

Support Loved Ones With Mental Health Concerns



Objectives

- Recognize common signs of mental health challenges
- Learn tips to provide meaningful support to loved ones
- Discover valuable resources

Signs of mental health challenges

Common changes or challenges first noticed by loved ones:

- Developmental challenges
- Depressive changes
- Anxiety changes
- Social changes
- Self-care changes
- Unexpected behavioral changes

Talking to a loved one about their changes and potential need for support

Be kind, open-minded and compassionate

Be honest with concerns you have

Be open to listening and understanding

Understand they may react defensively

Share your hopes for them to be well, feel better, and struggle less

Paraphrase what you hear, so they feel heard

Continue to check-in

Providing meaningful support without overstepping personal boundaries

Suggest or offer to assist your loved one in making initial contact for services and help them get transportation to and from or financially afford the needed help (these are the most common barriers).

Be comfortable not knowing if they will get or continue utilizing the help.

Don't set ultimatums or demands, "If this, then that... or you must x before y," but define your limits and clear expectations.

Don't focus solely on the other person and forget to care for yourself!
your oxygen mask on, before you help your child."

"Put

Helping a team member dealing with a mentally ill loved one

Talk about the stress the person may feel coming to work and not being with the loved one.

Ask what resources they may need as a caregiver and remind them of the signs of caregiver burnout.

Help the person make a plan to manage the added responsibilities they may be facing, help them problem solve with an objective eye, and assist in helping them find and access resources.

Discuss how they can manage their work in a way that can support the needs of the loved one.

Define the changes you can make to accommodate their needs and communicate the limits clearly.

Discover ways to connect loved ones with helpful resources for managing their mental health

- Show empathy, care and concern, but be careful not to push with fear tactics.
- Provide options and allow individuals to explore and make their own choices, unless they are minors or pose a danger to themselves or others.
- Be patient and celebrate any efforts, no matter how small. What seems insignificant to you may have a big impact on your loved one.

Ten coping skills anyone can use when facing challenges with a loved one's health

1. Acknowledge that things are changing and sometimes scary.
2. Realize that even good change can cause stress and make change a slow process.
3. Keep open and regular communication as much as possible.
4. Try to encourage an increase in healthy choices and behaviors.
5. Be honest and compassionate in all communication with the loved one.

Ten coping skills continued

6. Seek support for yourself as a caregiver—caregiver burnout is a real thing that can sneak up on you!
7. Write down the positives that you have seen come from this challenge. Gratitude is key!
8. Get proactive and participate in a mental health advocacy group like NAMI.
9. Vent your feelings to a trusted friend or support person (e.g., pastor, advocate, etc.), and seek solutions, not just complain or stay in the negatives.
10. Give yourself a break (“...accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”)

Finding help

Online locator services for various types of mental health professionals:

- [Find a Psychiatrist](#) (American Psychiatric Association)
- [SAMHSA Treatment Locator](#) (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services)
- [ADAA Finding a Therapist \(Anxiety and Depression Association of America\)](#)
- [Psychologist Locator](#) (American Psychological Association)
- [Finding a Therapist](#) (*Psychology Today* Listings for psychologists, psychiatrists, therapists, counselors, group therapy and treatment centers)
- [Social Worker Finder](#) (National Association of Social Workers)
- [Group Psychotherapy](#) (American Group Psychotherapy Association)
- [Certified Counselors](#) (National Board for Certified Counselors)
- **988 Crisis Line.** Call or text [988](#) or chat [988lifeline.org](#)
- Call 911 for an immediate emergency or crisis.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline- 1-800-273-8255
- Crisis Text Line: text "home" to 741741

Your Program

Call toll-free or visit us on the web

24 hours a day/7 days a week

Thank you!

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Sources

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- <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/helping-a-loved-one-cope-with-mental-illness>
- <https://www.nami.org/support-education/publications-reports/you-are-not-alone/>
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