

May 2017 Health Observances

Baptist General Convention of Virginia, Health & Wellness Ministry
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Mental Health Month*

<https://www.nami.org/faithnet>

Arthritis Awareness Month

www.arthritis.org

Better Hearing and Speech Month

www.entnet.org

Better Sleep Month

www.bettersleep.org

Healthy Vision Month

www.geteyesmart.org

Hepatitis Awareness Month

www.hepatitisfoundation.org

High Blood Pressure Education Month

www.nhlbi.nih.gov

Liver Awareness Month

www.liverfoundation.org

Lupus Awareness Month*

www.lupus.org/awareness

Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month

www.spotskincancer.org

Older Americans Month

<https://oam.acl.gov/resources.html>

Osteoporosis Month

www.nof.org

Stroke Awareness Month

www.strokeassociation.org

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month

www.advocatesforyouth.org

May 1-7

Anxiety and Depression Awareness Week

www.freedomfromfear.org

May 6-12

Nurses Week

www.nursingworld.org/nationalnursesweek

Tips for How to Help A Person With Mental Illness

Because 1 in 5 Americans lives with a mental health condition, you likely encounter people with a mental illness in your family or in your daily life. However, if you are unsure of how best to approach someone who may be struggling, these tips may help.

Suggestions on how you may approach someone living with a mental health condition:

- ▶ Talk to them in a space that is comfortable, where you won't likely be interrupted and where there are likely minimal distractions,
- ▶ Ease into the conversation, gradually. It may be that the person is not in a place to talk, and that is OK. Greeting them and extending a gentle kindness can go a long way. Sometimes less is more.
- ▶ Be sure to speak in a relaxed and calm manner.
- ▶ Communicate in a straightforward manner and stick to one topic at a time.
- ▶ Be respectful, compassionate and empathetic to their feelings by engaging in reflective listening, such as "I hear that you are having a bad day today. Yes, some days are certainly more challenging than others. I understand."
- ▶ Instead of directing the conversation at them with 'you' statements, use 'I' statements instead.
- ▶ Be a good listener, be responsive and make eye contact with a caring approach.
- ▶ Ask them appropriate questions and avoid prying.
- ▶ Give them the opportunity to talk and open up but don't press.
- ▶ Share some easy insights as a way of encouraging easy conversation, such as comments about the weather, the community or other.
- ▶ Reduce any defensiveness by sharing your feelings and looking for common ground.
- ▶ Speak at a level appropriate to their age and development level. Keep in mind that mental illness has nothing to do with a person's intelligence.
- ▶ Be aware of a person becoming upset or confused by your conversation with them.
- ▶ Show respect and understanding for how they describe and interpret their symptoms.
- ▶ Genuinely express your concern.
- ▶ Offer your support and connect them to help if you feel that they need it. Ask, "How can I help?" if appropriate, or even, "Can I pray with you now?" if appropriate.
- ▶ Give the person hope for recovery, offer encouragement and prayers.

Things to Avoid Saying:

- "Just pray about it."
- "You just need to change your attitude."
- "Stop harping on the negative, you should just start living."
- "Everyone feels that way sometimes."
- "You have the same illness as my (whoever)."
- "Yes, we all feel a little crazy now and then."

Things to Avoid Doing:

- Criticizing blaming or raising your voice at them.
- Talking too much, too rapidly, too loudly. Silence and pauses are ok.
- Showing any form of hostility towards them.
- Assuming things about them or their situation.
- Being sarcastic or making jokes about their condition.
- Patronizing them or saying anything condescending.

- See more at: <http://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/NAMI-FaithNet/Tips-For-How-to-Help-a-Person-with-Mental-Illness#sthash.WXC18Gvo.dpuf>

**PUT
ON
PURPLE**
FRIDAY, MAY 19

POP

Research shows most Americans know little or nothing about lupus and its devastating impact on millions of lives.

For a future with **NO LUPUS**, we must **KNOW LUPUS**. Put on purple and tell people why.

LUPUS.ORG

Help Us Solve
The Cruel Mystery
LUPUS
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