

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS

### → In adults, young adults, and adolescents:

- Confused thinking
- Prolonged depression (sadness or irritability)
- Feelings of extreme highs and lows
- Excessive fears, worries and anxieties
- Social withdrawal

### → In younger children:

- Changes in school performance
- Poor grades despite strong efforts
- Changes in sleeping and/or eating habits
- Excessive worry or anxiety (i.e. refusing to go to bed or school)
- Hyperactivity
- Persistent nightmares
- Persistent disobedience or aggression
- Frequent temper tantrums

More information [HERE](#)

## SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER (SAD)

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that's related to changes in seasons — SAD begins and ends at about the same times every year.

If you're like most people with SAD, your symptoms start in the fall and continue into the winter months, sapping your energy and making you feel moody.

Don't brush off that yearly feeling as simply a case of the "winter blues" or a seasonal funk that you have to tough out on your own.

More information [HERE](#)

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## SIX WAYS YOU CAN HELP A LOVED ONE ON THEIR HEALING JOURNEY

At any given time, 1 in 5 individuals is living with a mental health condition. You may have noticed a loved one struggling, but if you're not a trained mental health professional, you may not have known how to help. However, you can help. You can be supportive and encouraging during their mental health journey. Here are a few tips on supporting the mental health of those you love:

### Educate yourself

There are hundreds of mental health concerns; your job is not to become an expert in all of them. When you do notice potentially troublesome symptoms, it's helpful to determine if those signs may indicate a mental illness.

### Remain calm

Try to be mindful and patient. Take time to consider your loved one's symptoms and your relationship before acting. Writing down how you feel and what you want to say may be useful to help you recognize your thoughts and feelings.

### Be respectful and patient

Before talking to someone about their mental health, reflect on your intention to promote healing and keep that in mind. Ask how you can help in their recovery process and be cautious not to come off as controlling. Let them know that if they ever wish to talk in the future, you're available.

### Listen

Give your loved one the gift of having someone who cares about their unique experience. It's a privilege to have someone share intimate details of their mental health. Be present and listen before moving forward.

### Provide support

One of the best ways to help is to simply ask how. People don't like being told what to do – asking how you can help empowers them to take charge of their recovery, while also letting them know you are a source of support.

### Establish boundaries

When trying to help, you are susceptible to neglecting yourself in the process; boundaries will help you maintain your self-care, while also empowering your loved one. Be sure you're not working harder than they are at their own healing process.

More information on ways to help a loved one [HERE](#)