Happens to Good Men

Depression. Anxiety. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Substance addiction. Thoughts of Suicide. It can happen to strong, good men. It has nothing to do with one’s personality or character. The cause can vary. Sometimes it is prolonged or intense stress resulting from an event like a divorce or layoff from a job or a death. Left unchecked, stress can wreak our health and ability to function. Sometimes it can be from a medical condition like heart disease or diabetes. Sometimes it can be a side effect from medications or changes in hormone levels. Sometimes it just happens and we don’t know why.

When to start a conversation with your doctor.

- Has this been lasting for more than a few weeks?
- Is it interfering with your ability to do everyday activities?
- Is it causing you distress? Is it causing you pain?

Why do this? Left untreated, symptoms can get worse. It can cause other health issues. It can damage your relationships. It can hurt your finances.

It may be uncomfortable for you to talk to your doctor about this. It is OK to feel uncomfortable. Don’t worry about what he thinks about you. Doesn’t matter. He is there to get you well. Most important is that you tell the doctor exactly what you are experiencing. Be open and honest. Don’t worry about saying the right words or the wrong words. Be direct. If it helps to take a friend or family member with you to the appointment, do it. Be prepared to work with the doctor to find the treatment that works for you. Don’t give up.

Other resources that can help:

- The National Suicide Lifeline 1-800-273-8255 can provide help if you are thinking about taking your life. They are available whenever you need them 24/7. If anyone is in immediate danger, call 911.
- The Missouri Department of Mental Health can help you find a behavioral health professional in your area. Call 1-800—364-9687 or visit www.dmh.mo.gov.

Suicide is very much preventable. For more information, go to HelpHimStay.org.