absorbing with a result that sustains for a longer period. But merely moving enough to change the “scene” can provide some relief.

Do....bee.... Do....bee.....DO

Time for reflection/assessment is important if it contributes to more valuable understanding and productive activity. But, too much opportunity for reflection can invite the depression monster in for a visit – even an occupation.

Depression Flourishes In “Dead” Space.

“Dead Space” is one of the significant challenges of old age when 1) the sense of making a meaningful personal contribution wanes, 2) physical capability diminishes, 3) chronic pain and instability emerge, 4) social contacts shrink, 5) isolation and loneliness escalate, 6) personal and automated mobility decreases, 7) spouses and friends depart, 8) family is widely dispersed, and 9) the failures of the “outside” world seem more severe in their constant presence. With too much reflection time, filling the days meaningfully beyond moving from seat to seat, computer to TV becomes a chore. No wonder a lot of old folks are depressed.

Do....bee....Do....bee....DO

Easy to Say.....Not So Easy to

DO