

# How to Help and Support Someone with Depression

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*How do you help and support someone with depression? Find out how to help a depressed person.*

On occasion, it may require making an appointment and accompanying the depressed person to the doctor. It may also mean monitoring whether the depressed person is taking medication. The depressed person should be encouraged to obey the doctor's orders about the use of alcoholic products while on medication. (read [Antidepressants and Alcohol Don't Mix](#))

## Providing Emotional Support to Help with Depression

The second most important thing is to **offer emotional support**. This involves understanding, patience, affection, and encouragement. Engage the depressed person in conversation and listen carefully. Do not disparage feelings expressed, but point out realities and offer hope. [Do not ignore remarks about suicide](#). Report them to the depressed person's therapist. You might encourage the person to join a [depression support group](#) where they can share their thoughts in a non-judgmental environment.

You can also invite the depressed person for walks, outings, to the movies, and other activities. Be gently insistent if your invitation is refused. Encourage participation in some activities that once gave pleasure, such as hobbies, sports, religious or cultural activities, but do not push the depressed person to undertake too much too soon. The depressed person needs diversion and company, but too many demands can increase feelings of failure.

Do not accuse the depressed person of faking illness or of laziness, or expect him or her "to snap out of it." (read [Best Things To Say To Someone Who is Depressed](#)) Eventually, with treatment, most depressed people do get better. Keep that in mind, and keep reassuring the depressed person that, with time and help, he or she will feel better.

## Depressed People May Need Help to Get Help

The very nature of depression can interfere with a person's ability to get help. Depression saps energy and self-esteem and makes a person feel tired, worthless, helpless, and hopeless. Therefore,

- Seriously depressed people need encouragement from family and friends to seek depression treatment to ease their pain.
- Some people need even more help, becoming so depressed, they must be taken for treatment.
- Don't ignore suicidal thoughts, words or acts. Seek professional help immediately.

## Where to Get Help for Depression

A complete psychological diagnostic evaluation will help decide what type of depression treatment might be best for the person. If you need to locate a psychologist or psychiatrist, you can contact the Psychological Association or Medical Society (for psychiatrists) in your county or state to receive a referral. You can also get a referral from your family doctor, county mental health association or local psychiatric hospitals.

*Source: National Institute of Mental Health*

