

Do you have a coworker who is sad or upset?



Any number of stressful situations such as a personal setback, family argument or a work disappointment can cause someone you work with to seem upset, withdrawn or just not like themselves. If your coworker's sadness or feelings of hopelessness continue, it could be depression, a common condition that affects one in five people. Depression is treatable through a combination of lifestyle changes, medication and counseling.

Offering a listening ear and understanding can be the first step for someone to get the help they need.



Choose a private place to approach your coworker. You might just say, "I'm concerned. I noticed you don't quite seem like yourself. I'm here for you."



Avoid dismissing the person's distress. It's not always easy to find the right words. The key is to acknowledge them without judgment. Say something like, "It must be hard for you."



Call a Counselor for suggestions on how to help your colleague. This may be especially important if your coworker doesn't seem to be improving on their own.



Remind your coworker of available resources. Your employer offers access to Health Advocate Licensed Professional Counselors who will listen and help them sort through feelings. It's free and confidential and they can reach a counselor by phone, or text, or by scheduling in-person sessions. You could also suggest they talk to a close friend, family member or their doctor.



Take care of yourself, too. Focusing your energy on supporting others can be emotionally exhausting. Make sure you get the support you need from the Counselor or from friends and loved ones.

If your coworker says things like "Everyone would be better off without me," don't ignore it. Suicidal thoughts are common with depression. Urge the person to call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1.800.273.TALK (8255). If the person seems in imminent danger and wants to harm themselves or others, call 911 immediately.



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In a crisis, help is available 24/7.

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