

Recognising Practical Problems & Difficulties

All of us from time to time face practical problems and difficulties concerning the 'Outside World' over which we often have little or no control but which can cause us great distress. When someone faces a large number of such problems they may begin to feel overwhelmed, low and stressed. Dwelling on the problems may worsen things still further and quickly get them out of all proportion. The problem is unhelpfully focused on and mulled over again and again in a way that doesn't help resolve it.



Practical and relationship problems may include:

- > Debts, housing, unemployment or other difficulties.
- > Problems in relationships with family, friends or colleagues etc.
- > Other difficult life situations or changes that you face.

Part of your assessment is to consider how these different factors may be affecting you.

Low mood is often linked to stress at home or work (or lack of work – for example unemployment). People who have experienced a relationship split, or who have no one to talk to about how they feel are also prone to depression. Young mothers and mothers facing the demands of trying to bring up

many young children are also at greater risk of depression. Other people around us such as relatives and friends can sometimes really help, for example they may offer practical and helpful support, but sometimes their lack of understanding or their own problems can make our situation worse.

Low mood and tension can affect any kind of relationship. We may become confused as to our feelings towards others. We may know intellectually that we love and are loved but feel nothing if we are very depressed. Relationships can lose their interest. Love can feel subdued. For example, a mother may look at her baby and feel nothing – a common symptom in postnatal depression. Similarly, those with a spiritual faith may find that their God seems very distant.

Situation, relationship & practical problems
Are any of these relevant to you? – *tick those that apply...*

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| > I have relationship difficulties (such as arguments) | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> | Sometimes <input type="radio"/> |
| > My partner doesn't really talk to me or offer me any support | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> | Sometimes <input type="radio"/> |
| > There is no one around who I can really talk to | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> | Sometimes <input type="radio"/> |
| > My children won't do what I tell them | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> | Sometimes <input type="radio"/> |
| > I have difficulties with money worries or debts | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> | Sometimes <input type="radio"/> |
| > There are problems where I live | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> | Sometimes <input type="radio"/> |
| > I am having problems with my neighbours | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> | Sometimes <input type="radio"/> |
| > I don't have a job | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> | Sometimes <input type="radio"/> |
| > I don't enjoy my job | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> | Sometimes <input type="radio"/> |
| > I have difficulties with colleagues at work | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> | Sometimes <input type="radio"/> |



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Contd.

Write in any other difficult situations, relationships or practical problems here:

At times of distress it can sometimes seem that we are only aware of problems and difficulties. We may tend to overlook or downplay our own personal strengths. This can lead us to fail to use the possible supports we have around us. There may be a range of supports and resources we have available to us. This might include family or trusted friends, having a paid or unpaid role doing

something we value, living somewhere we like or having access to supportive health workers who we find we can work with. Even if at the moment you have few or none of these, there may be other resources that you do have around you. There also may be other resources that you have used in the past that have previously proved to be useful aids to feeling better.

Write in any practical resources and supports here:

Then, answer these questions:

- Q. Overall, do I have practical problems and difficulties? Yes No Sometimes
- Q. Overall, do I have some practical resources and supports? Yes No Sometimes

Having answered these questions, you can choose what to try to do about your practical problems or what you can do to increase your practical resources and supports. Your *guide* can offer you *other leaflets* (see list to the left) to help you.

