



One of the best ways to handle your problems and feelings is to talk to someone you trust.

Everyone has problems and strong feelings from time to time.

When you talk to someone you trust, sometimes it's helpful just to "get it off your chest." Other times, you may want advice or suggestions.

Keeping your thoughts and feelings to yourself can make you feel alone. Sharing them with another person can make problems seem easier to handle.

## Feeling sad

People feel sad for lots of different reasons. Losing something that's important to you—like a friendship, or dealing with a breakup, is often a trigger for feeling sad. Family problems or big changes in your life can sometimes cause sad feelings.

### *Am I feeling sad?*

- I feel like crying.
- I'm eating more or less than I usually do.
- I'm having trouble with sleeping (too much or too little).
- My chest or stomach hurts.
- I just want to be left alone.

### *How can I feel better?*

Sometimes it helps just to cry. Sometimes painting or writing about your feelings helps. Sharing your feelings with someone you trust may help you feel better. Also, try getting some exercise, even if you don't really feel like it. Physical activity can improve your mood and help you to sleep better.

Everyone feels sad sometimes, but if you feel very sad for 2 weeks or more without a break, you might be depressed. Get help from a trusted adult right away. You can always call Kaiser Permanente for help.

## Feeling anxious

Are you feeling worried or stressed out about friends, how you look, or how you are doing in school? Are you worried about money or work? You're not alone.

### *Am I feeling anxious?*

- My muscles feel tight.
- I'm having trouble sleeping.
- My stomach or head hurts.
- I'm eating more or less than usual.

### *How can I feel better?*

Learning to handle stress can help you deal with anxiety. Deep breathing can help you relax. Physical exercise is a great way to beat stress and clear your

mind. Talking things over with someone you trust can help, too.

Sometimes, anxiety can feel overwhelming. Try to go easy on yourself, and let go of the idea of "perfect." If you can't stop worrying or having panic attacks, you may need help to feel better.

## Feeling angry

Anger is normal. It's okay to feel angry sometimes. You might feel angry when things are unfair, or you don't get what you want.

### *Am I feeling angry?*

- My stomach or head hurts.
- I feel really tense.
- My throat feels tight.
- I feel like crying or yelling.

### *How can I feel better?*

You can learn ways to deal with anger. Sometimes it helps to pound on a pillow, get some exercise, or write about your feelings. You can even find a place to scream and yell where no one will hear you. Taking deep breaths, and counting to 10 can also help.

It is not okay to get so angry that you hurt other people or break things. If you don't like how you treat other people when you get angry, it's important to ask someone you trust for help.

## Is it just me?

A lot happens during your teen and young adult years. Your body is growing and changing. You're learning more about who you are and how to be more independent and responsible.

Lots of these changes are fun and exciting. Some are confusing and difficult. Every one deals with some of these changes and the feelings that come up.

### Have you had feelings or concerns like these?

- I feel like I don't fit in.
- I'm unhappy about my body.
- I have this secret that bothers me.
- I feel stressed about school.
- I get scared when my parents fight.
- I'm scared because someone close to me drinks too much.
- I'm not sure whether to have sex or not.
- I think I might be gay, lesbian, or bisexual.
- I'm too busy to enjoy anything.
- I feel like I have to be perfect.

If you have thoughts or feelings like these, you are not alone. Some of these issues are a normal part of getting older. The good news is that you can get help to handle them.

### Who can I talk to?

Think about all the people in your life. You probably know who you can go to with questions or problems. You may trust a close friend, a parent, another relative, coach, or teacher.

### Parents or other adults in the family

Talk to your parents or another adult family member if you can. Even if it feels like they won't understand, you may be surprised how open and helpful they can be.

### Teachers, counselors, coaches

Sometimes it's easier to talk to someone outside your family. They can listen and give you advice. They can also help you find more help if you need it.

### A word about friends

Friends are important, but they may not always be the best people to help you deal with strong feelings. Sometimes it's hard for friends to be helpful, often because they're too close to you to see the problem clearly. Other times, they may be having the same feelings. Keep in mind that sometimes it's important to talk to a trusted adult.

### Talk to someone ASAP!

You need to get help now if you are dealing with any of these major problems:

- You are thinking of suicide or hurting yourself in any way.
- Someone is hurting or abusing you physically or sexually.
- You are hurting or abusing someone physically or sexually.
- You've been feeling sad, angry, or anxious without a break for 2 weeks or more.
- You're using drugs or alcohol to deal with feelings

### Getting help from Kaiser Permanente

All Kaiser Permanente offices have doctors and nurse practitioners that specialize in young adults. There are also counselors and other mental health professionals who can help you.

You can make their own appointment and come in to see a doctor, nurse practitioner, or counselor. Some Kaiser Permanente facilities have a clinic with information and services especially for teenagers. Others offer special care for young adults who are 18–25.

Many Kaiser Permanente offices also have support groups and classes. We are here to help you feel your best.

### Top tips for dealing with strong feelings

- Take a deep breath, slowly inhaling and exhaling.
- Count to 10, slowly.
- Take a minute to put a name on your emotion, like "I'm feeling really angry right now" ... or "I feel scared and lonely."
- Picture your feelings as a wave. See the wave coming in and going out again.
- Try not to shove your feelings down. Ignoring them can make them worse.
- Try to step back and get unstuck from your emotion.
- Use "I" statements when talking about emotions, such as "I feel angry when ...."
- Remind yourself that this feeling will not last forever. Remember times when you felt different.

### More resources

#### Web sites

- [kp.org](http://kp.org)
- KidsHealth College Page  
[kidshealth.org/teen/index.html](http://kidshealth.org/teen/index.html)
- American Psychological Association  
[apahelpcenter.org](http://apahelpcenter.org)

#### Phone numbers

- Kaiser Permanente Member Service Center  
1-800-464-4000
- Suicide Prevention Hotline  
1-800-273-TALK
- KP Chemical Dependency Services  
1-800-464-4000

This information is not intended to diagnose or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor.