

# Mind Body Spirit

## Women, Depression and Mental Health History

L.A. County Department of  
Public Health  
Office of Women's Health

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# Women and Depression: the Basics

- Most common reason to seek mental health care
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Most common reason to seek health care
- 2/3 of the 30,000 suicides each year are linked to depression
- 2/3 of those with major depression are women
- One in four women will be depressed at some point in their lives (men 1/7)

**Why more impact on Women?**

**Complex Interaction of  
biological, cultural and  
psychological Factors**

# Biological Perspectives

- **Research suggests depression (sadness) results from both biogenic and psychosocial factors**
- **Reaction to stress physiological and cognitive**
- **Reproductive events (menstruation, childbirth, etc) are related to reproductive hormones and may impact mood**
- **Social cultural factors bias cognitive/affective experience of reproduction & sexual experience**

# Psychological and Cultural Perspectives

- **Research fairly recent**
- **Socialization patterns reinforce stereotypes**
  - **Men – independence and mastery**
  - **Women – attractive; sensitive; passive in relationships**
- **Depression = lack of activity/energy**
- **Cognitive behavioral therapy: change perception**
- **Aversive situations: change behavior; escape; improve situation**
- **Cultural expectations: lower power, esteem, respect, discrimination, abuse, harassment; care-taking, self blame**

## Question: What are the symptoms of depression?

- a. **Loss of interest or pleasure in activities you used to enjoy**
- b. **Feelings of guilt, hopelessness and worthlessness**
- c. **Suicidal thoughts or recurrent thoughts of death**
- d. **Sleep disturbance (sleeping more or sleeping less)**
- e. **Appetite and weight changes**
- f. **Difficulty concentrating**
- g. **Lack of energy and fatigue**
- h. **All the above**

**Answer:** What are the symptoms of depression?

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# CA Mental Health Brief History

- **State Hospital System**
  - 57,000 patients in 1960
- **1958 Short-Doyle Act**
  - State/county community services funds
- **1968 Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act**
  - Model for Nation
- **1980s**
  - programs shrink; state budget cuts
- ***Consumer & family groups make their voices heard***

# CA Mental Health Brief History

- **1990s – responsibility moves to counties**
  - Realignment
  - Medi-Cal Consolidation; Managed Care
  - Insurance Parity (partial)
  - *Increased advocacy from consumer and family groups*
- **2000s**
  - AB 34; AB 2034
    - Legislative funding to provide outreach and integrated services to people who are homeless and have a psychiatric disability
  - President's New Freedom Mental Health Commission
- **Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63) passes November 2004**

# Mental Health Services Act: Prop 63

- **Define serious mental illness as a condition deserving priority attention**
- **Reduce long-term adverse impact from untreated serious mental illness**
- **Expand successful, innovative service programs**
- **Provide funding to adequately meet the needs**
- **Ensure that funds are expended in a cost effective manner and that services are provided consistent with best practices**

# Mental Health Services Act: Prop 63

- **1% tax on taxable personal income over \$1 million to be deposited into a Mental Health Services Fund (MHSF) in State Treasury**
- **Oversight by 16-Member Accountability Commission**
- **Five program components:**
  - **Prevention and Early Intervention**
  - **Services to Children, Adults, Older Adults**
  - **Education and Training**
  - **Innovation**
  - **Capital Facilities and Technology**

# Mental Health Services Act: Prop 63

- **Successes:**
  - Increased services to children, transition age youth, adults, older adults
  - Local and statewide prevention and early intervention programs
  - Focused programs for under-served ethnic and cultural groups
- **Problems:**
  - Limited to “un-served” individuals
  - State micromanaging
  - Lack of statewide outcomes (county only)
- **Legislative Action:** Eliminated state plan approval; “un-served” regulations & others under review