

#LALALA

LISTEN ASK LOVE ACT link ADVOCATE

When you know someone who's feeling depressed, there are specific things you can do to use your voice, your ears, and your heart to help.

listen

The first and easiest step to take when you're worried that someone you know might be suffering from depression is to simply listen. Validate their feelings by telling them you want to hear what's going on without judgement. Listening encourages people to open up, so they tell you about signs of depression, like hopelessness, insomnia, persistent sadness, or suicidal thoughts.

ASK

Encourage conversation by asking questions; this shows that you care enough to know more about their struggles. Specifically ask: "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" This is important because it's proven to decrease – not increase – suicidal thoughts. So asking about the possibility of suicide may save the person's life.

love

Listening and asking are acts of love. Listening with compassion and empathy and without dismissing or judging further reflects love. That feeling of being loved may help someone find the confidence to reach out for help from you, or experts.

ACT

Keep a person in crisis safe. Ask if they know how they'd hurt themselves, and then work to put time and distance between the person and their chosen method, especially dangerous items like firearms and medications. Stay with the person until the crisis passes or they're connected to professional resources that can help.

link

If you think someone might be in immediate danger, don't hesitate to call 911. Link them to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK. Know that mental health treatment definitely works – research shows it decreases depression and reduces suicide. And link them to other people who can provide support – research has also shown a connection with others acts as a buffer against hopelessness and psychological pain. And remember to follow up after the immediate crisis passes, and repeat: Listen, Ask, Love, Act.

ADVOCATE

Get informed and involved. Start conversations to reduce the stigma. Everyone can help raise awareness about the suicide epidemic (each day nearly 130 people in our country die by suicide) and about suicide prevention. Advocate for better access to mental health care. Advocate for more resources and treatments. Advocate for more funding for research to better understand and treat depression and suicide.



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