The reality of the financial crisis concerns us all. The fact is that we are struggling with the most intense debt catastrophe in modern history. Many believe that economic pain and suffering is inescapable; and during the past three years, Americans have experienced a significant amount of financial stress, depression and anxiety.

Research reveals that job loss may be directly related to depression and affects one’s social status, self-esteem and self-concept, mental and physical activity, and the ability to exercise one’s ability and skill. Atypical Depression is a common diagnosis for those that experience depression due to a specific event.

What is Atypical Depression?

Americans that suffer from depression with atypical features may react to negative or positive extrinsic situations. The symptoms of depression may only exist during the event and will subside when the situation is corrected.

Loosing your job and financial stability may trigger Atypical Depressive symptoms that include:

**Symptoms (in addition to typical symptoms of depression, you may experience 2 out of 4)**

* Increased appetite with weight gain of 10 lbs or more when depressed
* Hypersomnia (excessive sleep) of 10 hours or more per day or 2 hours more sleep than the usual amount of sleep when not depressed
* Heavy, leaden feelings in arms and legs
* Longstanding pattern of interpersonal rejection sensitivity, not limited to episodes of depression, that results in significant social or occupational impairment

There are a number of life transitioning situations (divorce, job loss, death, relocation, etc.), which trigger a significant amount of stress; and researchers have concluded that financial instability and job loss is among the most common. Job loss is contributed to an exceptional amount of grief and bereavement.

**What is GRIEF?**

Everyone experiences grief at some point in life. Grief is a common reaction to trauma, loss, and bereavement. Grief is usually associated with the death of a loved one; however, grief may also include loss of a job, financial stability, health, marriage, friendship, or dreams. According to Kubler-Ross, there are five stages of grief.

**5 Stages of Grief:**

**1)** Denial (this cannot be happenin*g* to me!)

**2)** Anger (why is this happening to *me*?)

**3)** Bargaining (I promise I’ll be a better person *if*…)

**4)** Depression (I don’t care anymore)

**5)** Acceptance (I’ve accepted whatever comes)

**What are symptoms of Grief?**

Grief affects people in a variety of ways. If you are struggling with grief you may experience the following symptoms derived from Kubler-Ross’ stages of grief:

1)  Disbelief/Shock – Shortly following a loss, it will be exceptionally difficult to accept the loss. A ‘not guilty’ verdict seemingly shocked many American and was difficult to believe.

2)  Depression—Symptoms of depression are common when faced with tremendous loss and grief. Sadness, despair, loneliness, emptiness, and hopelessness may intensify.

3)   Remorse – It is common to experience feelings of remorse or guilt when you loose a loved one. It is not unusual to have feelings of frustration and anger during this phase of the grief cycle.

4)   Anxiety/Fear – Panic attacks may also become a focus when struggling with the grief process. Helplessness and anxiousness are common symptoms of grief.

5)    Physical Symptoms – Grief an emotional and physical process. Somatic symptoms may emerge when faced with the grieving process: muscle tension, insomnia, weight loss, weight gain, fatigue, or nausea.

**What to do?**

1. Seek help: Grief counseling, EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), EFT (Emotion Freedom Technique), CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) and/or Support group.
2. Develop a self-care program
3. Surround yourself with a strong support system

**When to seek help?**

1. If you feel suicidal or if you feel that you will harm yourself
2. If you are unable to maintain normal, daily functioning
3. If you blame yourself excessively
4. If you feel disconnected or dissociated
5. If you feel unusually numb
6. If you cannot trust anyone

If you or someone you know are struggling with depression or anxiety as a result of grief, contact a therapist or counselor for help.

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There are a great number of life altering circumstances that are very stressful, but losing one’s job ranks high. It is not uncommon for joblessness to affect your state of well being. Typically, those that lose their jobs experience a cycle, which includes denial, anger, frustration, and lastly accommodation or adaptation.

Many people become identified by the work they do, so when that work disappears, it is natural for them to feel that a part of themselves is missing. There are a lot of questions that need to be addressed: how long can you sustain myself with no work? Do you need to move into a different career? At the point of loss, it is time to plan for the future.

A period of mourning is very typical after one loses his or her job and when not addressed appropriately, life events can cascade out-of-control: bills begin to accumulate, or payments are late, or neglected altogether. Relationships can become strained. Searching for a new job can be more difficult because of varying circumstances: not having appropriate transportation anymore, or not having appropriate clothes for job interviews, etc., so it is quite possible to see the way events can spiral downward. Insecurity, low self-esteem, and uncertainty are typical in people dealing with joblessness. Even after a person has gotten a new job, it sometimes takes a while until that individual feels stable again.

Symptoms of depression that can occur as a result of joblessness are sadness, fatigue, losing interest in previously pleasurable experiences, isolation, weight loss, sleep disturbances, increase in alcohol and mood altering drugs, and lastly suicidal thoughts. Usually, these symptoms are apparent, but if you are suffering from these symptoms then you need help from a professional.

If you suffer from joblessness then you need to know that your situation is not permanent—even though in the moment it may appear so. Here is a quick, helpful list to cope with job loss: firstly, it is vital you remain realistic, proactive. Perhaps that means seeking new training. Secondly, managing your money is essential, in this dry period; this may mean learning new methods of saving money. Create a weekly and daily routine, one you can adhere. This schedule may be made up of job searching, leisure, and exercise. It is vital to seek emotional support; i.e. reach out to family, friends, therapists, and support groups.

Even though today’s job-market is dreary, setting goals is still essential. People are acquiring jobs, but it is highly competitive due to the recession. Remember that the curtain will eventually lift. In fact, the recession is slowly improving, so with the proper guidance, help, and support you can find strength in these trying times.

Job loss and the resulting financial strain can lead to depression and strain on relationships, lost personal control, lowered self-esteem.

While it may not be surprising that job loss and the resulting financial strain can lead to [depression](http://www.healthyplace.com/depression/main/atypical-depression/menu-id-68/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), new study findings show that this and other negative consequences of unemployment can last for up to 2 years, even after a person gets another job.

It is not simply the loss of employment that keeps individuals in a prolonged state of depression or otherwise poor health, the report indicates, but rather the "cascade of negative events" that follows that loss.

"It is the crises that follow job loss that are more damaging than the loss itself," says study author Dr. Richard H. Price of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Price and his colleagues investigated the link between job loss and depression, impaired functioning and poor health in a study of 756 job-seekers who were involuntarily unemployed for roughly 3 months or less and had no hopes of being recalled to their former position. The study participants were 36 years old, on average, and most had completed high school.

Overall, the financial strain that resulted from the participants' unemployment led to what Price called a "cascade of negative life events." No Iframes

For example, if someone loses their job, they may have difficulty making a car payment, which can cause them to lose their car, thus hindering their ability to search for a job, the author explained. In addition, losing healthcare benefits due to unemployment will affect the person's ability to care for a family member with a life-long illness, all of which can create a "huge strain on relationships," Price said.

Such negative events seem to have caused the study participants to have higher symptoms of depression and a greater perception that they had lost personal control, including lowered self-esteem, study findings indicate.

Further, this depression and perceived loss of personal control remained evident in follow-ups conducted 6 months and 2 years later, when 60% and 71% of the study participants, respectively, had been re-employed and were working at least 20 hours a week, Price and his team report in the current issue of the Journal of Occupational Health Psychology.

What's more, the study participants' perceived loss of personal control led to reports of poor health and poor emotional functioning in daily tasks, both of which also remained evident in subsequent follow-ups, the researchers note.

"Some effects reflected in disability and depression linger for some people," Price said. Also, the "sense of job security is eroded," which Price says is "another hidden cost of job loss."

Finally, the participants' depression appeared to affect their later chances of reemployment, study findings indicate.

"These people become 'discouraged workers,' not searching for a job, and the personal, family and societal costs are very high," Price said.

"Thus, chains of adversity are clearly complex and may contain spirals of disadvantage that reduce the life chances of vulnerable individuals still further," the researchers write.

Yet, much of these negative effects "can be prevented in many cases by helping people learn the skills of getting back into the labor market," Price said.

And to those who are currently exercising those skills, Price offers the following advice: "Help inoculate yourself against inevitable setbacks and turndown by planning your strategy beforehand for what you will do if this try doesn't work out. Always try to have a 'Plan B."'