

## Helping Someone with Depression

### Practical ways to help

People with depression/anxiety often don't see the point of doing anything and may feel that no one can really help them. The type and amount of help you're able to provide may depend upon your relationship with the person experiencing depression/anxiety. Helping someone who isn't ready to recognise they need assistance may be very difficult. Below are some do's and don'ts for helping a person with depression/anxiety.

### Do's – You may help someone by:

- Spending time talking about their experiences
- Indicating that you've noticed a change in their behaviour
- Letting them know you're there to listen without being judgemental
- Suggesting they see a doctor or health professional
- Assisting them to make an appointment with a doctor or health professional
- Going with the person to the doctor or health professional
- Asking how their appointment went
- Assisting them to find information about depression/anxiety
- Talking openly about depression/anxiety
- Encouraging them to become involved in social activities
- Encouraging them to exercise and eat well
- Providing a change of scenery occasionally
- Maintaining contact
- Encouraging other close friends and family to adopt a similar, inclusive approach
- Encouraging them to practice stress management and relaxation techniques

### Don'ts – It is unhelpful to:

- Pressure them to 'snap out of it', 'get their act together', 'cheer up' or 'calm down'
- Stay away or avoid them
- Tell them they just need to stay busy or get out more
- Pressure them to party more or wipe out how they're feeling with drugs or alcohol
- Assume the problem will just go away.

If you are unsure how to support someone you are worried about, simply say that to them.

**“I am concerned about you and don't know how to help. Perhaps we can contact someone”**

The contact list may include: GP, partner, Employee Assist Program (EAP), Hospital or other identified professional or support person.

\* In an emergency Lifeline has telephone counselling available 24/7 on 13 11 14