

Mental Health 101: Helping Out A Friend

Description

Everyone suffers with their mental health at some point in their lives. For most people, this will hopefully be an acute bout of anxiety brought on by an upcoming job interview or a short term period of stress due to an important presentation coming up at work. Once the life events have passed, mental health returns to normal. However, for some individuals who suffer with mental health problems, their issues are more chronic, causing terrible anguish and suffering. If your friend is working through anxiety, depression, or PTSD, it can be difficult to know how to help. But don't assume you can't. You can. Take a look at how you can help out a friend who is struggling.

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Anxiety

Extreme worry, panic, or intrusive thoughts can emanate from anxiety. Medication from a doctor can help, but there will always be times in your friendâ€™s life that will spark an acute bout of extreme [anxiety](#). To help your pal, be there. Let them know that you will be their sounding board and venting post. Get them to talk and open up. A problem shared, really is a problem halved. Anxiety can cause many irrational thoughts, so donâ€™t laugh off or belittle their worries. Ensure that you signpost them to more concrete remedies for their anxious mind. Mindfulness and meditation can help your friend to focus on other things rather than their immediate worries. Go along to a mindfulness session with them, and show some support.

Depression

There is usually a root cause of depression, whether this is trauma, pain, or a long term issue from childhood. Try and aid [your friend](#) by helping them to address any problems they may be experiencing. If they suffer from chronic pain, depression can result. Help them to locate a decent [glucosamine](#) supplement to ease inflammation, encourage them to eat an antioxidant-rich diet to flush their system of toxins, and get them outside to get closer to nature.

[Depression can cause feelings of isolation, so you need to break this cycle](#). Walk with them to the park, have a picnic, or have a kickabout with a ball. By channeling their thoughts to something else, however mundane, you are taking their mind off their mental health for a short while.



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PTSD

Post-traumatic stress disorder can be difficult for an individual to manage. Flashbacks, panic attacks, and feelings of helplessness can cause erratic [behavior](#). Ensure that your friend is talking through their trauma with a professional counselor. Be present when they need you. Donâ€™t be afraid to ask how they are doing and always invite them to social gatherings even though they may decline. One day, they will come. PTSD sufferers need to know their support network is there for them should they need it. Be at the end of the phone and touch base regularly.

It can be challenging to know how to help a friend. However, follow this guide, and you can be part of the solution rather than the problem when it comes to mental health.

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