



# HOW CAN I COPE WITH DEPRESSION?

**Do you sometimes think “There’s nothing left in my life” or “I’d rather just stop existing”? Such dark thoughts are experienced by many students. So you are not alone. Nevertheless, most students do not share their dark thoughts with others because they are afraid of not being taken seriously or understood.**

Nevertheless, it is very important to talk about them. It can be a great relief when these thoughts are heard and understood. In addition, talking to a close friend or family member can also make you feel less lonely, more supported, and less hopeless. Below are four tips on how to cope with depression.

## “HELP, I’M DEPRESSED”

### TALK ABOUT IT

Talking about your depression and dark thoughts with someone close to you can be a great relief. Be as specific as possible (e.g. what you struggle with, how often you have these thoughts, etc.). This way, discussing your thoughts becomes easier and you get a better grip on them.

### PROTECT YOURSELF

It is important to avoid dangerous places and things. This doesn’t mean that you should never leave your room again, but you can make sure that someone always knows where you are. The anonymous ‘BackUp’ app is there to help you with this. You can download it from [www.zelfmoord1813.be/backup](http://www.zelfmoord1813.be/backup). Another tool to protect yourself is to create a ‘safety plan’. You can view this on <https://www.zelfmoord1813.be/SafetyPlan>.

## “HELP, I KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS DEPRESSED”

### ✓ WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Talk to that person about their dark thoughts and listen understandingly, without judgement. Keep in touch with them. Lastly, don't forget to take care of yourself and don't bear this burden alone. Involve those around you and seek professional help together.

### ✗ WHAT DOESN'T HELP?

It is not helpful to condemn the behaviour or appeal to the person's sense of guilt. Nor does it help when the problems that arise are minimised or when immediate solutions are offered and promised. Lastly, it does not help to promise that you won't talk to anyone about it.

You can find more tips on <https://www.zelfmoord1813.be/ik-benbezorgd-om-iemand>.

### 🚩 SIGNS

If the person you know indicates that things are really not going well, take this seriously. This may indicate dark thoughts and depression. Try to talk about it with them so that the person is not alone in this. Don't be afraid that this will lead the person to even darker thoughts.

### 🔍 WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP?

Do you have dark thoughts or are you depressed? Do you know someone who has dark thoughts and may be depressed? Would you like to talk about them with someone anonymously? You can contact the Suicide Helpline for free via chat (zelfmoord1813.be), email (zelfmoord1813.be), and telephone (1813). In case of emergency, call the emergency services via 112, the Poison Control Centre (0470 245 245), or the general practitioner ([www.mediwacht.be](http://www.mediwacht.be)).

References

Zelfmoord 1813 Suicide Helpline. Chat for your life. Retrieved via [https://www.zelfmoord1813.be/sites/default/files/CPZ\\_Babbelvanjeleven\\_Folder.pdf](https://www.zelfmoord1813.be/sites/default/files/CPZ_Babbelvanjeleven_Folder.pdf)