

# Family & Friends Checklist

## The unhelpful things you do as a friend/family member are you:

Tick here if you have noticed  
this - even if just sometimes

Becoming overly protective of the person - wrapping them in cotton wool?

Taking over all responsibility from the person? For example, making all the important decisions, or trying to control every aspect of their life.

Taking over all activities they used to do, so they don't have to 'worry' about them?

Not allowing the person to be upset or distressed?

Getting upset at the person from time to time—through frustration or anger?

Becoming so focused on the distressed person that other people's needs aren't met? For example, your own needs or other family members such as children are overlooked.

Depending on or needing the person to be well and functioning (so that they aren't allowed to be unwell)?

Making snap decisions about important issues? For example, resigning from your job to look after the person.

Automatically advising the person not to try recommended treatment approaches because of your fears that it may do harm?

Undermining or criticising healthcare practitioners (because they haven't been able to successfully treat the problem)?

Helping the person avoid doing things because of fears about what harm might result? For example, taking over all of the shopping, or doing all the driving (This can undermine their confidence).

Constantly reassuring the person in an effort to reduce their worry?

Constantly asking about how they are (which can unhelpfully draw attention to illness)?

Introducing the person as "X, who has this problem" rather than just by their name? For example you have started seeing the symptoms not the person.

Speaking for/over the person in social settings, or in medical appointments, etc.? For example, you telling their story rather than them.

# Family & Friends Checklist

## The things you can do that help as a friend/family member are you:

Tick here if you have noticed  
this - even if just sometimes

Finding key information via this course, self-help groups, practitioners or reputable websites

'Being there' for the person for the long term

Keeping a positive but realistic outlook that change is possible but will take time

Being willing to talk and offer support when needed

Looking after your own mental health

Encouraging both of you to put what you learn into practice

Using your sense of humour to help you both cope

Planning gaps during each day or week - time for yourself

Realising there are no quick fixes for long term conditions

Asking questions of experts such as health or social workers

Helping the person you support get to appointments and navigate through appointments/the health system

Planning time for yourself as well as others

Using effective coping resources, such as relaxation techniques, to deal with your own feelings

Building in time for hobbies/pleasure. Recognise a sense of achievement in things - and plan activities that give you a sense of closeness to others

Seeing a healthcare practitioner for advice if you yourself are struggling to cope

Helping both you and the person you support pace things - taking one step at a time

What else do you both agree helps?

Write them here:

# Family & Friends Checklist

## The things you are avoiding as a friend/family member are you:

Tick here if you have noticed  
this - even if just sometimes

Completely avoiding asking about anything to do with illness?

Avoiding talking to anyone else about your their symptoms or about  
how they are coping?

Putting off all decisions until the person is better? For example, putting  
holidays or other life plans completely on hold?

Not really being honest with your friend or relative. For example, saying  
'yes' when you really mean 'no'?

Trying hard to avoid situations that cause upsetting thoughts/  
memories?

Brooding over things and no longer living your own life to the full?

Avoiding discussing how you yourself are feeling or coping?

Avoiding people or isolating yourself from others?

Avoiding expressing concerns about how children in the family are  
doing if there is a clear problem here? If there is, it's important to make  
sure the care that is needed is given.

Avoiding being assertive about your own needs?

Avoiding going out in public either by yourself or with the person you  
are supporting?

Keeping so busy that you don't have to think about the problem?

For partners/spouses - are you avoiding sex or physical intimacy?  
Perhaps you have fears of causing over-exertion or harm? Or perhaps  
you're not sure whether this would be imposing/inappropriate or not  
wanted right now?

Are you avoiding things in other ways?

If so, write down here what you are avoiding: