

**Depression:**  
**What Not to Say to a Loved One**  
Topic: #802  
Category: Family



*My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.*  
*Psalm 119:28*

Our natural tendency, when someone is depressed, is to cheer them up. When that doesn't work, we get frustrated and challenge them. When someone has depression, these tactics won't work. Your loved one is dealing with a real medical condition that affects their brain chemistry. The best thing you can do is show support, love, and acknowledge you understand.

**What Not to Say:**

1. Snap out of it.
2. What do you have to be depressed about? (You can't argue someone out of depression).
3. Why don't you go for a nice walk. (They don't feel like doing anything!).
4. It's all in your head. (Depression is a real medical condition).
5. Why don't you have a drink, eat a piece of cake, take a vitamin...

**Instead say:**

1. I'll help in any way I can.
2. I'm sorry you feel so bad.
3. Let's go on a walk together.
4. I know the illness is causing you to feel this way.
5. Do you think this is something medication could help? Or, are you confident your medications are working correctly?

**Always OK to say:** It's great to see you enjoying things. I love you.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. How does your loved one's depression affect your mood/behavior?
2. How can you best help both yourself and your loved one?

Adapted from Borchard, Therese. *What Not to Say to a Depressed Loved One*, Beyond Blue, beliefnet.com 8/30/2010. 802a©2010 Fresh Hope

**Depression:**  
**What Not to Say to a Loved One**  
Topic: #802  
Category: Family



*My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.*  
*Psalm 119:28*

Our natural tendency, when someone is depressed, is to cheer them up. When that doesn't work, we get frustrated and challenge them. When someone has depression, these tactics won't work. Your loved one is dealing with a real medical condition that affects their brain chemistry. The best thing you can do is show support, love, and acknowledge you understand.

**What Not to Say:**

6. Snap out of it.
7. What do you have to be depressed about? (You can't argue someone out of depression).
8. Why don't you go for a nice walk. (They don't feel like doing anything!).
9. It's all in your head. (Depression is a real medical condition).
10. Why don't you have a drink, eat a piece of cake, take a vitamin...

**Instead say:**

6. I'll help in any way I can.
7. I'm sorry you feel so bad.
8. Let's go on a walk together.
9. I know the illness is causing you to feel this way.
10. Do you think this is something medication could help? Or, are you confident your medications are working correctly?

**Always OK to say:** It's great to see you enjoying things. I love you.

**Discussion Questions:**

3. How does your loved one's depression affect your mood/behavior?
4. How can you best help both yourself and your loved one?

Adapted from Borchard, Therese. *What Not to Say to a Depressed Loved One*, Beyond Blue, beliefnet.com 8/30/2010. 802a©2010 Fresh Hope

## What *not* to Say to a Depressed Loved One

### What Not to Say:

1. Snap out of it.
2. What do you have to be depressed about?
3. Why don't you go for a nice walk.
4. It's all in your head.
5. Why don't you have a drink, eat a piece of cake, take a vitamin...

### Instead say:

1. I'll help in any way I can.
2. I'm sorry you feel so bad.
3. Let's go on a walk together.
4. I know the illness is causing you to feel this way.
5. Do you think this is something medication could help?  
Or, are you confident your medications are working correctly?

**Always OK to say:** It's great to see you enjoying things. I love you.

### Discussion Questions:

- How does your loved one's depression affect your moods and behavior?  
How can you best help both yourself and your loved one?

## What *not* to Say to a Depressed Loved One

### What Not to Say:

1. Snap out of it.
2. What do you have to be depressed about?
3. Why don't you go for a nice walk.
4. It's all in your head.
5. Why don't you have a drink, eat a piece of cake, take a vitamin...

### Instead say:

1. I'll help in any way I can.
2. I'm sorry you feel so bad.
3. Let's go on a walk together.
4. I know the illness is causing you to feel this way.
5. Do you think this is something medication could help?  
Or, are you confident your medications are working correctly?

**Always OK to say:** It's great to see you enjoying things. I love you.

### Discussion Questions:

- How does your loved one's depression affect your moods and behavior?  
How can you best help both yourself and your loved one?