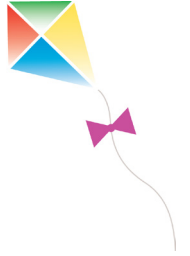


Helpful activities by family and friends



- Finding out about depression, for example, by reading the workbooks in this course or other information booklets, getting information from self-help groups or from healthcare practitioners.
- 'Being there' for the person for the long term.
- Being willing to talk and offer support when needed.
- Encouraging asking questions of experts such as health or social workers.
- Encouraging the person to put what they are learning in this course into practice.
- Keeping a positive but realistic outlook that change is possible but will take time.
- Realising there are no quick fixes.
- Using your sense of humour to help you and the person you support to cope.
- Planning time for yourself as well as for others.
- Using effective coping responses, such as relaxation techniques, to deal with your own feelings of tension.
- Looking after yourself.
- Seeing a healthcare practitioner for advice if you yourself are struggling to cope.
- Pacing recovery. Recovering from depression takes time. Even when mood improves, there is period of weeks to months where a person is more vulnerable to relapse. Think about the broken leg again. When the plaster comes off, you wouldn't expect them to run a marathon the next day! Muscles need to be built up again. In the same way, although the depression may lift, a person needs to build up their confidence and activities slowly again. Helping them pace their recovery is one of the best ways of reducing the risk of relapse.