

How to Talk About Depression

A Conversation Guide for Supporters

Talking about depression isn't always easy.
Starting the conversation can make a real difference.



Look for Signs it May be Time to Talk

- A noticeable change in energy, appetite, or sleep
- Withdrawing from friends or activities
- Persistent sadness or irritability
- Loss of interest in things they usually enjoy
- Talking about feeling hopeless or worthless
- Saying things like “I’m tired of everything” or “I don’t want to do this anymore”



Try an Empathetic Conversation Starter

- *“I’ve noticed you haven’t seemed like yourself lately. Want to talk about it?”*
- *“You don’t have to go through this alone – I’m here for you.”*
- *“No pressure, but if there’s ever anything on your mind, I’m open to listening.”*
- *“Would it help to talk, or even just sit together quietly for a while?”*

Offer validation and
genuine curiosity.
Depression isn't a mindset.
It's a **MEDICAL CONDITION.**



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Avoid Suggesting a “Quick Fix”

- ✗ *“Just think positive.”*
- ✗ *“Everyone feels that way sometimes.”*
- ✗ *“You have so much to be grateful for.”*
- ✗ *“Snap out of it.”*
- ✗ *“It could be worse.”*



Have Ideas for What to Do Next

- **Ask** directly if they're thinking about suicide
- **Be there** by listening with empathy and without judgement
- **Keep them safe** by removing access to lethal means
- **Help them connect** to a support system, like a help line, peer support group &/or a professional
- **Follow up** by checking in on a regular basis



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