

Self help matters.

Helping you to find your solutions

**Worried About
Someone**

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It may be that you have a relative or friend who is experiencing difficulty or behaving in a way which is causing you anxiety. You may be worried about someone who shares accommodation with you.

When someone is in difficulty we may feel helpless, impatient or angry and have a strong urge or need to DO something. It may be helpful to reflect on a time when you have felt helped by someone else and what that was like. It is likely that what you have found to be helpful in the past will be echoed by others.

Top Tips

Listen. It can be difficult to listen closely to another person and to try to put yourself in their shoes. However, far from being ineffective active listening is one of the most powerful actions you can offer. Reflect back to the person what your understanding is – this lets them hear you have heard them.

Your stuff. It's usually not helpful to respond with all your similar situations you have experienced. This just takes the conversation away from them and over to you. It's not about you in this instance, it's about the other person.

Empathy. Keep your view, opinions and judgements out of this and just focus on understanding their perspective.

Expert. We often think that we can be an 'expert' and tell someone what they need to do. But it's about balancing sensible guidance against encouraging the other to be the expert of themselves – so they find their solutions.

Know your limitations. You may not have the time that seems to be required or the problems are too complex for you to respond to and that you are out of your depth. That's OK.

Signposting. If you feel out of your depth, consider who might be worth signposting to – a GP, Student Advice and Support Office, the Multi-Faith Centre, Personal Tutor, AUSA, Counselling Service etc. It might feel supportive to offer to phone or accompany them when they have an idea of what they would like to do.

Medical. If you feel that someone is seriously ill and unable to take responsibility for themselves, discuss options with someone in the medical profession or in the Student Advice and Support Office.

Clarity. Be as clear as possible about what you feel able to offer. If you offer to do more than you can cope with and then have to withdraw, your friend may feel let down. Give the person time to consider what feels helpful.

Self-care. Monitor your own stress so you are not adversely affected. Review your support systems and nurture yourself with friends and activities that sustain you. You may need support as well from someone you trust and to whom you can express your fears and feelings.

Responsibility 'to'. Try not to become too immersed in the other person's difficulties. If you are careful to see that your needs are met, you will find it much easier to be helpful and supportive. We can be responsible **to** other people, but we are not responsible **for** them.

Time. Allocate an appropriate amount of time for talking where you're not keeping an eye on the time or interrupted by distractions.

Honesty. Be open with what you can and cannot offer in terms of support.

Trust. People need to trust to feel free to be open. Trust often has to be earned. How can you earn this trust?

Risk. If your colleague talks about something that could put them or others at risk, consider the safety issues involved. Seeks advice where appropriate.

Simplicity. What means most to those in difficulty is that you are there for them, without judging them and that you trust them to find the answers they need. This is as important as the practical help or suggestions that you offer.

Resources

MOODZONE

Boost your mood, cope with stress, anxiety or depression or simply improve your overall emotional wellbeing.



Opening Hours: Online

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx

LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

Want to know how to feel happier, more confident & worry less right now? Would you like to learn new ways of dealing with what life throws at you?



Opening Hours: Online

www.livinglifetothefull.com

THE MIX

Provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile.



Opening Hours: Online

www.themix.org.uk

MINDFULNESS FOR STUDENTS

Helping you to stay calm, focused & better manage the pressures of student life.



Opening Hours: Online

<http://mindfulnessforstudents.co.uk/>

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN SERVICES & SUPPORT

A range of support resources for everyone at University



www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/support

BIG WHITE WALL

Online community of people who are anxious, feeling low or not coping who support and help by sharing what's troubling them. This is a free, online, moderated service and confidential.



Opening Hours: Online

www.bigwhitewall.com

If you are experiencing a crisis - please contact any of the following

- **Emergency Services** - telephone 999 (Free) 24 hours
- **Samaritans** - telephone 116 123 (Free) 24 hours
- **Breathing Space** - telephone 0800 83 8587 (Free) Mon-Thu 6pm-2am, Fri-Sun 6pm-6am
- **Nightline** - telephone 01224 272829 (local rate) term-time only, between 20.00-08.00
- **NHS 24** - telephone 111 (Free) 24 hours

For other support resources, please see - www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling