

25 BENEFITS OF TALKING[©]

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1. **You are not alone.** Even though other people may not have had the identical experiences as you, many of them have had similar feelings that resulted from those experiences. Talking about how you feel will enable you to see this, and thus, feel less alone.
2. **Not talking about what is bothering you will not make it bother you any less.** Maybe there will be a temporary reprieve, but the buried feelings will continue to resurface or become corrosive if you continue to internalize them.
3. **You don't have to wait until you have the "right" words to describe how or why you are feeling the way you do.** Part of talking is to help you figure it out.
4. **Being depressed is not a character flaw or sign of personal weakness.** Strength doesn't mean you will never feel depressed. Strength means that you can recognize your depression and seek help for it. Talking about it is the first step in that direction.
5. **Your friends and family can be a great support system and they will often listen when you are ready to talk. But when you are clinically depressed or suicidal, you also need to seek professional help.** Find a therapist or another mental health professional with whom you can talk.
6. **Talking about your feelings can lead to new understandings** and those insights can help lessen the power of your despair. *The more you understand your feelings, the better able you will be to manage them if they continue to return.*
7. **Sometimes it's okay to take a break and not talk about how you are feeling.** It's critical to maintain a healthy balance and sometimes a little breather is what you need in order to process your thoughts and replenish the energy necessary to keep ascending out of your despair.
8. **There are all sorts of ways to "talk" about your feelings.** It might come in the form of writing to others, or to yourself (e.g. in a journal), or sometimes it's just having someone who really cares to be present with you.
9. **If people don't respond empathetically, or in the manner you hoped they would, find a way to tell them.** Maybe you didn't want to be cheered up when they tried to make you laugh, or maybe they changed the subject before you were ready to move on. Tell them. They may not be aware of the way they responded and its impact on you. Many people will be thankful you told them so they can learn what you need and how to become better listeners and support systems.
10. **Not all the people in your life will have the skills or capacity to handle your emotions.** If you are not getting what you need or want from someone, recognize this and move on. There will be other people who are there for you, waiting and wanting to listen.

11. **There is a time and place for bearing your soul. Be careful not to misinterpret someone's lack of receptiveness as a sign of not wanting to listen to you.** The person may have been distracted by their own strife or it may not have been the best venue to accommodate your feelings. Try to gauge the difference between catching someone at a bad time and their not caring.
12. **Initially, it can feel worse when you start to talk about your feelings, but it becomes easier** in time and ultimately relieving to do so.
13. **Try not to let your fear of self-pity silence you. Small doses of it every now and then aren't always a bad thing.** Imagine having a family member or friend who was in the same position as you. You would likely agree that they had a right to occasionally indulge themselves in self-pity, too.
14. **There does not have to be a specific reason for talking about how you are feeling.** Even though there may be no apparent solution to your problem, at the very least, it will help you feel less alone and that "aleness" is part of what feeds depression.
15. **You don't have to fear "falling apart" forever if you talk about your feelings.** Many people believe that once they start to cry, they'll never be able to stop. The tears will stop eventually, much like getting the dry heaves of the eyeballs!
16. **More people are willing, wanting, and waiting to help you than you realize.** You just have to reach out and find them.
17. **Keeping up appearances (not talking about your despair) will cause you to drift further apart from your family and friends.** Talking about your feelings can enhance your relationships and bring you closer. The people who care about you will be thankful if you allow them to really know and help you.
18. **Anger-management is sometimes overrated.** Expressing some anger about your situation may be warranted. It can serve as a healthy release, *as long as it is expressed and managed appropriately*. Recognize that you can feel anger at the same time as you feel loss, relief, love or appreciation. These emotions do not negate each other. Opposite feelings can co-exist.
19. **Talking about your feelings doesn't always mean you are "complaining."** Sometimes you are merely talking about the way you feel. That is not complaining. It's communicating.
20. **Sometimes talking about your feelings does qualify as "complaining." But you may have every right to complain,** especially if something terrible has just happened in your life. Give yourself license to voice your gripes.

21. **Talking about your despair can be cathartic and can serve as an emotional release.** At first, it might be draining to express your feelings, but that is far less exhausting than mustering up the energy required to contain all of those emotions.
22. **Many people do not talk about their depression or suicidal thoughts because they think they are sparing their loved ones.** However, family and friends will be left to cope with the devastating aftermath of your death, so at least give them the chance to help you.
23. **Keep seeking out good listeners and those who will not pass judgment** or “one down” you with sad stories of their own.
24. **Revealing your depression or suicidal thoughts can help others who are having similar feelings come forward.** Every time you speak about your depression, you reduce stigma and its silencing power.
25. **You will not feel this way forever—if you reach out for help and continue to talk about your feelings.**

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