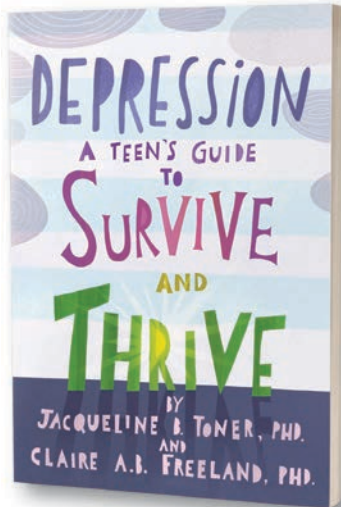




Three Tips to Support a Teen with Depression



If you think your teenage son or daughter is depressed, seek professional attention. To supplement their treatment, here are a few ways to be supportive. These tips are from Jacqueline B. Toner, PhD, and Claire A. B. Freeland, PhD, the authors of *Depression: A Teen's Guide to Thrive and Survive*.

Encourage your teen to get up and out. Maybe offer to do an activity together like taking a walk or going out for lunch. Your teen may not feel like it at first, but sometimes behavioral action precedes feeling better.

Stay positive. Use empathy and validation. You can't simply tell someone not to be depressed. Instead, acknowledge and validate your teen's feelings and struggle. Try, "I can tell you are feeling down. I'm here if you want to talk, or I can just stay nearby."

Support healthy habits. Focus on nutritious food, exercise, and plenty of (but not too much) sleep.

It is tough on a parent to have a depressed teen. Be patient and take care of yourself!

This Article's Author

Jacqueline B. Toner, PhD, is the co-author of several self-help books. She has been in private practice working with children, teens, and families for over thirty years. Dr. Toner earned her PhD from the University of Virginia and completed two post-doctoral programs (in pediatric psychology and adolescent medicine) at the University of Maryland Medical School. Dr. Toner also serves as lead facilitator and consultant on a project on medical ethics led by Johns Hopkins Hospital and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. She is the mother of three grown children and lives with her husband in Baltimore.

Claire A. B. Freeland, PhD, is a clinical psychologist in private practice, working for more than thirty-five years with youth and their families. Interested in bringing the general principles of cognitive-behavioral therapy to families everywhere, she is the co-author, with Dr. Jacqueline Toner, of *What to Do When It's Not Fair*, *What to Do When Mistakes Make You Quake*, and *What to Do When You Feel Too Shy*. She lives with her husband in Baltimore. They have two grown children.

Depression: A Teen's Guide to Survive and Thrive

This guide discusses depression and provides guidance and tools based on cognitive-behavioral therapy principles to help teens take a problem-solving, strategy-based approach to deal with depressed moods, thoughts, and behavior.