

How to Respond to Someone You Suspect Has Mental Health Problems



Listen

Let the person *talk* – tell their story. Talking about one’s problems is a key to overcoming them! Current psychological science supports the therapeutic value of talking about one’s problems.



Empathize

Try to *understand* what’s going on from the person’s perspective. Put yourself in his or her shoes. See the problem through their eyes.



Accept

Accept what the person has to say. Be *calm*. Don’t judge. Acknowledge what they are experiencing. Stop saying “snap out of it” or “suck it up!”



Support

Adopt a *helping stance*. Let them know you are here to help and that they are not alone in this struggle. Make the call with them or take them to help.



Encourage

Instill *hope* in the person. Affirmations can go a long way! “You can handle this.” “Therapy can help this.” “You will prevail.”

These strategies form the acronym **LEASE**.

Use the **LEASE** approach to support a person into the mental health system. Help give someone a “New Lease on Life!”