

Words That Can Help

The following comes courtesy of the February 2002 issue of the Mental Health Recovery Newsletter, which is published by Mary Ellen Copeland and Ed Anthes (copeland@mentalhealthrecovery.com):

Words That Can Help

If you are having a hard time, what can others say to you that would be helpful? Often when you are having a hard time, others don't know what to say. In their efforts to be helpful, they may say things that are really upsetting like, "snap out of it", "pull yourself up by the boot straps" or "just go take a hot bath". You may want to talk with them about this, telling them what helps and what hurts.

Participants at a recent training came up with the following list of things others could say that would be helpful. Which ones would be helpful to you?

Can you think of others?

You're doing well.

How can I help?

I'm here for you.

We can work together through this.

It's OK to feel like that.

I accept you and love you the way you are.

What do you need at this time?

You've come a long way.

You're a strong person.

I admire your courage in dealing with this pain.

I encourage you.

Don't give up.

I can't promise, but I'll do my best to help.

I don't understand. Please tell me what you mean.

Tell me how you feel.

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