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Teenage Depression and Suicide

Abstract

Teenager depression and suicide, which have been neglected for a long time, has now emerged as a great health concern in modern times. The long spells of sadness, feelings of worthlessness and not being valued, depressed mood are some of the most important sign of depression among the teenagers, which lead them towards the thoughts of suicide. It is often caused due to the family history of the individual, however, can also be found among the individuals having no family history of depression. It is a treatable condition, which needs the attention and support of family and other support groups. It can be treated with the help of professionals by getting psychotherapy, interpersonal therapy, cognitive behavior therapy, and medicines.

Teenage Depression and Suicide

Depression is one of the most common, as well as growing, mental health concerns in modern time. The society has taken a really long time to accept the fact that depression is a serious mental health issue, which can impact the performance of an individual regarding the routine activities, as well as cause serious threats to the physical health of the person. A general conception in the society is that then mental health issue like depression can only be found among the adults and it does not affect the life and routine activities of the children or the teenagers. However, this conception has been proved wrong in the past decade, as a number of cases of teenage depression have been observed. They are facing the challenges of making their place in modern society, which becomes an important source of their depression. Teenagers can also develop depression due to the pressure of performance, family issues and identity issues. It can also be caused due to the family history of the issue. One of the most concerning issues about teenage depression is that it is giving rise to suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts among the teenagers, as they do not get timely help and think they are not needed in the society. The rate of suicide among teenagers has drastically increased in the past few years and pose a serious threat to the mortality rate of the teenage population. The issue is not just limited to one part of the world but the teenagers in different parts of the world, belonging to different races and ethnicities, as well as genders, and social classes of the society have the tendency of developing depression and becoming suicidal. It is the responsibility of the society to provide the programs of awareness, so the disturbed teenagers can seek treatment, instead of being guilty and feeling worthless and unvalued. Teenage depression and suicide may have been among the rising concerns of the society, however, it can be controlled by spreading awareness about the importance of mental health and the status of the problem among teenagers, in addition to providing the psychotherapies and other treatment facilities.

Teenage depression is almost a new concept for the society as initially, the people did not believe the fact that there could be any issue with the mental health of the children, or teenagers as young as the age of ten to fifteen or sixteen years. However, the research by McLoughlin, Gould, and Malone (p. 765) has highlighted the fact that teenager depression has emerged as a common mental health issue among the children born after the year 1995. In addition to it, the teenage depression statistics reached an all-time high number during the year 2015. The society often confuses the depression of the teenagers with temporary sadness, as well as the physical and psychological transition from being the child to the adult, which is completely wrong. The teenage depression is an equally important issue and concern to be acknowledged and explored by society as the issue of depression among the adult population of the society. The most important thing in this regard to exploring teenage depression. So, the teenage depression is the long episodes of sadness and irritability among the teenagers, accompanied by depressed or irritated mood. A sudden gain or loss in weight, without any apparent reason or physical health issue, is another indicator of depression among teenagers. These changes are often associated with the hormonal changes in the bodies of the teenagers, which is not wrong if it is limited to a little time period and does not affect the routine activities and life of the teenagers. However, if these changes start impacting the lives of teenagers and persist for weeks and months, then it is not the impact of the hormonal changes but teenage depression. Another important aspect of teenage depression is that the teenagers develop suicidal thoughts and attempt is as well, which has taken the life of a great number of population. Feelings of worthlessness, sense of identity, as well as being unvalued, are the major triggers towards the suicidal thoughts, which makes the sufferer think that there is no purpose of living the troublesome and difficult life (McLoughlin, Gould, and Malone, 773).

Teenage is one of the most challenging parts of the life of an individual. They pass through the physical and psychological changes, which suddenly take away their childhood and make them think that they are now grown-ups, who need to think and act like a mature person. The pressure of the society to become mature and think seriously about life and future sometimes causes great stress to the teenagers, which transitions to long episodes of depression, leading to suicidal thought and attempts. The teenagers also have to go through the changes in their feelings, in addition to body and thought changes, which make them question their identity and place in society. Confusion, uncertainty, and fear are the major aspects of their troubled feelings, which make them question their identity and position in society. The pressure of achieving academic excellence as well as take a progressive career path in the future is another major stress of the teenagers, which become the source of their depression. The fear is mostly not being able to fulfill the expectations of family, peers, and teachers. When the teenagers fail in achieving academic excellence or are unable to maintain their performance, they develop the thoughts that their failure is not temporary and they would stay the same their whole life. Even if they try to make their performance better, their depressive thoughts and feelings do not let them concentrate on their goals and achieve them, which adds to their depression and strengthen suicidal thoughts. Such thoughts trigger them to think that there is no use of living life in failures and suffering and it would be much better to take their life (Hagler). Apart from the pressure of academic excellence, teenagers also face the pressure of socializing and if they fail to become socially active and popular, it sometimes leads them to the thoughts of not being valued or worthless for the society. They keep confining themselves in their shell, due to the fear of not being accepted in the popular groups or being rejected (Twenge).

Apart from societal reasons, there are some family issues, which give rise to depression among teenagers. One of the most important among them is the family history of depression. The teenagers who have an individual in their family, have greater chances of developing depression because it can sometimes be transferred through the genes. However, it does not mean that teenagers not having any history of depression in their families cannot develop it. Separation or divorce among the parents can also become the source of depression among teenage children. Moreover, the death of a loved one or changing the community which can separate the teenagers from their childhood friends, can also contribute to the sources of their depression. Adjusting in a new atmosphere and getting bullied can also lead the teenagers towards depression and developing suicidal thoughts as well as attempting it. Moreover, childhood trauma or abuse can also greatly contribute to the depressive and suicidal thoughts among teenagers. In some of the aspects, the family attitude towards the upbringing of the teenagers also greatly contribute to the development of depression. For example, the poor parents, who spend their whole lives in suffering may instill the feelings of hopelessness among their children, making them think that nothing can change and work in their favor (Hagler).

The teenage is that part of life when the young children need the most support of their families, peers, and instructors, to know the complexities of life. This is the time they need to focus on taking a career path, along with enjoying the changes in their life, instead of being fearful of them. It is very important for the family and peers of the teenagers to lend a hand of support in the time of need. The teenagers suffering from depression and suicidal thoughts depict specific signs and symptom, which are actually a cry of help and should never be ignored. The warning signs of depression among the teenagers include the feelings of hopelessness and deep sadness which continue for a long period of times or are recurrent. It can also include unreasonable crying spells. The feelings of anger, frustration, and irritation over trivial matters, is another important warning sign of depression among teens. The consistent annoyed mood of the teenagers accompanied with feelings of hopelessness, emptiness, or the loss of the sense of purpose are also among the warning signs of depression. Low self-esteem, loss of interest in fun activities or the most favorite activities of the person can also be the signs of depression among the teen. Self-blame, criticism, guilt, developing conflict with family, are also the signs of depression among teenagers. The signs of depression among the teenagers which can specifically take them towards suicidal attempts include the sensitivity towards rejection, the need of excessive reassurance, over and deep thinking, bleak and grim thoughts of future, frequently thinking and talking about death and suicide. Apart from the changed attitude and behavior of the teens, drastic changes in their health can also provide the warning signs of depression and suicidal thoughts. they may have increased or decreased appetite, leading to sudden weight gain or weight loss. It can also be depicted through the increased sleep pattern of the teens or the lack of sleep, which can also lead to insomnia. Teenagers can also isolate themselves from their social groups, as well as family, which is a warning sign (Twenge).

One of the most important aspects of teenage depression and suicide is the increasing pressure of the modern world to stay updated and follow the trends of society. Research has proved that teenagers who spend more screen time, like scrolling their social media accounts and using their phones have a greater tendency to developing depression. Becoming aware of the progress and activities of the life of other people can make them rethink about their life and its purpose. If someone from their friend list keep posting about the achievements in his/ her life or new ventures of life, exploring the talents or availing the opportunities of progress, it can make the teen, seeing all this progress, think that he does not have enough opportunities of making progress and there will be no improvement in his life. The most important issue of the teen of modern times is that they get intimidated, which become the source of their depression. This depression does not let them keep up with their performance or improve it, which further worsens their condition and they start developing the suicidal thoughts. If they do not get any help from their support groups, as well as professional counseling and treatment, they cannot get out of their depression and get rid of their suicidal thoughts. Most of the times, the signs of depression among the teens are associated with their poor performance and parents think that they are just making the excuses. They do not take the depression of the teenagers seriously as they also associate it with teenage rebellion. However, this completely wrong and parents should pay special attention to the attitude and behavior of their children, in order to identify the symptoms and signs of depression, while lending a hand of support to them (Ophir, Asterhan, and Schwarz, 103).

The society has now become more understanding and knowledgeable towards the issues of teenagers. The general public has accepted the fact that teenage can also suffer from depressions which can take them to commit suicide and have learned to not associate the troubling behavior and attitude of the teenagers with rebellion. There are a number of articles in the newspapers and talks on the news as well, which guides the parents regarding the troubled attitude of their teen. They are provided with the information that they need to lend support to their children so that they overcome the dark period of their life and enjoy its blessing instead of taking their own life. The teenagers suffering from depression and suicidal thoughts need to get professional treatment, in order to restore their mental health. There is nothing wrong in being weak and taking the steps towards improving mental health. One of the most effective treatment procedure for depression and suicidal thoughts is getting the psychotherapy. The psychotherapy provides the opportunity of discussing the troubling thoughts and feelings with the professional. The teenagers can also share the events and incidents which trigger their thoughts and feelings of sadness. The professional can provide them counseling that they do not need to get worried about anything and can also share the coping skills to manage their frustration, anger or feelings of sadness. Cognitive behavior therapy can also prove effective for the treatment of depression and suicidal thoughts by making the teenagers change their attitude and patterns of thinking in a negative manner and develop a positive thought process. In addition to it, interpersonal therapy is also utilized as the source of treating depression among teenagers. Interpersonal therapy provides the opportunity for learning the abilities to develop a healthy relationship with family and peers. It also provides the opportunity of being more focused towards positive and constructive, instead of focusing on negative and destructive thoughts. The professionals can also recommend medicines to troubled teenagers in order to help them treat their depressive moods and thought, which can eventually help them to restore their mental health and become progressive (Kroning, and Kroning, 80).

Teenage depression and suicide have become a fairly common issue in modern society. The issue was neglected in the past, as it was associated with teenage rebellion, however, the growing number of teenage suicide rate is causing serious concern to the society. The mood irritability, lack of interest in routine activities, low self-esteem, long spells of sadness, feelings of worthlessness and not being valued are some of the signs of depression among teenagers. These are also accompanied by physical health issues like eating disorders, drastic weight loss or gain, lack of sleep or increased sleep. Depression can lead the teenagers to suicide attempts; however, it can be controlled and treated with the help of family, support groups and professional. Medication, psychotherapy and cognitive behavior therapy, in addition to interpersonal therapy, can play an important role in treating depression among teens and helping them get rid of suicidal thoughts.

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