Supporting Others During Depression Awareness Month

Supporting someone with depression means noticing warning signs and knowing who to contact.

Effective Support Strategies

- **Active listening:** Listen without judgment or rushing to solve the problem.
- **Validation:** Acknowledge their pain without minimizing it.
- **Practical help:** Offer specific assistance with daily tasks.
- **Encouraging treatment:** Support professional help while respecting their autonomy.
- **Consistent presence:** Stay connected, even when they withdraw.
- **Education:** Learn about depression and when additional support may be needed.

What Not to Do

Don’t minimize depression, take withdrawal personally, give unsolicited treatment advice, or pressure someone to socialize; offer steady, caring support instead.

Recognizing Crisis Situations

These warning signs may indicate suicidal thinking. Seek help promptly, especially when behavior is new or worsening.

- Talking about death, guilt or shame, or being a burden to others
- Feeling hopeless or trapped, experiencing extreme distress, or feeling unbearable pain
- Making a suicide plan or researching methods
- Withdrawing, saying goodbye, giving away possessions, or making a will
- Taking dangerous risks
- Having extreme mood changes
- Eating or sleeping changes
- Using drugs or alcohol more often

If someone shows these warning signs, act now.

- Stay with the person and don’t leave them alone.
- Ask directly whether they are thinking about suicide.
- Reduce access to lethal means such as firearms or medications.

- Call or text 988, or text HOME to 741741.
- Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department if life is in danger.
- Contact their mental health provider.
- Follow up to see how they are doing.

Err on the side of caution and seek professional guidance promptly if you are concerned.

Resources and Where to Find Help

These organizations provide free screening, information, and support by phone, text, or online.

National Organizations and Hotlines

- **Mental Health America:** mhascreening.org
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) HelpLine:** 1-800-950-NAMI (6264), Monday–Friday 10 a.m.–10 p.m. ET excluding federal holidays.
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline:** 1-800-662-HELP (4357), 24/7, English and Spanish.
- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:** Call or text 988 or visit 988lifeline.org, 24/7; Spanish text and chat available.
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text HOME or HOLA to 741741, 24/7.
- **Your company's EAP provider:** Contact your company's EAP provider.