

# Helpful Mental Health Tips for Loved Ones

Thank you for entrusting your loved one to HopeWay. They are in expert hands, receiving compassionate, physician-led, evidence-based care. Our nurturing environment ensures they feel seen, heard, and supported - like family.

While we focus on their healing, here are some tips to support **you** on this journey:

- Mental illnesses are not anyone's fault. They are not caused by poor parenting or a weak character, nor are they something that someone can "snap out of." Mental illness affects people from all walks of life, regardless of gender, age, race, religion, education, socioeconomic status, etc.
- When a loved one has a mental illness, all family members are affected in some way. It's okay to feel a wide range of emotions about the illness (and about your loved one). Help yourself by remembering to practice self-care on a regular basis. If you have the opportunity to go to individual therapy, family therapy, and/or attend support groups, this will likely help you during the more difficult times.
- Clients in treatment may appear to be selfish. They may need to be in order to best work through and understand their mental illness, triggers and coping strategies.
- Clients may come home from treatment exhausted (or sound exhausted when you talk to them on the phone). That is because they are. They spend about six hours a day talking about their emotions, their relationships, expectations, the future, and more, as well as listening and supporting others in their groups. Often this highlights struggles, disappointments, frustrations and other painful emotions and experiences. That's why when they get home, they may not want to talk about these things right away.
- Clients need to heal on their own time. It's important for friends and family to understand that and align their expectations accordingly.
- Structure, schedules, and self-care are helpful for most people to sustain recovery as they return to their everyday lives.
- **It's always better to ask, than to ignore.**

## IT'S IMPORTANT TO NOTE:

- Treatment is often not a straight line of improvement. It may have dips and lulls that seem like your loved one is taking steps backwards. This is not unusual and should not alarm you or cause you to give up hope.
- Just because someone attends treatment, doesn't mean that they will never need mental health care in the future. There may be periods of time that their symptoms are not present, but that doesn't mean that they won't come back. This is because some illnesses are cyclical.

*If at any point you do find yourself or your loved one in crisis, please call 911 or 988 (Crisis Lifeline), or go to your nearest emergency room.*