# UNIPOLAR DEPRESSION

# Behavioural Characteristics of Unipolar Depression

**Changes to activity levels** – Reduction in their energy levels can lead to withdrawing from social life, work, education and any other commitments. Some sufferers can even find it difficult to get out of bed.

**Disrupted sleep and eating behaviours** – Depression can result in changes to sleeping habits (e.g. Reduction in sleep via premature waking (insomnia) or an increase in the need for sleep (Hypersomnia)). Changes in eating habits can either be an increased or decreased appetite leading to weight gain or weight loss.

**Aggression and self-harm –** Depression can cause irritability and in some cases verbal or physical aggression. Physical aggression can be directed at someone or it can take the form of self-harm (cutting or suicide attempts).

**Emotional Characteristics of Unipolar Depression**

**Lowered Mood** – A very pronounced experience of feeling lethargic and sad. May describe themselves as being worthless or empty.

**Anger** – Sufferers experience more negative emotions than positive when they are going through an episode of depression. Anger can be directed at themselves or others.

**Low self-esteem** – Those who experience depression tend to report reduced self-esteem which means they like themselves less than usual. A feeling of self-loathing and expression for hatred for themselves.

**Cognitive Characteristics of Unipolar Depression**

**Poor concentration** –A sufferer may find it hard to stick to one task or have difficulty making decisions that would usually be very natural for them.

**Thoughts of death** – Sufferers may have thoughts of death and or carrying out suicide.

**Paying attention to and dwelling on the negative** – Inclination to pay attention to the negative aspects of a situation and are prone to recalling unhappy events rather than positive ones.

**Poor memory** – Can have trouble with retrieving memories

# BIPOLAR DEPRESSION

**Behavioural Characteristics of Manic Episodes:**

**High energy levels** – boundless energy leading to increased work output, increase social interaction or sexual activity

**Reckless behaviour** – may involve risk taking /dangerous behaviour such as taking drugs.

**Talkative** – may speak very fast or endlessly without consideration for others’ input or understanding of turn-taking.

**Emotional Characteristics of Manic Episodes:**

**Elevated mood state** – during a manic episode the individual might experience high moods and an intense feeling of euphoria.

**Irritability** – Feelings of frustration particularly if they don’t get their own way.

**Lack of guilt** – Feel a general lack of guilt concerning their own behaviour (e.g. they would not feel guilty if they hurt some ones feelings).

**Cognitive Characteristics of Manic Episodes:**

**Delusional thinking** – false beliefs which may well be grandiose or persecuting (e.g. belief that they are a religious prophet or that their family is out to get them).

**Irrational thought processes** – reckless and irrational decision making (e.g. spending a significant amount of money even though they cannot afford to).