You’ve Got This

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**Alison asks: How can I help my friends and family that have depression or anxiety?**

Thank you, Alison, for this question. It is estimated that approximately 16.2 million adults have at least one depressive episode per year. The numbers for anxiety run as high as 40 million adults per year. Yet know these are not necessarily “real” numbers as a vast percentage of people do not seek help for either disorder.

Having said all this, it is quite “normal” for people to have episodes of anxiety, depression or a combination of the two in a life-time. There are situations that one would only expect this. Some of these situations are death of a loved one; divorce; loss of income stream; or other life changing events. Your childhood life-experiences also have a great impact on your ability to cope with major life changes.

Some strengths that help us overcome would be having a strong emotional, spiritual and social support system, a positive outlook and mindset, and good physical habits of diet, exercise and a preventive care. If we lack in these areas, the struggle becomes more profound.

The most obvious way to help is to have your loved one get professional help. You can start with a licensed counselor who can easily assess the level of impact, and determine what actions need to be taken to increase the person’s ability to overcome.

Yet, the main necessary ingredient is WILLINGNESS. If the person is not willing to overcome, change, or follow-up with treatment success will be greatly limited. Willingness isn’t something we can give to another person, they have to pull from deep with in to generate it, and have a great desire to feel better.

In a nutshell, it isn’t easy and may take patience, but keep trying with love and tenderness.

**Resources**: Insurance companies will help find a counselor. Google can be helpful too.

**Books:** *From Tears to Triumph* by Marianne Williamson; [Top bestselling books on anxiety and depression](https://www.livehappy.com/practice/reading/10-best-books-depression-and-anxiety)