



Supporting a Friend with a Mental Health Issue

Many people know someone with a mental health issue, such as depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, or PTSD. Here are some ways to help a family member, friend, or colleague with maintaining their health and wellbeing:

- **Offer support.** Ask your friend what would be helpful. Let them know that they can turn to you when they are struggling.
- **Encourage treatment.** A person who has a mental illness often needs to adhere to a medication or therapy regime. If your friend finds this stressful, gently remind them that these resources will help them stay healthy and could improve their quality of life.
- **Be compassionate.** A person who is in a mental health crisis may say or do things that damage relationships. Remind the person that you care about them, while also addressing any hurtful behaviors. Offer forgiveness if you are able to do so.
- **Adapt to the new normal.** A friend who has been diagnosed with a mental health condition may need to make lifestyle changes. If a favorite activity is no longer an option, look for other common interests that you can share.
- **Stick to a routine.** Keep up with any standing appointments, such as Sunday dinner or movie or game night. Having a steady



routine may help your friend maintain a sense of normalcy.

- **Set boundaries.** While it is important to be empathetic, it's okay to set boundaries on how much you hear about your friend's condition or treatment. If they seem to be in crisis, urge them to speak with their therapist or care team or call 911.

Supporting someone who struggles with their mental health can take an emotional toll. LifeMatters is available 24/7/365 to provide counseling and other helpful resources. In addition, LifeMatters offers access to Togetherall, which provides online peer support for a variety of situations and circumstances. Call or visit mylifematters.com to receive caring, professional assistance.

1-800-634-6433

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mylifematters.com • Text* "Hello" to 61295 (U.S.)/204-817-1149 (Canada)
 Call collect to **262-574-2509** if outside of North America
 TTY/TRS 711 and language translation services are available

