

## Dear Auntie Stella

I am 15 years old and have a problem which is making me very miserable. I sometimes get so depressed and yet there is no reason for me to feel this way. All my friends are always having a good time and I force myself to join in and pretend that I am enjoying myself. This is difficult, but I know that if I do not pretend, I will lose my friends. What is wrong with me? Please help me.

**Sipiwe**



## TALKING POINTS

- Do a lot of teenagers feel like Sipiwe? If so, why? Draw a ladder. Put the most common reason for young people to feel unhappy in the top step of the ladder. Then put other reasons in order going down the ladder. Don't forget 'sad for no reason' like Sipiwe.
- Doctors say that teenagers can feel depressed (sad and hopeless) for no reason because of chemical changes in your body when you're growing up. Girls, especially, can feel sad or irritable before their periods. Compare your experiences and see if this is true for you. Does it help if you know these feelings are normal?
- 'A problem shared is a problem halved'. This proverb means you should always talk about your problems. Do you agree with this advice – for Sipiwe and in general?
- What can Sipiwe do to cope with her feelings? What helps you most when you're down?