

Giving Positive Support

If you are a support person or part of a support group, whether friend or healthcare worker, here are a few things you can do to help people you are supporting

Listen	First and foremost find out what they are thinking they might need. At least ask the question “What is it that you would like help with?” “What are the things at the top of your list?” “How best can I / we help you and your whānau?” By discovering what people find most helpful we can do a better job of supporting them.
Be pro-active	Sometimes people are too exhausted, embarrassed or simply don’t know what, or how, to ask for help. Being proactive and offering specific help such as – “Do we need to organise someone to pick the children up from school?” or “Would you like someone to pop in and check on you for five minutes each day?” can be really useful.
Look forward	Helping someone find order in chaos can help them to make plans, and help them to find / create a sense of order. Find some small, achievable, goals and support the person to reach them.
Be there	Many people benefit from having someone with them at meetings and appointments. It may be handy to help the person formulate questions beforehand, then take notes during the meeting, and even discuss the outcome afterwards.
Be positive	Be positive, but be realistic too. If your friend / client wants to talk realistically, don’t brush the concerns aside in an effort to be seen to remain positive. Follow their cues – being positive means supporting their thoughts and concerns, regardless of where they take you. Help with plans to better the situation.
Self care	Look after yourself too! You need to be well to support others.