

It's Been a Tough Year—Here Are 125 Ways to Show Moral Support for the People You Care About



It's been a tough year for almost all of us. And as we start to emerge from the [stress](#), [anxiety](#), and sadness of the past 13+ months, many of us are wondering: What's the best way to show moral support when someone we love is going through something challenging?

Emotional healing isn't a one-size-fits all approach, which is why it's important to be compassionate and understanding through their healing journey. In other words: What works for one person may not work for someone else.

Thankfully, you can show moral support in many different ways. To help you get started, we've compiled a list of 125 from the top therapists and [mental health](#) experts.

125 ways to show moral support

1. Take something off of their plate

Make a meal for them, offer to run an errand they've been putting off, complete a

household chore—anything that will lighten the load even just for the day, says [Dr. Alexandra Emery](#), licensed psychologist at Grit City Psychology PLLC.

2. Be there in person

Physically being there, even if silent, can let others know that you care—as long as you practice mask-wearing if both parties aren't yet vaccinated. But make sure that your presence is wanted and/or comforting, [Dr. Gabriela Sadurní Rodríguez](#), Licensed Clinical Psychologist at The Psychology Group Fort Lauderdale, explains. Attempt to notice their body language and facial expressions as it may be difficult for a person to express their needs when having a hard time.

3. Be present

It may sound simple, but many areas of effective communication are rooted in [mindfulness](#). Being fully present and giving your full attention to another person is a wonderful way to offer moral support, says [Michelle Fraley, MA, CPC](#), therapist and life coach.

4. Show active listening

If someone comes to you and wants to process what they've been struggling with, do your best to give them your full attention, Dr. Emery states.

5. Refrain from "reading the other person's mind"

Instead, gently reflect what you're noticing (like, "You seem really down, do you want to talk?") and be open to being corrected, Dr. Sadurní Rodríguez explains. Asking if they would like to talk about their feelings or their situations could be helpful, and it's also important to always respect their boundaries.

6. Let them know that failure is OK

Sometimes, people don't want to hear that it will be ok. They want to hear that you will be there for them if things are not OK, Fraley says. You can offer moral support by letting someone know that your support for them does not depend on their success.

7. Help find exceptions to their struggles

If you have a friend who is being really hard on themselves, validate their feelings first, but you can also kindly challenge their negative self-talk by pointing out a few of their strengths, Dr. Emery explains.

8. Ask for what they need in the moment

Be mindful that everyone processes their hardships in different ways, Dr. Sadurní Rodríguez states. Show up, be there, offer a shoulder to cry on, and don't take it personally if they don't want you to be there with them in that particular moment.

9. Share your favorite inspirational [quotes](#) or mantras

Affirmations, inspirational quotes and mantras are popular for a reason, Fraley says. If you have some that really resonate with you, sharing them may offer support and reassurance to others.

10. Encourage [self-care](#)

People often have a difficult time giving themselves permission to take a day off work or do something kind for themselves, remind them that it's okay, Dr. Emery explains.

11. Find common ground and share similar experiences

As humans we thrive on connection, says Dr. Sadurní Rodríguez. Sharing a similar experience with someone offers moral support by showing how deeply you understand what they are going through.

12. Use humor

Moral support in the form of humor is great for a few reasons: One, it can serve as a simple distraction from a stressful situation, Fraley explains. Two, it can shift the mood and make things feel a bit lighter. Obviously, there is a time and a place for humor, so be sure to use your judgment.

13. Make plans to do their favorite activity with them

This one is especially helpful for people who either don't know or don't know how to ask for what they need, Dr. Emery states.

14. Validate your loved one's experiences and emotions

Use statements such as, "It makes sense that you feel this way, X was very important to you," says Dr. Sadurní Rodríguez. Don't assume what the other person is feeling and how the situation is for them, instead recognize their efforts and emotions.

15. Offer compliments

Highlighting someone's strengths and letting people know what it is we really admire about them is a great way to offer moral support and boost [confidence](#). People often have a difficult time recognizing what's great about them so it's helpful for morale to share our thoughts on the matter, Fraley explains.

16. Check in

This one seems obvious, but many shy away from checking in because they don't want to pry, says Dr. Emery. Remember that your friend can decide for themselves how much or little they want to share, the important part is that you offered.

17. Engage in a thoughtful gesture that you think the person might appreciate

This can be as simple as getting them coffee, sending them a picture. Sometimes small gestures can mean a lot and brighten someone else's day, Dr. Sadurní Rodríguez states.

18. Resist the urge to offer unsolicited advice

Moral support is often best given by simply listening, Fraley explains. People may not be coming to us for advice, but rather just to be heard and supported.

19. Support the person's solutions

Rather than weigh-in on their solutions, support their efforts in trying to address their problems. Acknowledge how they're trying to make things better, even if you aren't completely in agreement with the solutions they're trying, says [Amy Morin](#), psychotherapist and bestselling author.

20. Try to keep the focus on them

It's often tempting to make conversations about us, but if someone is in need of moral support, it is important to resist making the issue about you and keep the focus on them, Fraley states. This really shows that you're invested in their well-being!

21. Get comfy yourself

Allow yourself to settle into a conversation with your friend to be present for what wants to come up and be supported, says [Dr. Allison Davis, PhD](#), a maternal health therapist.

22. Find a volunteer activity to participate in together

Although options may be limited due to COVID, there are plenty of ways to get in touch

with your community while offering your support for an even more significant impact, [Hillary Schoninger, LCSW](#), explains. Giving back always feels good while helping us gain greater perspective.

23. Give a high five

High-fiving someone is a way to express some positivity. Whether you're giving a quick high-five on the way out the door after a meeting or you give a high-five to someone who shares good news, it's a good alternative to a hug or other form of affection that might not be appropriate, says Morin.

24. Square your body and lean into your friend.

This lets them know you are with them and attentive to their experience, Dr. Davis explains.

25. Take an online course with a friend

There are so many courses online that either are teaching skills or are more lecture-based, says Schoninger. Find something you want to learn with a friend, and see if there is a corresponding Masterclass or YouTube series that fits your interests. Learning together with a friend is a beautiful way to bond.

26. Speak highly of the person in front of someone else

Sometimes it's uncomfortable for people to hear compliments, Morin states. But those same people might feel good if they hear you tell someone else how hard they're working.

27. Let their emotions move you

Allow their experience to be mirrored in your body, rather than just your mind, so you can be with them and their experience more fully, says Dr. Davis.

28. Plan a monthly dinner date

Again, this is tough with the pandemic—but maybe you plan cook together via zoom, or make plans to meet up for dinner outside, Schoninger explains. When a friend is going through something challenging, it's vital that they have things to look forward to regularly.

29. Send a kind letter

While a card can be helpful, a personal letter is even more meaningful, Morin says. Write a

letter that describes what you appreciate about the other person.

30. Listen to feel, not to respond

Listening to your body's experience of your own emotions can clue you in on your friend's experience without necessarily relying on what is verbally shared, Davis states.

31. Do a craft project together

Do something creative you can share with a friend, Schoninger says. Whether it's a paint-by-number canvas, building a terrarium, or making a [vision board](#) (and these can all be done "together" via Zoom!), these are all fun ways to bring some creativity to your life.

32. Send a text message

A quick message that says something supporting could show someone you're cheering them on, Morin explains. Whether you say, "You got this," or "I'm [thinking of you](#)," your message lets someone know you're on their mind.

33. Reflect the emotions back

When you respond verbally, try to reflect back the emotions and meaning you feel, rather than just what you hear, Davis states. This can help your friend feel "heard" and can help them understand themselves better.

34. Work out with your friend

With all the streaming app workouts available and FaceTime-synched [Peloton](#), incorporating an exercise routine will be morally supportive and therapeutic for everyone, Schoninger explains.

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35. Give your friend the gift of time by not rushing

Allow for silence to create space for what wants to come up, Davis says.

36. Have a mini-makeover

Whether it's a homemade face mask or painting each other's toenails, tap into some healthy self-care to pamper yourself while offering support, says Schoninger.

37. Drop off dinner or a gift card to their favorite restaurant for takeout

The trick here is not to ask, but rather do, [Dr. Natalie Bernstein](#), clinical psychologist, explains. Most people will say, “No, I’m fine!” because they don’t want to feel bad or like a burden.

38. Don’t be afraid to ask about the topic for fear you will trigger them

Crying and anger help the body release and anger keeps them from moving backwards in their journey to healing, says [Dian Grier, LCSW](#).

39. Find a good book to share with them

Pick something that interests you both, and make a timeline for when you will be reading together in real-time, Schoninger states. Plan to have conversations while you read the book to take away more from the book.

40. Go for a walk where you listen rather than a question.

In difficult moments, some people like to discuss the situation, while others prefer a distraction. Follow their lead. Your presence can be enough, Dr. Bernstein explains.

41. Do not change the topic until they are done discussing it

Remember you are there for them not yourself, Grier says.

42. For a friend who might have adopted sobriety, ask them what a fun sober activity might be

Maybe they would appreciate you asking about their program and seeing anything else you can do to offer emotional support, Schoninger explains.

43. Take on extra tasks for a colleague

If it’s a coworker, take on one of their projects or tasks so they don’t have to feel even more stressed about deadlines, Dr. Bernstein says.

44. Give them permission to grieve

If the person is dealing with grief or loss, remember it comes in waves on its own schedule, Grier states. Remind them of that and sit comfortably with their pain.

45. Find a show to watch with a friend, where there is a “watch party” application

This allows you to watch a movie or show with a friend in real-time, where you might be

laughing or holding your breath, depending on what you are watching, Schoninger explains. It is a great way to connect, and the new way we can go to the movies with friends for now.

46. Accompany them to a difficult appointment or event

If someone needs support for a medical issue, offer to go with them to a tough appointment, Dr. Bernstein says. It's a simple way to show moral support.

47. Remind them of all the wonderful aspects they bring to the world

This may help bolster their self-esteem, Grier states.

48. Support with nonverbal cues

Words aren't the only way to show you care. Pay attention to your facial expressions and body language too, [Dr. Noelle Nelson](#), clinical psychologist and author, explains. Keep your body open (arms not crossed) and facing the person who's talking.

49. When children are experiencing a challenging time, spend more time alone with them

Go get ice cream together, let them pick a movie, make yourself more available (particularly in the evenings when they are more likely to share before bed), and listen without jumping in to solve or tell them they are "being silly," says Dr. Bernstein.

50. Keep asking them if they want to do things, even if all they say is "no" in the beginning

Encourage walks together and do your best to help them re-engage in life, Grier says.

51. Be a patient listener

When a person needs moral support, they often need to "talk it out," Dr. Nelson explains. Sometime that means lots of talking. Be patient. Stay focused and try not to interrupt. Sometimes, helping others get through what's troubling them can be accomplished by just being a good listener.

52. Focus on future fun

Schedule a "reward" and make a countdown calendar to see progress once the difficult event has passed—something to look forward to can help lessen the intensity, says Dr.

Bernstein.

53. Provide reminders to be self-compassionate

Remind them to tell themselves that they should be extra kind to themselves during this time and to have an attitude of self-compassion, Grier says.

54. Keep it simple

It's okay if you don't know what to say, [Lesley Koepfel, LCSW](#), explains. Just be honest! You can keep it something short and sweet, like: "I don't know what to say but please know that I am here for you and thinking of you."

55. Make yourself available

Send frequent texts where you aren't asking anything, Dr. Bernstein states. Rather than, "How are you?" Send a text that says, "I'm in the car for a few minutes if you want to talk."

56. Ask them to tell you more about something they said

It can be as simple as, "Can you tell me more about (x,y,z) if you feel comfortable doing so"? Or even a, "how so"? This shows real interest in what the other person is saying and shows that you truly are listening and engaging with them, Koepfel says.

57. Don't ignore the fact that they are struggling

Even if you don't know what to say, try something like, "I'm sorry things are difficult right now," Dr. Bernstein explains.

58. Make and maintain eye contact

Koepfel says to ask yourself: Have you ever talked to someone and had them look everywhere else but you? Or their eyes dart around to see what else is going on? If so, that does not make you feel heard, does it?

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59. Avoid cliché statements

This includes "everything happens for a reason." "This too shall pass." "It's for the best," Dr. Bernstein explains.

60. Respect boundaries

If a friend or [family](#) member doesn't want to talk about it right now, honor that. However, don't let this stop you from checking in in the future, says [Sarah Hubbell, MAS-MFT, LAMFT](#).

61. Make allowances for someone's poor behavior

We show a kind of grace when we overlook a petty annoyance and cut someone who's suffering some slack, [Karen R. Koenig, LCSW, MED](#), explains.

62. Reframe after you have offered validation

[Haneen Ahmad](#), a BIPOC therapist recommends, "I hear that that task is overwhelming for you, is there a small part of the task that you feel confident in completing?"

63. Offer tangible ways you are available to help

"Let me know if I can help" can often feel like an empty platitude especially if there is no follow up, Hubbell says. Instead offering something specific and tangible like "I'd love to babysit for you one night this week to allow you time to process" makes it easy on them to determine if this would be helpful or not.

64. Be there for someone but don't intrude

There is no perfect way to provide moral support, Koenig explains. Some people want a great deal of attention and others want to keep their distance. Regulate your efforts according to what others need.

65. Use non-judgmental communication

Create a safe space for the other person to open up, Ahmad states.

66. Reassure them with brief supporting statements

Let them know that they are entitled to all they are feeling about any given circumstance, says [Jennifer R. Wolkin, PhD](#), clinical neuropsychologist and author of [Quick Calm](#).

Give brief supporting statements like "that's a lot to go through" and/or "I understand." (Support doesn't require you to fully understand a challenge or that you "fix" anything. Often, it involves nothing more than validation).

67. Make note of special dates

Oftentimes the support is strong in the immediate aftermath and then wanes over time.

Birthdays or an anniversary of a loss can be just as difficult and often arrive without the strong network of support checking in, Hubbell explains. Setting a calendar reminder can help you to show up for a friend throughout the year.

68. Don't overdo being upbeat

Your job isn't to make someone happy. Help others see what is difficult: sometimes it's the bright side and sometimes it isn't, Koenig says. Allow people to experience all their feelings.

69. Be vocal about your care for someone

Don't assume they already know or don't need to hear it again, Dr. Wolkin explains. Tell them, "I care about you" and "I love you" if it applies.

70. Set up a meal train

Bringing food is a tangible way to show support. [Meal Train](#) and similar services make it easy to organize meals for a loved one, Hubbell states.

71. Share, but don't over-share, similar experiences you've had

Let someone know they're not alone and that you've struggled similarly, but don't make it all about you, Koenig says. Respect that everyone's experience of similar circumstances is different.

72. When showing moral support, strive to take action rather than making an *offer to act*.

For example, if a friend is struggling with financial issues, you can send a text that says, "I know things are tough right now; I've just ordered your favorite pizza—it's on the way!" This type of gesture shows moral support in both words and action! [Dr. Carla Marie Manly](#), clinical psychologist, explains.

73. Hold hands and give hugs

This is another tough one in current times, but if you're fully vaccinated: Holding hands or hugging someone who isn't feeling well will cost nothing and yet, it soothes a person significantly, says [Amber O'Brien](#), therapist at Mango Clinic. These small gestures serve as the greatest and easiest tip to show moral support.

74. Understand someone's motivations

This includes why they do what they do, and what they are trying to achieve, [Dr. Raymond Raad, MD MPH](#), co-founder of RIVIA Mind, explains. Understanding why someone needs support, and what kind of support, is key.

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75. Laugh together!

Humor can be deeply healing and supportive. By making time to watch a rom com or funny sitcom with a friend who is feeling low, you can show moral support by sharing time while enjoying the mood-boosting properties of humor, says Dr. Manly.

76. Don't offer constructive criticism

Constructive criticism has a time and place, but it's not when you're trying to show moral support. Everyone looks for empathy in this world full of harsh experiences, O'Brien states. Put yourself in the other's shoes and try to comprehend their words and emotions. If you disagree with someone on a point, try to explain your viewpoint gently. Moreover, to correct someone, make sure to offer constructive criticism instead of a destructive one.

76. Listen to the person's perspective and "see them" for who they are

Listening is one of the most difficult skills to master and one of the most important, Dr. Raad explains.

78. Appreciate them for their efforts or hard work

A boss or manager can appreciate her or his employee for good work, and similarly, a friend or family member can give a compliment to his or her loved one in front of other people. A few words of appreciation and praise can greatly uplift someone's spirits. You never know when your words could make someone's day better, O'Brien says.

79. Give time and attention

It sounds simple, but these are the most valuable items we can give to someone else, Dr. Raad states.

80. Empower

"I remember when I was studying for my boards, I doubted my ability to pass and feared

failing,” says [Dr. Geri Lynn Utter, PsyD](#). “My internal dialogue, during this time, was anything but supportive. However, I had people in my corner reminding me that I could do it and that they believed in me which empowered me to believe in myself!”

81. Write down one affirmation to have with you

Encourage your loved one to post it on his/her mirror or carry it with them, [Shari Botwin, LCSW](#), and author, says.

82. Let them know that your support is not conditional on their success

This communicates that you are nonjudgmental and are someone who they can open up to about their worries and concerns, [Jessica Brohmer, LCSW](#), licensed family and marriage therapist, explains.

83. Be a positive distraction

Help get their mind off of the issue that’s eating away at them, says Utter. This doesn’t have to be anything extravagant; it might be as simple as going for a walk outside, grabbing a coffee at your favorite coffee spot or treating them to a self-care ritual they enjoy such as getting a pedicure or playing a pick-up game of basketball or soccer.

84. Offer to make a vision board with them

This allows them to shift into a more positive headspace and design the future they wish to live in, Botwin says.

85. Let them vent

Brohmer explains that while it can be tempting to try to “fix” whatever is going on, often what someone is looking for is the opportunity to vent. Let them have that.

86. Be genuine and open-minded

Both are powerful tools that largely contribute to the ability to offer moral support when someone is trying to share with you. “As a psychologist, I learned a skill that I think everyone would benefit from greatly—refraining from judging others,” Utter says.

87. Learn to be okay with negative emotions

Remind them what they are feeling is natural and normal and not to be ashamed, Brohmer explains.

88. Tell your loved one that no matter the outcome, "I believe in you."

Botwin says these four words can have a positive and profound effect on a person's mental state.

89. Think outside the box

See if the person you are supporting would be up for a fun outing, trying a new restaurant, or going on a hike to shake things up, [Sarah Epstein, LCSW](#), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, explains.

90. Use "I" statements

If offering suggestions, say saying, "I would do ___." *not* "You should do ___," says [William Chum, LMHC](#).

91. Focus on remembering small details

When somebody tells you something that's important to them, try to remember it, Epstein says. This will show you listen deeply and internalize things that matter to them. When the same subject comes up later, you'll be able to deepen the connection by remembering what they told you.

92. Help them reframe their perspective

When someone is facing an overwhelming situation, it's helpful to encourage them to take things one day at a time and to remember how far they've already come, says [Angela Amias](#), licensed couples therapist and cofounder of [Alchemy of Love](#)

93. Talk about happy moments and memories of good times

If you are trying to show moral support in your relationship, talk about fun and joyful moments that you have enjoyed in the past rather than complaining, [Katie Ziskind, LCSW](#), licensed marriage and family therapist and owner of Wisdom Within Counseling, explains. Talking about fun vacations you'd had, a delicious meal you cooked together, or laughing with your family.

94. Send flowers

If you can afford it, send a small bouquet of flowers with a hand written note if this person is in a stressful situation, says [Jennifer Browning, LCPC, NCC](#), owner of Family Counseling Services. This type of gesture is an instant mood lifter.

95. Try listening below the surface to the words being said

See if you can hear what the speaker is really trying to communicate, Amias suggests. Responding empathetically to the heart of what's being said shows the speaker that you're really listening and that you truly care.

96. Be honest

Sometimes, people need to hear the hard truth and anything less is enabling them. Just make sure you do it with kindness and compassion, says [Amanda Stemen, MS, LCSW](#), creator and owner of FUNdaMENTAL Growth.

97. Do your best to be proactive

Think about what may help your loved one, and do it. Don't say anything like, "Let me know what I can do," or, "Let me know if I can help," Browning states. These kinds of statements usually are not followed up on by the giver or the receiver.

98. Explain that they are valued

When someone is coping with a loss that's affected their sense of self-worth, remind the person that they matter and are valued, no matter how circumstances in their life turn out, Amias says.

99. Be enthusiastic about their goal

If they have a goal that they need support with it can be extremely validating to them if you show just as much enthusiasm (make sure you mean it though), [Dr. Morgan Levy](#), licensed psychologist, explains. People love sharing what they love and being validated for it. Care and enthusiasm can help so much.

100. Remind them of their inner strength and battles they've already won

If someone is feeling discouraged, help put the current situation in perspective by reminding them of past challenges they've faced successfully, Amias says.

101. Practice your own self-care

This sound's cheesy, but you can't be there for someone else if you aren't there for yourself, Dr. Levy explains. It's important for you to be recharged in order to be there for someone else truly and fully in their time of need.

102. Encourage them to stay present

When someone is facing an overwhelming situation, it's helpful to encourage them to take things one day at a time and to remember how far they've already come, Amias states.

103. Mirror back to them that you can see their strength courage and resiliency

Remind them that they have what it takes to get through this, says [Dr. Tari Mack](#), Clinical Psychologist and celebrity love and relationship expert.

104. Don't be the fake cheerleader

In other words, don't say "it's easy—you can do it". It's much more helpful for people to hear, "this is really hard" because that's what they are experiencing, therapist [Jacob Brown](#) explains.

105. Share tools that may be helpful

During dark times, it's often hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel. You can show moral support by offering practical tips and suggestions, says [Dr. Danita Morales Ramos, PhD, LPC, LPCC, LMHC](#).

106. Love them through the hard times and help remind them to do the same for themselves

Dr. Mack recommends the following phrases:

"I know what you're going through is difficult and I'm here for you. You're not alone," "I know this is hard and I want you to know that I see how strong and brave and courageous you are," and "you've gotten through so much already, and you'll get through this."

107. Show up!

People often isolate when feeling stressed or having a tough time, says [Ashley Jarvis PsyD, HSP](#), licensed clinical psychologist. Bring them lunch or dinner or a coffee and then they can choose to spend more time beyond that.

108. Do not be afraid to encourage them to seek therapy or more support if you feel like they need it

Validate what they're going through is hard and then asking for help is a strength not a weakness, Dr. Mack explains.

109. Ask open-ended questions

This will help you learn about how your friends and loved ones are feeling. Voicing your own feelings and creating a safe environment may encourage your friends to open up as well. Listening without judgment is key, says [Dr. Leela Magavi, MD](#), and psychiatrist.

Active listening helps individuals struggling with burnout remember that they are valued and cared for. A loved one could say something such as I have noticed you are not talking to your close friend as much as you used to. This has been such a tough time. I am here for you to support you in any way I can whenever you are ready.

111. Remind them that every hard situation, every feeling, every difficult time is temporary

Even though it's hard now it won't always feel this way, Dr. Mack states.

111. Ask your friend to list the things she loves about herself and share these things with you

You could complete gratitude lists and share these with one another, Dr. Magavi explains. This could bolster mood and assuage anxiety.

112. Don't take action on your friend's behalf without their permission.

No matter how you feel about what your friend has shared with you, don't take action on their behalf unless they have asked you to do so, and unless they've given their permission, says [Dr. Sarah Rattray](#), Couples Psychologist, and Founder and CEO of Couples Communication Institute. Offering moral support isn't the same as taking action. Let them know they're in the driver's seat, in charge of what happens.

113. Amplify the other person

If you are in a group together such as coworking, community organization, fellow students, etc., call attention to the good work the other person is doing or the situation they are struggling through, says [Laura Mueller-Anderson, MSW, LICSW](#). This is another opportunity for a social media shout-out. This is only a good strategy if the other person would appreciate the attention being drawn to them though!

114. Don't argue or debate

Don't argue, debate, play "devil's advocate," or try to point out other ways of interpreting the situation unless you're directly asked for another way to look at it. Your loved one will

feel your moral support when you listen to their perspective without trying to offer alternatives or talk them out of their view, Dr. Rattray states.

115. Send a card

This can speak volumes because there is some measurable effort behind it, Mueller-Anderson explains. Sending a good old-fashioned greeting card that say "I'm thinking of you" can be so much more impactful than a text message. A small gift basket of thoughtfully curated items can be a very supportive gesture for someone that you are close to and know their needs well.

116. Practice attunement

Attunement is a mirroring technique that can involve body postures, facial gestures, and eye contact, says [Louis Laves-Webb, LCSW, LPC-S](#). This skill is powerful and goes hand-in-hand with effective listening.

117. "Drop the but!"

When you use the word "but," it invalidates and discounts everything that came before it, Mueller-Anderson explains. When you want to use but, a good strategy is to instead find the "Yes, and..."

118. Listen for subtleties

Most of the communication is actually a miscommunication. With this understanding, subtlety and nuance become important factors in listening, Laves-Webb states. This can include, what's "not" being stated, vocal intonation, or word choice.

119. Seek clarification when necessary

Showing moral support isn't a one-size-fits all approach, so be sure to get clarity on what the other person needs, [Dr. Chloe Greenbaum](#), clinical psychologist states. It's impossible to be a good listener if you're confused about something, so ask for clarification when you feel lost.

120. Use a gesture that says I'm cheering you on

In-person and within your pandemic comfort zone this can be a hug, high five, elbow bump, salute, head nod, whatever is most natural to you. Virtually this might be a social media shoutout, invitation to connect for a virtual coffee or happy hour one on one, sending some encouraging text messages or encouraging yet silly Snapchat messages,

etc, Mueller-Anderson says.

121. Summarize the main points

Either at natural points during the conversation, or certainly at the conclusion, return back to a bit of a summary of what you've heard, [Dr. Charlotte Reznick, PhD](#), psychologist and author, explains. You don't have to be super specific as in *repeat back what you've heard*, but more note the main points of what was said. Showing you truly understand is one of the best ways to show moral support.

122. Nod your head

Body language is powerful, especially when it comes to showing moral support. Nodding your head is a simple way of signaling to the other person that you're paying attention and processing what they are saying, without interrupting, says [Jenicka Engler, PsyD](#), Psychologist, Neuropsychologist and Clinical Scientist. Sometimes, a head shake instead of a nod may be a better option!

123. Breathe

When you consciously breathe, you're more present in your body—and less likely to get caught up in your thoughts, [JF Benoist](#), founder & program manager of The Exclusive Hawaii and author of [Addicted to the Monkey Mind](#), explains. The act of being present is a simple yet powerful way to show moral support. Now, instead of thinking about what you're going to say next, you're more in touch with the present moment and can fully focus on what the person is saying.

124. Ask curious follow up questions

To show moral support, you need to be a good listener and to be a good listener you need to well is being able to ask follow-up questions based on what the person had just shared, [Laurie Carmichael, MS, MFT,](#) says.

Therapists do this all the time and it communicates that you were listening closely and that you want to learn more. The closer you listen, the better questions you will have, which helps whoever you are speaking to feel heard, seen, and understood.

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125. Be patient

Showing moral support can sometimes require patience. If someone has something important to say to you, it's important to create a safe environment for them to feel comfortable sharing, Carmichael explains. It can be difficult to find the right words in the moment, so the more patient you are, the more time there will be to find the words they need to clearly communicate.

Next, read up on these [compassion-enhancing tips](#).

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