

# Devine Mental Health Services

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## Hard Times: Surviving and Thriving

"In the depth of winter, I finally realized that deep within me there lay an invincible summer."  
(Albert Camus)

Dear friends and clients;

The highest stressors on the psychological scale—which include death of a family member, divorce, serious illness and job loss—can cause us to experience depression and anxiety, as well as a variety of health issues. In this edition of my quarterly newsletter, I'd like to alert you to symptoms you might experience and some coping skills until the stressor is past.

### IF YOU FEEL ANY OF THESE--

- |                                       |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1) low energy                         | 6) Persistent bitter/angry feeling   |
| 2) numbness                           | 7) Hopelessness                      |
| 3) worried about the worst happening  | 8) Stomach distress                  |
| 4) disrupted sleep/daytime sleepiness | 9) Recurring minor illnesses         |
| 5) distracted and unfocused           | 10) Hard on yourself/lost confidence |

These could be a sign of unresolved loss issues.

### THEN TRY THESE---

- 1) Lay the problem down. Take a break from trying to solve the situation. Put aside the divorce papers and take a walk. Leave the resume writing behind and watch a funny movie. The mind needs rest.
- 2) Resolve to limit time spent talking to others about the problem. Just as not talking about it at all makes it worse by hiding it in the body, so talking about it obsessively can keep you in a panicked state. Your discussions should be limited to a close friend, a family member, and your therapist.
- 3) Give yourself treats. A nap, a new novel or signing up for a class can be a little lift to help you get through the hard time.
- 4) Examine your life on paper. Journaling a few minutes when you are feeling overwhelmed can help rid the body of stress.
- 5) Let yourself grieve. Grief is a powerful healer if acknowledged and expressed.
- 6) Take shortcuts. You are recovering as if from a debilitating illness and need time and energy to do so. Incorporate short naps into your daily routine if possible, particularly if you are sleeping poorly at night.

Look for more of my ideas on self-care and healthy thinking in Lakeside Living Magazine, in my article entitled "How to Talk When You Talk to Yourself." This is being published throughout Houston, Ft. Worth and the Dallas metroplex, and future articles are forthcoming.

Yours for happier living!  
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Limited appointments available  
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