



BEST PRACTICES FOR SUPPORTING OTHERS

PRESENTED BY YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE
AND WORKLIFE PROGRAMS

February 12, 2025

OBJECTIVES

- Review basic techniques for providing support
- Acknowledge the power of listening, normalizing, and increasing hope through support
- Discuss the dos and don'ts of supporting others

INTRODUCTION



SECTION 1

THE BASICS OF PROVIDING SUPPORT

The power of listening,
normalizing, and increasing hope

THE POWER OF LISTENING

Research shows:

- Most people lack a support system of individuals who will truly hear their concerns
- The average person cannot identify someone they can count on to listen to them for more than a few minutes
- Over 70% of people seeking assistance for their personal concerns reported that having someone to talk to was helpful



THE POWER OF NORMALIZING

People struggling with mental issues may feel:

- Isolated and that they are the only one dealing with the issue
- Embarrassed or ashamed that they need help
- Like something is wrong with them because they are struggling
- Relieved upon learning that their concerns are common and shared by many others
- Validated when they hear about similar situations that have caused stress or confusion for others



THE POWER OF INCREASING HOPE

When experiencing hopelessness, a person tends to feel paralyzed. When a person feels hopeful:

- They start to move forward in a positive direction
- Their mood improves and they begin to feel less discouraged and anxious
- Their outlook and behavior can change significantly



SECTION 2

DOS AND DON'TS OF SUPPORTING OTHERS

SCENARIO



THINGS TO AVOID



Becoming outwardly upset or anxious

Attempting to solve the person's problems or concerns

Telling the person what to do

Taking on the role and responsibility of a therapist or doctor in giving direction or advice

DO HONOR RESILIENCY

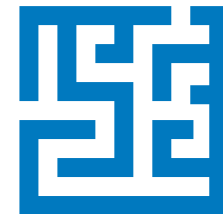
Resiliency consists of all the factors that can help us overcome stress and resolve life challenges, including:



Our support system



Ability to think positively



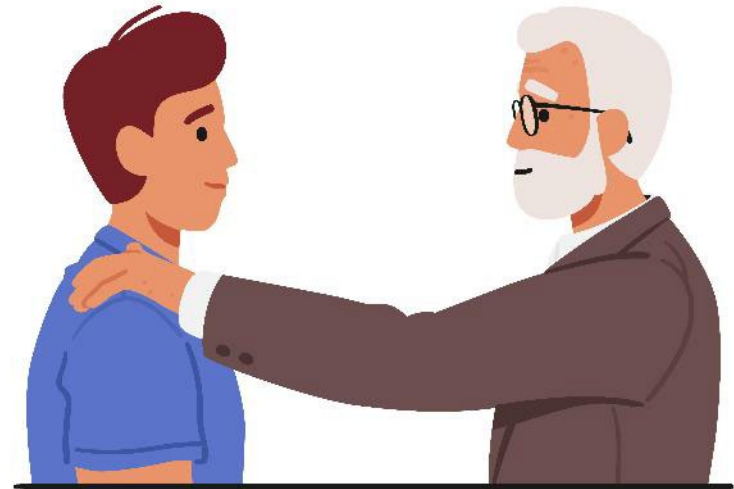
Problem-solving skills

DO POSITIVE, SOLUTION-FOCUSED PROBLEM-SOLVING

Ask the person:

- What has helped you resolve problems in the past?
- Who in your support system is helpful with these types of concerns?
- What progress you have already made?
- What ideas do you have for solving your concerns?

Listen and provide reassurance to help people start to feel more hopeful



DO SHARE YOUR STORY IF IT'S APPROPRIATE

What to keep in mind

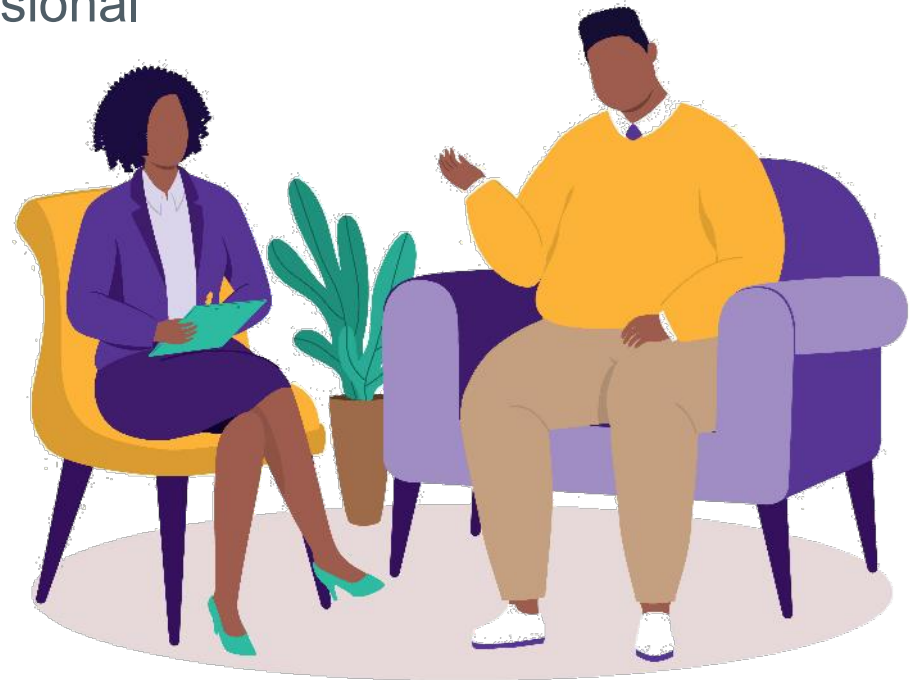
- Are you comfortable if what you share is repeated at the office or in your social circles?
- Keep in mind that everyone is unique and lives in their own world
- How will you feel if the person can't relate to your story, rejects it, or even verbally lashes out?
- Always offer options/choices



DO ENCOURAGE PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

When your loved one's needs are beyond what you can provide, suggest they reach out to experts.

- A qualified mental health professional
- A community resource, doctor, or support group



RESOURCES

Books

- **The Empathy Effect: Seven Neuroscience-Based Keys for Transforming the Way We Live, Love, Work, and Connect**
 - Helen Riess, 2018

Websites

- Mental Health America
mhanational.org/supporting-others
- Oaks Integrated Care
oaksintcare.org/7-ways-to-support-others-who-are-struggling

Online Articles

- Psychology Today
[The Power and Impact of Good Listening](#)
- Verywell Mind
[The Different Types of Social Support](#)

Podcasts

- [The Mental Illness Happy Hour](#)
- [Therapy Chat](#)

Apps

- [Headspace](#)
- [Calm](#)

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