

Is That Just Him Being Him---or is He Depressed?

Women typically are seen as the more sensitive, emotional and vulnerable of the sexes. This statement is not meant as my position but to raise the question, *how do men view their entitlement to express their sentiment, emotions and vulnerabilities?* We have come a long way in efforts to level the playing field between men and woman, but I believe *that the expectation of men, even in today's social climate is still to be our protectors.* This leaves little room for men to even admit to themselves that they may experience any vulnerability. I'm not calling for the feminization of men. Both men and woman bring their sameness and differences into their relationships and when at our best, we truly complement each other.

But my belief is that men are paying the cost of separating from their feelings. Logically they might say they realize we all have feelings but for a majority of men, expressing the feelings that make them vulnerable doesn't always fit into their logic. The price they pay is with unrecognized and undiagnosed depression. I think their partners, families, friends and colleagues see the symptoms but just chalk it up as a--that's *just who he is* mentality. In many men, the depression just becomes part of who he is and how he knows himself. We may have fathers, brothers, spouses/partners and friends who fit the category of depressed men.

There are many sign of depression. Considering the following symptoms, feeling guilty, chronically tired, low energy, problems sleeping or eating, irritability, a sense of hopelessness, feeling sad or nervous, and/or difficulty concentrating. These are just a few of symptoms that may be a signal to men or women that they could be depressed. But for men it could be a combination of pain, anger and risk-taking that may be a common grouping that clues us in that something is going on in the man we love.

If you think the man/men in your life may be suffering from depression, don't hesitate to talk to them or to someone for help. Too many men just believe this is the way they have to feel. There is a website you may want to check out for more information, Men Get Depression -- <http://www.mengetdepression.com/>

Life is precious and too short to live with a condition that has treatment for making a difference. Don't wait, act today.