

Opinion: Understanding depressive disorders

By Betsy Glass

The common stressors of everyday life can result in feelings of sadness. But if a person feels sad more days than not and it causes a difference in social, academic, and occupational functioning, it may be signs of a depressive disorder.



Betsy Glass

The day may feel heavy or overwhelming, a person may lose track of time or forget what is important, and things that used to cause joy and pleasure no longer bring happiness. The steps to feel better may seem impossible, but it's never too late to get support.

Commonly reported signs and symptoms of depressive disorders include:

- Sadness or hopelessness
- Agitation or irritability
- Fatigue or low energy
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Poor memory or concentration

- Feelings of worthlessness or low self-esteem
- Loss of interest or pleasure
- Thoughts of death or suicide.

The most significant and concerning symptom is thoughts of death or suicide. Suicidal thoughts or intentions are often an individual's way of coping with or escaping from the unpleasant and unbearable experience of their symptoms. If left unrecognized or untreated, these signs and symptoms can impact the quality of life for individuals and their loved ones.

Everyone has unique experiences with mental health concerns, and may not experience all of the symptoms identified. Developmental stages and age can also affect how someone experiences depression. However, anytime we notice an abrupt or significant change in mental or physical health lasting more than two weeks and interfering with everyday life, it's important to consider an assessment with a qualified mental health professional and primary care provider.

Feeling better is possible, according to Neuroscientist Richard Davidson, as "happiness is a skill that can be learned." Depressive disorders are manageable through following the recommendations outlined by a qualified mental health professional and primary care provider, which may include psychotherapy, medication management, lifestyle changes, and other alternative methods.

What can you do? It's important to:

- Know the common signs and symptoms of depressive disorders.
- Demonstrate empathy and compassion toward yourself and others.
- Encourage yourself, friends and loved ones to seek

support, possibly requesting or offering assistance in coordinating or attending appointments.

- Develop a care plan with your qualified mental health professional and primary care provider, addressing all the dimensions of your wellness.

- For those most at risk, please seek emergency services when in crisis, either by calling 911 and requesting a welfare check or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800.273.8255, or by visiting your local emergency room.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that up to one in five Americans will develop a mental health disorder in their lifetime. Locally, the 2015 Community Health Needs Assessment identified mental health disorders as one of the top three most significant concerns.

Become more aware about how mental health conditions affect our loved ones and our community. Throughout the month of May, Barton Health and other community organizations are encouraging members of the public to participate in a 31-Day Mental Health Awareness Challenge. Get details about the challenge **online**.

Betsy Glass is a licensed clinical social worker at Barton Community Health Center in South Lake Tahoe. On May 12, she and other mental health clinicians will a free mental health talk at Lake Tahoe Community College's Aspen Room at 6pm.

Letter: USFS crew volunteers

at Bread & Broth

To the community,

Thanks to the U.S. Forest Service employees at the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, the Bread & Broth diners on May 2 enjoyed a festive Mexican dinner at St. Theresa Church's Grace Hall.

With funds from the Forest Service employee association's Wellness, Recreation and Morale fund, the B&B cooks prepared beef tacos, Mexican black beans and Spanish rice to celebrate the upcoming Cinco de Mayo holiday.

Representing the U.S. Forest Service employees at their Adopt A Day of Nourishment dinner were Barbara Drake, acting deputy forest supervisor; Robert Guebard, timber management officer; and civil engineers Barbara Shanley, Jordan Burge and Anjanette Hoefer.

"What a rewarding experience," remarked Drake. "Thank you for having us. We enjoyed assisting B&B in your support of the community and we look forward to being a part of this event in the future."

Partnering with the U.S. Forest Service employees that work so hard caring for our forestlands is a real treat for the B&B volunteers. These sponsor volunteers came in ready to help and enthusiastically packed food giveaway bags, cheerfully served the diners and cleaned and stacked tables and chairs after the dinner. Thanks to the Forest Service members for their loving care of our forests and their concern for our community members.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Opinion: California's housing crisis deepens

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

Three dry statistical reports issued simultaneously last week reveal the stark dimensions of California's deepening housing crisis.



Dan Walters

A Census Bureau report says that in 2015, California saw 98,188 permits for new units, up from 83,657 in 2014.

A deeper data dive reveals that during the 11-year period from 2005 to 2015, local governments issued permits for just under 1 million units, but there were wide variations during the period.

In 2005, at the height of the housing boom, California saw 205,000 housing permits issued, but as the bubble burst activity dropped to as low as 35,000 in 2009 before beginning a slow rise.

Read the whole story

Letter: Unity at the Lake serves at B&B

To the community,

Bread & Broth would like to thank Unity at the Lake Church members for their ongoing support of our efforts to ease hunger in our community. About 10 Unity at the Lake (UATL) members are regular Bread & Broth volunteers who serve and cook at the Monday evening meals, help with the Bread & Broth 4 Kids Thursday bag packing and serve on B&B's board.

As an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization, Bread & Broth truly appreciates the support that we have received from UATL since the program's inception over 26 years ago.

On April 25, UATL donated \$250 to sponsor another Adopt A Day of Nourishment. UATL members Diana Silva, Sandra Olivo, Susanne Hoy, Gayle Bradshaw, Paige Rice and Jenna Poell came to the dinner to help.

"The Unity at the Lake cooking and serving crew was happy to be joined by the fellow members of Unity at the Lake to help feed and serve our community," commented Kathi Olsen, B&B's lead cook for the fourth week of the month. In addition to Olsen, UTLA church members Cindy Archer, Bob Neidermeyer, Donna Hawsford, Cherie Kagan, Linda Witters and Mike Farnon are the B&B volunteers who serve every fourth Monday of the month.

St. Theresa Bread & Broth is very thankful for the partnership it shares with Unity at the Lake Church and appreciates their efforts at transforming lives in with positive and inspiring deeds.

To partner with B&B as a donor or sponsor, contact me at 530.542.2876 or carolsgerard@aol.com

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Opinion: Breaking mom's heart

By Hattie Jean Hayes

A spoiled child, I was flabbergasted and a little furious when, at the age of 5, I was told I could not live in my mother's basement when I grew up.

"You can't live here forever," my mother insisted. "You have to leave."

"You only live five minutes away from your mom!" I protested. "I can just live in the basement, and I can keep my husband and kids down there with me. I promise I'll never leave."

My mother just laughed at me. "I'm sorry," she said. "But you can't make promises like that to me, or to anyone."

For most of my childhood, I assumed my mother's vehemence came from her dislike of housekeeping, and of the idea that she would have to pick up after my own spoiled children if we all lived in the basement. So then I resolved to live down the street, keeping with family tradition. My mother, and all her sisters, lived a hop, skip, and a jump from my grandmother, in what seemed like an unspoken rule of daughterhood.

It seemed scandalous for my mother to encourage me to move far away from our Missouri hometown for college, seemingly shirking my familial obligation. Nothing seemed better than living out my life in Grain Valley, alongside the family I

felt equally endeared and indebted to. Staying with my parents in perpetual girlhood sounded like paradise; leaving them, like a betrayal. It seemed an insult to my parents to even consider a life that was, somehow, superior enough to justify abandoning them. My mother's insistence confused me to no end, even as I began to receive scholarship offers from out-of-state universities.

I did not fully understand my mother's urgings until I was 18 years old, in a rented car with her, somewhere between San Francisco and Los Angeles at 4 in the morning.

"I need to tell you something, Hattie, and I need to know you aren't going to hate me," my mother said out of the blue. We had spent the day touring colleges in Los Angeles, and had been driving for hours to spend the next day exploring Stanford and UC Berkeley. I wondered if my mother's impending confession was some sort of car trouble that would strand us in the middle of an unfamiliar state. I encouraged her to go on.

That's when my mother told me about her first marriage. At the age of 20, my mom married her high school sweetheart. He did not treat her kindly. He was abusive. One day, she packed a suitcase while her husband was out, left a full dinner on the table, and never set foot in their apartment again. They were divorced soon after, and within the year she would meet my future father. Her second husband, I thought to myself in disbelief.

In my mind, a dozen stray puzzle pieces slipped into place. My mother's astounding work ethic had sprouted from necessity, and from fear. Her goofy anecdotes of young adulthood were always edited around a decade-long relationship she wasn't ready to tell me about. And my mother's insistence that I not hunker down in her basement reflected her worry that the promises I made when I was young would keep me from experiencing the world as an adult.

“I was going to tell you when you turned 18 and got engaged and put your dreams on hold for a boy,” my mother said, “and then I finally realized you would never do that. You aren’t me.”

Indeed, I was and am not my mother: I laughed in my high school boyfriend’s face when he suggested I tailor my college decision to his preference. And I could see now that, throughout high school, I was paving the way to live wherever I wanted and attend whichever university I liked. The world was my oyster. And suddenly I understood that at 18, the world had been at my mother’s feet, too, but she had made other promises.

When my mother remarried, she was able to take on one dream she’d held close to her heart for a long time: having children. Throughout my youth, my mother told my younger brother and me that our joy would always be her top priority, and that being our mom was her No. 1 job. As I’ve grown up, I have come to understand how my dreams have also become my mother’s. The day I was born, my mom told me, she felt she had everything. And since, she’s dedicated herself to making sure I would feel the same way someday, even though it meant her heart would break.

When my mother sent me out into the world, she knew she’d never get quite get the same daughter back. Once I had a taste of independence, and of success, a rift would form between us: the fate of mothers and their daughters who leave. I’ve come to see since that my mother is more isolated now than I was when I first turned up in Phoenix, a small city of millions of strangers.

My mother bears the burden of my younger brother’s sadness and frustration at the absence of his older sibling. She witnesses my father’s fear for my safety and my grandmother’s fretting. I wonder if my aunts and uncles ask my mother why I don’t make the effort to come home more. When I was a child, my mother

gave up friendships to spend time with me, and now she gives me lighthearted briefings on failed lunch plans and dud “girl dates.” She’s open about her sadness—she tells me when she has “sorrow for dinner,” or when she’s cried herself to sleep. I am, perhaps, the only person who understands her heartache, because I gave it to her.

I watch my mother’s grief from afar, like watching a possible version of my future self in a crystal ball. I know that one day, I will send my own children into the world, and it will be hard. But my mother has prepared me. I will understand when my children don’t want to come home during holidays, and when they come home with newly acquired beliefs I can’t understand, I’ll remember the way I argued with my parents during my first collegiate summer home. Or, better yet, I will turn to my mother for advice.

I have, at 21, more freedom than I know what to do with. And as I get older, that feeling will only grow; my mother has created a trust fund of the liberties she missed out on. In chasing my own dreams, I’m fulfilling hers, too.

If at 18, I’d decided that living in my mother’s basement was truly the life I wanted, my mom would’ve furnished it for me. But that’s not how it happened. Instead, my mother taught me unconditional love by encouraging me to break her heart. My mother wouldn’t let me make promises to her, so instead, I call her once a week and tell her about the promises I’m making to myself.

Hattie Hayes is a comedian and writer. She hosts a weekly variety show in Phoenix, Arizona, and will graduate from the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism at Arizona State University in May 2017.

Opinion: Do fire shelters save lives?

By Fernanda Santos, New York Times

Carrying a fire shelter has been mandatory for anyone fighting a wildfire in the United States since 1977. But in Canada, where a raging fire is threatening to destroy the entire city of Fort McMurray, Alberta, firefighters stopped carrying shelters in 2005. Do Canadians know something Americans don't?

Wildfires are an ever-present threat to both America and Canada, and they burn similarly on both sides of the border: hot, big and tough-to-tame beasts. It's where they burn that's different: In the United States, there are more often homes and people close to the flames.

That means Canadian firefighters may have time to think and strategize, while American firefighters have to take more risk as they rush – risk the shelters can help mitigate. In Canada, where fires often burn in densely forested areas, it can also be much harder to find a clearing or local road where it is safe to deploy shelters, which are not built to withstand direct contact with flames.

[Read the whole story](#)

Opinion: Drought isn't over, so don't relax

By Peter Hanlon, High Country News

California's State Water Resources Control Board recently indicated that mandatory water restrictions could be lowered in some parts of the state later this spring. Such a move would come just one year after the wise decision that encouraged residents to save water in the midst of a severe, multi-year drought.

Regardless of the board's decision, Californians need to shift permanently toward water conservation and efficiency. In fact, that's not a bad idea for all Americans.

There's no denying it: There was a lot more rain and snowfall in California this past winter than we've seen in recent years, especially the last five. Unfortunately, when it comes to the drought, a closer look at recent rain and snow trends makes it clear that saying "things are better" is a long way from knowing that "the drought is over."

Read the whole story

Opinion: Calif. preschool spending a big conflict

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

In the broadest sense, this year's version of the annual budget wrangle pits Gov. Jerry Brown, who wants to keep a lid on spending and build budget reserves, against his fellow Democrats in the Legislature, who want to spend more.



Dan Walters

The sharpest skirmish is likely to be over demands to ramp up spending on a confusing welter of “early childhood” programs that serve nearly a half-million children now and cost about \$3.5 billion.

Brown proposes only token increases in spending on child care and preschool programs, while urging the Legislature to shift to a voucher system for the former and combine several programs into block grants for the latter.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Placing Zika virus in a broader perspective

By James Wilson

As you all have no doubt seen in the media, we have yet another exotic public health threat on the radar: Zika virus. While the vast majority of people infected either experience minimal symptoms, many develop dengue-like symptoms of rash, fever, and joint pain. Worse, pregnant women who are infected are experiencing between an 18-50 percent rate of birth defects known as microencephaly (“small fetal head”). Microencephaly may lead to a child with neurological issues

such as cerebral palsy. We have also noted paralysis (Guillain Barre Syndrome) in a limited group of 20- to 30-year-old adults, where the case fatality in this group is as high as 50 percent.



James Wilson

Zika virus is a national security issue because in Brazil we estimate as many as 1.3 million infected, with 3,500 cases of microencephaly. At one single hospital, they reported nearly 100 cases of paralysis in adults, of whom half died. There is no vaccine or anti-viral medication. Zika has spread explosively in the tropical belt of the Americas, and now the expected media hyperbole has arrived.

It is believed that Zika virus is transmitted in a primate-mosquito cycle similar to dengue virus. However, we are not 100 percent sure of this, and we have called for studies to examine whether this virus is capable of infecting birds. Our threat assessment for the nation will be dramatically different if the virus spreads in a similar manner as West Nile versus dengue. West Nile is ecologically established, with locally acquired cases reported here in the United States every year. Dengue, on the other hand, does not transmit locally but in occasional circumstances and in very focal areas of California, Texas, and Florida. But many cases are imported yearly.

The World Health Organization has drawn comparisons between the current Zika crisis and the Ebola disaster. The two situations could not be more dissimilar. Ebola was associated

with an approximate 70 percent case fatality rate and 15,216 confirmed cases as of Jan. 20 for all of West Africa. Recall there was great concern at the time of virus mutation leading to a more transmissible form of Ebola. It turns out this was not the case. And CDC's forecasts of more than a million cases in West Africa were not realized.

Zika virus infection estimates so far are as high as 2 million cases across 18 tropical American countries, with more than 3,500 birth defects documented. Fatalities have been rarely reported among patients with sickle cell disease. It should be emphasized that Zika was not the only Africa-origin exotic virus to recently be introduced to tropical America: Chikungunya was also introduced two years ago and spread rapidly as well. The difference is the impact: Zika has been associated with birth defects. So, to compare Ebola and Zika is truly not appropriate: it is apples and mangoes.

Many in the global public health community have embraced a public communications tactic of frightening politicians to action. It is unfortunate the community feels the need to take this path. However, repeated hyperbole associated with public communication has badly eroded credibility of the entire global public health enterprise. Careful balancing of what is/is not known in context that avoids hyperbole is recommended. That said, WHO is under heavy fire right now due to the perception they are again slow to respond.

Our bottom line assessment is this: Zika virus will cause great disruption in the tropical belt of the Americas. We will see imported cases of Zika to the U.S. in multiple states, including Nevada. It is highly unlikely to see sustained epidemic transmission of Zika in the U.S. Here in Nevada we do not have the appropriate mosquito species to support transmission. We are advising all men and women of child-bearing age to avoid unnecessary travel to the tropical Americas until herd immunity has been established given the significant risk to the unborn. The key tool for our

clinicians in the state of Nevada is access to laboratory testing. And our state Public Health Laboratory will soon have this test available.

James Wilson is an associate research professor in the School of Community Health Sciences and is director of the Nevada Center for Infectious Disease Forecasting. Wilson, a physician, is considered one of the world's leading disease forecasting experts.

Opinion: El Dorado County defends its roads

By Creighton Avila

California road funding has been in the news lately with state funding for local roads (i.e. which is a dedicated allocation that funds El Dorado County roads) projected to be cut due to plummeting gasoline tax revenue.

Per the *Los Angeles Times*: “The last month, the California Transportation Commission said the state would cut transportation funding by \$754 million – a 38 percent decrease. Why? Because revenue from the state’s levies on gasoline sales, which provide much of that funding, plummeted as gas prices dropped and more fuel-efficient vehicles proliferated. Those falling prices cut the state’s gas excise tax revenue from 18 cents a gallon two years ago to 12 cents last year, and revenue is expected to sink to 10 cents in July. Every penny in revenue lost per gallon means a \$140-million drop in transportation funding.”

Due to the cuts, for the first time in a decade the state has

been asking counties to terminate some of the 200-plus projects previously offered funding according to Susan Bransen, chief deputy director of the California Transportation Commission.

El Dorado County has seen its gas tax dollars decrease, and the county will continue to see a decrease according to state projections. For example, in 2014, El Dorado County received \$10.1 million and it is projected to receive just \$6.5 million in 2017. It is difficult for the county to maintain current roads and plan for future road infrastructure when its state allocated road funds are continuing to decrease and there is no action at the state level to alleviate the problem.

The following are facts about the funding, resources, and assets that maintain the roads that are overseen by the El Dorado County Community Development Agency:

Funding

A large majority of funding for El Dorado County roads comes from state allocated gas tax funds and local Road District Tax funds (a small portion of property taxes).

At times in the past, the Board of Supervisors has allocated discretionary funds to roads. These funds are better known as "General Fund dollars." General Fund dollars largely go to fund law and justice functions (e.g. Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, etc.) while also funding some land use and development functions (e.g. planning and building development), and general government functions (e.g. Assessor's Office, Veterans Department, Elections, etc.). When the Board of Supervisors has had savings, in the past, it has funded some transportation projects and road maintenance with General Fund dollars; approximately \$6.6 million since 2010.

The county has allocated \$3.75 million in local tribal funds since 2014 for road work. These funds must be spent within a designated area per an agreement as mitigation funding for

impacts associated with the casino.

Staffing

Due to uncertainties in state road funding with the current state budget, the County's Community Development Agency is holding several road maintenance and operation staff positions open until adequate state funding has been identified.

Quality of county roads and bridges

The Pavement Condition Index, or PCI, is a national measurement standard for the quality of roads. The index is measured from 1 to 100, with 100 being the highest score. Since 2009, El Dorado County's PCI has increased from 53 to the current 64. Below is a table which compares El Dorado County's PCI to surrounding California counties from a 2014 report completed by the California State Association of Counties and the League of California Cities:

2014 Pavement Condition Index	
County	PCI Rating
Alpine	44
Amador	33
Placer	69
Sacramento	62
El Dorado	63
Median	62

As stated above, the 2016 PCI for El Dorado County is 64. The county continues to find methods to improve its roads, which has helped to increase the PCI. However, continued inaction at the state level could put the county's road quality in jeopardy.

The county's average bridge sufficiency rating has improved

from 65 in 2012 to 68.3 in 2016. Bridge maintenance and construction funding is generally separate from funding utilized for road maintenance activities.

Accidents in the county, recorded in the Annual Accident Location Study, decreased from 1,271 in 2004 to 919 in 2015.

Examples of major road maintenance projects completed 2011-2015

Surface Treatment (crack seal, grind/pave, chip seal, slurry seal)

- Ridgeview (2013, 2014), Park Village (2015), Crown Village (2011) – subdivisions in El Dorado Hills
- Grizzly Flat Road (2013)
- Deer Valley Road and Kanaka Valley Road in Rescue (2011)
- Rattlesnake Bar Road in Pilot Hill (2011)
- Cold Creek subdivision in South Lake Tahoe (2013)
- Green Valley Road (2013)
- Old French Town Road and French Creek Road (2015)

Brushing projects

- Omo Ranch Road in Mt. Aukum (2013)
- Snows Road in Camino (2014)
- Rock Creek Road in Placerville/Swansboro (2012)

Ditching projects

- Governor Drive in El Dorado Hills (2013)
- Fairplay Road in Fair Play (2012)
- North Canyon Road in Camino (2012)
- Luneman Road in Lotus (2011)

Culvert replacement projects

- Deer Valley Road in Rescue (2015)
- Cambridge Road in Cameron Park (2014)
- Pioneer Trail in South Lake Tahoe (2014)

- Newtown Road in Placerville (2011)

Sign retro reflectivity program throughout the county
2013-2015

- 7,830 signs out of 15,172 signs have been updated (51.6 percent complete).

Annual Maintenance of Mosquito Bridge (2011-2014); major maintenance (2015)

Curb, gutter and sidewalk repairs in El Dorado Hills (2011-2015)

Road maintenance completed with tribal funding, 2014-2015

Asphalt Overlay – Gold Hill Road

Slurry Seal – Longview Subdivision and Emerald Meadows subdivision

Sign Retro-Reflectivity Program – signs completed throughout the tribal area

Minor and major rehabilitation – in the tribal area

Salida Way

Wilkinson Drive

Estepa Drive

El Tejon Road

Granada Drive

Greenstone Road

Springvale Road

Forni Road

Meder Road

Sunset Lane

Gold Hill Road

Sections of French Creek Road

Sections of Old French Town Road

Sections of South Shingle Road

Mother Lode Drive

Life Way

Longview Subdivision
Emerald Meadows Subdivision
Highland Subdivision
Cameron Woods Subdivision.

Examples of transportation related assets that need to be continually maintained

- 1,080 centerline miles of roadway
- 76 bridges
- 100+ box culverts
- 17,000 feet of guardrail
- 1,600 feet of timber wall
- 464 miles of double yellow centerline
- 302 miles of white edge line
- 14,822 warning, guide, regulatory and informational signs
- 137.6 miles of raised pavement markers (RPMs)
- 48 signalized intersections
- 131 pieces of heavy equipment.

The county is dedicated to continuing to maintain its roads even with continued lowered funds from the state, as shown above with the increased PCI. The state funding issues are ongoing and one-time state funding will not be a solution to this problem with the reoccurring maintenance needs that are required to maintain roadway infrastructure in the county. The County encourages the state to find a solution to the ongoing road funding issue, so El Dorado County can continue to provide a safe and effective road system for its citizens and visitors. To that end, the Board of Supervisors, through a resolution adopted at the April 5 board meeting, urged the state to provide sustainable funding for local transportation infrastructure.

Creighton Avila works for the El Dorado County Chief Administrative Office.