



Feel-Good Friday

When you want to help someone who is feeling sad, try the following steps:

1. Rather than dismissing the feelings with a statement like, "Don't be sad. Don't cry," you can **acknowledge the feeling** by saying, "You sound sad," or "You seem sad."
2. Saying, "I'm here for you," and "I care about you," and "You are important to me," can **help the other person feel connected** rather than isolated when navigating an uncomfortable emotion.
3. Try to make eye contact and say, "I'm ready to listen, when you're ready to talk." **Someone who is feeling sad may be comforted by your simply sitting quietly with them.** Going outside for a walk together can help alleviate sadness through your presence, the physical activity, and the change of scenery.
4. If someone shares their reasons for sadness, you may find the situation relatable and be able to truly say, "I understand how you could feel sad about that." However, **you may find it difficult to understand the cause or depth of their sadness, in which case, you may say, "I don't understand, but I'm trying to."** To better understand the context of the person's feeling, you could ask, "What does this situation mean to you?" and then actively listen to their perspective.
5. You might ask, "**How can I help?**" Or, you could offer specific assistance, such as "Would you like my help in finding a solution?" or "Is there an errand I can run for you?"
6. If you are concerned that someone is not able to function well in their daily tasks because their sadness is so strong or prolonged, you can encourage the person to talk with their doctor or with a mental health counselor for an assessment for depression. If you know someone has been diagnosed with depression, you can remind them that they are a strong person to reach out for help and that you're glad they're participating in treatment because you want them to feel better.

FOR PARENTS: Sometimes sadness can feel so big that a young child has trouble talking about it. One way to help is to say that their stuffed animal, doll, or action figure seems to be sad, too. You could ask your child why the toy is sad and what you can do to help the toy feel less sad. Imaginative play may help your child work through their own sadness.

You Can Comfort Someone Who Is Feeling Sad

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