

# Helping a Loved One with Depression

Often, family and friends seek a therapist's help to cope with a depressed loved one. Depression can come in different forms, usually situational (i.e., caused by one's reactions to a life event or situation) or biological (i.e., genetic), and sometimes both.

Symptoms of depression can include but are not limited to:

- Problems with sleep or appetite
- Decreased participation in usually enjoyable activities
- Feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Concentration difficulties
- Physical pains
- Thoughts of death or suicide

If you think a friend or family member may be suffering from depression, talk with him. Begin by pointing out how important he is and how much he means to you. Then describe your observations of his behavior leading to your concern about depression.

Try not to take how he reacts personally, as this might be the first time anyone has talked with him about this.

Let him know there is help out there, including counseling and medication. Avail yourself as a vehicle for getting help and offer to assist in making a phone call or to accompany him to an appointment to a therapist or physician.

If your friend or loved one expresses suicidal thoughts, take immediate action. Contact his family doctor, set up an emergency appointment with a mental health clinician, or if needed, visit the local hospital emergency room.

Do not take chances when it comes to the safety and well-being of someone you care about. Know that your concern can encourage him to take the first step out of the darkness.

You can make a difference.

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## GARY BREUER, MA, LPC



My private practice is located in North Scottsdale, within the offices of PsychArizona. I work with children (ages 6 and older), pre-teens, adolescents and adults. I work with individuals, couples and families with issues of anxiety, depression, trauma, grief and loss, career, academic and workplace issues, relationship issues, LGBT concerns, personal growth and spirituality.

I use various therapeutic approaches depending on the needs of the client. These approaches include developmental, humanistic, cognitive-behavioral, existential, family-systems, mindfulness-based, transpersonal, and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). EMDR is a model used for the treatment of trauma, and has also been found to be successful in the treatment of various other disorders as well.

I have experience providing professional counseling in clinical, business, and school settings.

Apart from my private practice, I am also a Reiki Master and have a great appreciation and respect for alternative as well as conventional treatment approaches.

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