For the Mature Man

We are supposed to enjoy our golden years. Sometimes that can be hard to do. Sometimes we can find ourselves alone. But it is never too late to build new friendships. Sometimes we can find ourselves without a purpose. But purpose is created, and we can create a new purpose. Sometimes we find ourselves with health issues. But health issues can be managed. Know that you can find contentment during these years.

Isn’t depression a normal part of aging?
• No. Depression is a medical condition that can occur at any age.

How is depression different from grief?
• These share many of the same symptoms. Grief is a normal response to a loss. It usually involves a wide range of emotions - with good days and bad days. Depression tends to have constant feelings of hopelessness and despair.

Isn’t depression the same as dementia?
• No. With dementia, the person has difficulty with short-term memory and feels confused and disoriented. A person with depression may have difficulty concentrating but he knows what today is and where he is.

What can cause depression?
• Prolonged grief can develop into depression. Not having a job to go to can cause some people distress. Some medical conditions like stroke, heart disease, cancer, and diabetes can increase the risk of depression. Depression and thoughts of suicide can be side effects of some medications.

What are the signs of depression?
• Know that depressed men may not feel sad and tearful. Signs can include 1) unexplained aches/pain, 2) weight loss, 3) fatigue, 4) trouble sleeping, 5) feeling hopeless, 6) feeling like a burden to others, 7) increased alcohol use, 8) loss of interest in activities and other people, and 9) wanting to die.

Why should I seek help?
• There is no reason you should suffer. Explain your symptoms to your doctor.

Is there anything else I can do?
• Avoid alcohol use. It can worsen symptoms. Avoid isolation. Schedule regular social activities. Volunteer. Get a part-time job. Some find comfort by adopting and caring for a pet. Talk to a trusted friend, pastor, counselor, or support group to get advice and encouragement. If you are thinking of taking your own life, call the National Suicide Lifeline 1-800-273-8255 for support.

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