

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**May 3 - 9 is National Anxiety and Depression Awareness Week**

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***Association for Compassionate Transformation Launches Community Anxiety & Depression Awareness Campaign***

**SAN DIEGO/CALIFORNIA** –During May 2009, communities across the nation will observe National Anxiety and Depression Awareness Week. The week of May 3 – 9<sup>th</sup> is a period to focus our awareness on anxiety and depression that together affects approximately 60 million Americans. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 18.1% of Americans are affected by anxiety disorders and 9.5% of Americans are affected by depressive disorders.<sup>1</sup> This campaign is part of a national effort to spread the word that there is assistance available for individuals dealing with anxiety and depression and their families.

Anxiety is a normal reaction to stress. Brief anxiety caused by a stressful event (such as speaking in public or a first date) can be relatively mild and easily managed. In contrast, anxiety disorders last at least 6 months and can get worse if they are not treated. As anxiety becomes excessive it can interfere with various domains of functioning that may include work, school or relationships. Sadly, anxiety can become disabling. The consequences of anxiety can impede one from working or pursuing educational goals and place a tremendous amount of strain on interpersonal relationships.

Often, individuals experiencing anxiety may also suffer from depression. Depression is a serious medical condition in which individuals experience sadness, hopelessness and a loss of pleasure. Depression can be as immobilizing as anxiety. Individuals struggling with depression may have difficulty coping with the demands of school, work or in their interpersonal relationships. Some individuals may become so hopeless that they no longer desire to live.<sup>2</sup>

Treatments that are effective in treating anxiety and depression exist. Such intervention approaches have been validated by the research as effective in alleviating signs and symptoms consistent with anxiety and depression. Human suffering due to anxiety and depression can be alleviated with professional help.<sup>3</sup>

This public and private sector endeavor is collaborating to achieve an environment in which persons experiencing anxiety and depression are able to access appropriate services and resources to enable a return to a healthy life style. In addition, the awareness supports the recognition of anxiety and depression as a public health issue; disorders for which individuals are entitled to effective treatment.

A.C.T. is committed to raising awareness of all individuals affected by anxiety and depression and the need for early identification and treatment. A.C.T. will provide **free screenings** for anxiety and depression for children and adults to promote public education about anxiety and depression during the annual observance for the entire month of May. For more information, please contact Dr. Drecun at [Dr.Drecun@a4ct.com](mailto:Dr.Drecun@a4ct.com) or (858) 792-3541.

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<sup>1</sup> National Institute of Mental Health  
<sup>2</sup> [Freedomfromfear.org](http://Freedomfromfear.org)