

How to care for a person suffering from depression?

The word depression here means sadness and low spirits: Melancholy is a mood disorder characterized by feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loneliness. Symptoms include inactivity, guilt, loss of concentration, social withdrawal, sleep disturbances, and sometimes suicidal thoughts.

It is important that you offer your loved one your support and encouragement during this difficult time. Here's how you can make a difference.

Understanding depression

From young to old and from every walk of life, millions of people suffer from depression, a serious but treatable disorder. Symptoms interfere with daily life, causing tremendous pain, and affecting not just those who suffer from them, but also those around them. Mental illness, such as depression, is serious. Depression is not to be underestimated. Depression saps a person's energy, optimism, and motivation. Your depressed loved one can't just "snap out of it" with sheer force of will.

Depression's symptoms are not personal. The effects of depression make it difficult to interact with anyone on a deep emotional level, even those closest to the sufferer. People who are depressed often say hurtful things and lash out in anger. Remember that it's depression talking, not your loved one, so don't take it personally.

There's no point in hiding the problem. Making excuses, covering up the problem, or lying for a friend or family member won't help anyone who is depressed. This may prevent the depressed person from seeking treatment.

How to talk to someone about depression

The hardest part of talking to your loved one about depression is starting the conversation. It might be helpful to say:

- "I have been feeling concerned about you recently."
- "I have noticed some differences in you lately and wondered how you are doing."
- As of late, you have seemed a little down, so I wanted to check in on you."

Providing encouragement and hope is part of being supportive. It is often a matter of talking to the person in a language that they will understand in a depressed state of mind and can respond to.

The risk to suicidal is real

A depressed person may be unable to see any other option but to commit suicide, even when you think it would be impossible. A person who is depressed cloud their judgment and distorts their thinking, leading them to believe that death is the only option for ending the pain they're experiencing.

Since suicide is a very real danger when someone is depressed, it's important to know the warning signs:

- Suicide, harming oneself, or thinking of suicide; an obsession with death
- Expressions of hopelessness or hate for oneself
- Acting in a dangerous or self-destructive manner
- Getting affairs in order and saying goodbye
- Seeking out lethal objects, such as pills and weapons
- After depression, a sense of calm suddenly appears

