

Self-help groups and support for families are available in some areas



from your appointment, you might want to log your symptoms and other variables (see main story) so you use your knowledge of yourself to help get the most accurate diagnosis possible.

Writing notes to remind us of what we want to say can help us stay focused when we may feel overwhelmed and out of our element. It can also sometimes be helpful to take a friend as a second pair of ears.

“Be gentle with yourself”

“My anxiety has mostly gone now and I have some symptoms of PTSD,” says Tara. “I have weekly psychotherapy. I used to get frustrated with myself. Any feelings I had about the situation were turned inwards, which just made things worse.

“My therapist mentioned the need to be more gentle with myself. This was something of a revelation. I realised that berating myself for the way I feel isn’t going to help. I’ve gradually got into the habit of noticing and acknowledging how I feel, asking myself what I need to help me through it. I remember someone saying you should treat yourself as you would a distressed friend. It’s easy to forget to look after ourselves in this way.”



What do you need to help you through?