

Excerpts from *Beyond the Blues* . . .

(From the Introduction)

You can learn to manage depression just like you learned to tie your shoes or read and write. Just give it a chance and be patient with yourself. You deserve to feel good, and you will . . .

(From Activity 20: Act on the A's to Manage Stress)

Most people feel stress almost on a daily basis. When you do not know how to manage stress, it is easy to feel depressed, because you often feel anxious, tired, or overwhelmed. Learning stress management techniques can help you ward off feelings of depression. . . .

. . . there are three ways to act on stress that all begin with A:

- **Avoid it.** Remove yourself from stressful situations when you can; do not purposely put yourself into situations that you know are highly stressful for you; do not dwell on thoughts that raise your stress level.
- **Make Adjustments.** Do what you can to change the stressful situation.
- **Alter your thinking.** If you can't change something, change your thoughts about it so you don't perceive it as so stressful. Or, change the way you cope with it so you can handle it better.

(From Activity 36: Sharing Your Feelings)

Sadness almost always feels bigger when you keep it to yourself. If you are ever feeling so depressed that you think you want to hurt yourself, it is important that you share your feelings with someone else. This will help to diminish your feelings of depression, and it will also alert other people so that they can either help you or get help for you.

Sometimes when people are depressed, they feel very alone and they may think that no one cares about them. This is rarely true. The depressive feelings may just be so big that it is hard to see past them to the people who are there waiting to help.

All around you are people who can help you, but they cannot help you if they don't know how you feel. Sometimes people give clues to how they feel by acting destructively or aggressively. But clues aren't always enough. If you feel so depressed that you might hurt yourself, it is very important to tell someone directly . . .