Feeling Good -- How to Beat the Blues
Identifying and Overcoming Depression. By Dr. Pat Ponto

Overview of Depression

- Ranges from normal "blues" to very serious episodes of incapacitation
- Estimates are that one-fourth of college students suffer from at any one time
- Triggered by troublesome events or situations, losses

Signs and Symptoms

- Feeling overwhelmed by duties and responsibilities
- Blaming and criticizing self frequently
- Overreacting to events
- Thinking the future looks hopeless
- Worry
- Irritability
- Restlessness
- Difficulty concentrating
- A lack of energy and motivation
- Feelings of guilt and worthlessness
- Frequent crying
- Change in sleep or eating habits

Downward spiral

- Depression leads to withdrawal from others and decreased activity
- Depression increases because of isolation and lack of stimulation and distraction

What to do

- Work with your thought process
  - Identify negative and self-critical thoughts
  - Note the self-defeating characteristic and the distortions involved
  - Formulate a more accurate/rational response
  - Continue to interrupt the automatic thoughts with the more realistic ones
- Talk about your feelings and the difficult situations involved
  - Let off emotional steam
  - Broaden your perspective
  - Counteract tendency to withdrawal
- Exercise
  - Counteracts inertia
  - Releases natural anti-depressants
- Schedule a realistic number of activities throughout the day
  - Also counteracts inertia and withdrawal
- Spend time off-campus
  - Broadens perspective
- Read Feeling Good by David Burns
- Get help if feelings are
  - more intense than usual
  - last longer than usual
  - interfere significantly with your day-to-day functioning.

Call Counseling Center (7190, 7191) for an appointment