

TIPS FOR SUPPORTING A LOVED ONE WITH Depression

Family Therapy Center of Bethesda

www.familytherapyllc.com

info@familytherapyllc.com

#1

Understand that it is an illness.

Just like the flu, depression is not something that your loved one can just "snap out of." It can effect anyone, even people who seem to "have it all" or who seem to be happy. If your loved one shows or expresses symptoms of depression, approach with curiosity and ask what you can do to help.



#2

Active Listening is Key

A lot of times people with depression feel lonely and unheard. If they open up to you about how they are feeling, listening actively and asking questions is often the best way to support them! Try to refrain from offering advice or problem solving unless they specifically ask.

#3

Encourage Professional Help

Although it is really helpful to have good friends and family to rely on, trained professionals like therapists are an extremely helpful resource for depression. There is no reason to face this alone. Therapy and/or medication can take time and patience to work so it is also helpful to encourage them to stick with it.



#4

Any Mention of Suicide is Serious

If you have a loved one makes any mention of suicide, do not take it lightly. Make sure to tell a trusted adult or family member and encourage them to utilize crisis resources if needed. The number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

#5

Encourage Social Activity

When people are experiencing depression, sometimes they will isolate themselves or even feel like a burden. Reaching out to them, inviting them to do things, connecting them with others, or helping them get involved in the community can be really helpful! Support groups are great as well.

#6

Encourage Healthy Habits

Habits like eating nutritious foods, drinking lots of water, getting enough sleep, and exercising regularly can be great for mental health. Any way you can gently encourage these habits is very helpful! Some ideas could be inviting your friend on a walk or sending them a recipe you like!

#7

You are Not Responsible

As much as you can want to help your loved one, remember that you are not responsible for curing their depression. Make sure to maintain healthy boundaries by identifying what you can and are willing to do to help them. Also, remember to take care of yourself, as having a loved one with depression may be heavy on you!



**FAMILY THERAPY
CENTER OF BETHESDA**

Child, Teen, Family & Individual Therapy