

Keep going to Church, don't isolate. Share with someone you can trust.

Worst things to say to someone who is depressed

Some people trivialize depression (often unintentionally) by **dropping a platitude on a depressed person** as if that is the one thing they needed to hear. While **some of these thoughts have been helpful** to some people (for example, some find that praying is very helpful), the context in which they are often said mitigates any intended benefit to the hearer. Platitudes don't cure depression.

Here is the list from contributors to ask:

0. "What's your problem?"
1. "Will you stop that constant whining? What makes you think that anyone cares?"
2. "Have you gotten tired yet of all this me-me-me stuff?"
3. "You just need to give yourself a kick in the rear."
4. "But it's all in your mind."
5. "I thought you were stronger than that."
6. "No one ever said life was fair."
7. "As you get stronger you won't have to wallow in it as much."
8. "Pull yourself up by your bootstraps."
9. "Do you feel better now?" (Usually said following a five minute conversation in which the speaker has asked me "what's wrong?" and "would you like to talk about it?" with the best of intentions, but absolutely no understanding of depression as anything but an irrational sadness.)
10. "Why don't you just grow up?"
11. "Stop feeling sorry for yourself."
12. "There are a lot of people worse off than you."
13. "You have it so good, why aren't you happy?"
14. "It's a beautiful day!"
15. "You have so many things to be thankful for, why are you depressed?"
16. "What do you have to be depressed about?"
17. "Happiness is a choice."
18. "You think you've got problems..."
19. "Well at least it's not that bad."
20. "Maybe you should take vitamins for your stress."
21. "There is always somebody worse off than you are."
22. "Lighten up!"
23. "You should get off all those pills."
24. "You are what you think."
25. "Cheer up!"
26. "You're always feeling sorry for yourself."
27. "Why can't you just be normal?"
28. "Things aren't *that* bad, are they?"
29. "Have you been praying/reading the Bible?"
30. "You need to get out more."
31. "We have to get together some time." [Yeah, right!]
32. "Get a grip!"
33. "Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be."
34. "Take a hot bath. That's what I always do when I'm upset."
35. "Well, everyone gets depressed sometimes!"
36. "Get a job!"
37. "Smile and the world smiles with you, cry and you cry alone."

38. "You don't look depressed!"

39. "You're so selfish!"

40. "You never think of anyone but yourself."

Best Things to Say to Someone Who Is Depressed

It is most tempting, when you find out someone is depressed, to attempt to immediately fix the problem. However, until the depressed person has given you permission to be their therapist (as a friend or professional), the following responses are more likely to help the depressed.

The things that didn't make me feel worse are words which 1) acknowledge my depression for what it is (Not 'it's just a phase') 2) give me permission to feel depressed (Not 'but why should you be sad?')

1. "I love you!"

2. "I care"

3. "You're not alone in this"

4. "I'm not going to leave/abandon you"

5. "Do you want a hug?"

6. "I love you (if you mean it)."

7. "It will pass, we can ride it out together."

8. "When all this is over, I'll still be here (if you mean it) and so will you."

9. "Don't say anything, just hold my hand and listen while I cry."

10. "All I want to do know is give you a hug and a shoulder to cry on.."

11. "Hey, you're not crazy!"

12. "May the strength of the past reflect in your future."

13. "God does not play dice with the universe." --A. Einstein

14. "A miracle is simply a do-it-yourself project." --S. Leek

15. "We are not primarily on earth to see through one another, but to see one another through" - (from someone's sig.)

16. "If the human brain were simple enough to understand, we'd be too simple to understand it." --a codeveloper of Prozac, quoted from "Listening to Prozac"

17. "You have so many extraordinary gifts; how can you expect to live an ordinary life?" --from the movie "Little Women" (Marmee to Jo)

18. "I understand your pain and I empathize."

19. "I'm sorry you're in so much pain. I am not going to leave you. I am going to take care of myself so you don't need to worry that your pain might hurt me."

20. "I listen to you talk about it, and I can't imagine what it's like for you. I just can't imagine how hard it must be."

21. "I can't really fully understand what you are feeling, but I can offer my compassion."

22. "You are important to me."

23. "If you need a friend..... (and mean it)"

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