# Supporting someone with depression

For partners, family and friends.

Watching someone you care about struggle with depression is hard. You cannot fix it for them, but your support does help.

## What it is like for them

Everything takes enormous effort. Things they used to enjoy feel flat. Their mind tells them they are a burden. They may pull away or snap, not because they do not care, but because they have nothing left.

### What helps

- Listening without rushing to solutions
- Small, specific invitations ("Walk to the shop with me?")
- Doing things alongside them
- Noticing effort, however small
- Patience with slow progress
- Gently encouraging professional help

### What does not help

- "Cheer up" or "Snap out of it"
- "Other people have it worse"
- Taking over everything
- Taking withdrawal personally
- Nagging or criticising
- Waiting for them to ask for help

## Things you could say

> *"I am not going anywhere."*
>
> *"You do not have to talk. I will just sit with you."*
>
> *"What is one small thing that would make today a bit easier?"*

## If you are worried about their safety

Ask directly: "Have you been having thoughts of ending your life?" Asking does not put the idea in their head. It shows you can bear to hear the answer. If they say yes, stay with them and help them contact their GP, an out-of-hours service or one of the lines below.

### If you need help right now (Ireland)

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| **In an emergency** | Call **112** or **999**, or go to your nearest emergency department. |
| **Samaritans** | Freephone **116 123**, any time, day or night. Email jo@samaritans.ie |
| **Text About It** | Free text **HELLO** to **50808**, any time, for an anonymous text conversation. |
| **Pieta** | Freephone **1800 247 247**, any time, or text **HELP** to **51444**. For thoughts of suicide or self-harm. |
| **Your GP** | Contact your GP or the out-of-hours GP service in your area. |

### Look after yourself

Keep your own life going: sleep, friends, interests. You will be more help, for longer.

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