

# How Can I Help?

What You Can (And Can't) Do  
To Counsel A Friend, Colleague  
or Family Member With A Problem

*"A thoughtful, insightful book. Highly recommended..."*  
Janice Kaplan, former Editor-in-Chief, *Psychology Today*

Anna Ranieri PhD & Joe Gurkoff MA

## How Can I Help?: What You Can (and Can't) Do to Counsel a Friend, Colleague or Family Member With a Problem

By Joe Gurkoff MA, Anna Ranieri PhD

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How Can I Help? is a valuable resource for parents, teachers, nurses, managers, friends and relatives – anyone who wishes to help another person facing a problem, from relationship issues or work challenges to reaching a personal goal or managing a health concern. In this easy-to-use primer, authors and therapists Anna Ranieri and Joe Gurkoff offer a straightforward guide to give you the knowledge, skills and confidence to be truly effective when you decide to counsel someone who is facing one of life's inevitable challenges. Each chapter provides an overview of a specific step in the helping process, insight into why that step works, a description of how to accomplish it and a way to evaluate what to do next. The authors use typical problems to illustrate why giving advice rarely works, how to encourage progress, when confrontation is appropriate and how to transition away from the helping role once the problem has been resolved. You'll also learn how to recognize when professional help may be needed, and what to do if at any point you decide that you've accomplished all you can or want to do. If you're looking for a roadmap to providing counsel that is supportive, realistic and doable, How Can I Help? is your indispensable, go-to guide. Anna Ranieri, Ph.D. has a private practice in psychotherapy, career counseling and executive coaching. Joe Gurkoff, M.A., a former psychotherapist, is now a consultant who specializes in helping people apply the art and science of problem solving in their private and professional lives. "When is the last time you put down the phone or walked away from a friend, family member or colleague wishing you could have helped them more effectively? Anna and Joe use their years of counseling experience to guide you in deciding when and how to help. They even coach you through the exit process so you can return to your original relationship. You will find many ways to use the insights they provide." Julia Schlam Edelman, M.D., FACOG, NCMP\_Author, Menopause Matters: Your Guide to a Long and Healthy Life; and The Harvard Medical School Guide to Successful Sleeping Strategies for Women "In this useful and accessible book, Anna and Joe extract from their extensive counseling backgrounds the therapeutic essence that will enable anyone to be of help to someone they care about. They show the reader how to be helpful – which centers on listening and

empathizing-- or to choose skillfully when not to engage. With common sense and kindness, they show us how we can and cannot be of help.” Fred Luskin, PhD, author of Forgive for Good and Stress Free for Good

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## **How Can I Help?: What You Can (and Can't) Do to Counsel a Friend, Colleague or Family Member With a Problem** By Joe Gurkoff MA, Anna Ranieri PhD Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1369558 in Books
- Published on: 2012-12-20
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.50" h x .44" w x 5.50" l, .51 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 176 pages

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **Review**

"They've laid out an excellent game plan in plainspoken English with an upbeat tone that encourages progress. Bullet points, sidebars and questions act as convenient yield signs along the way, giving readers a moment to recall and reflect. Even if "active listening" is second nature, it "can't hurt to revisit the basics." As a primer, reference or for regular practice, this guide contains all the tools needed for friends in need."

Kirkus

#### **About the Author**

Anna Ranieri, PhD, has a private practice in career counseling, psychotherapy, and executive coaching. Anna enjoys helping people navigate the transitions in their lives and pursue their personal and professional goals. Joe Gurkoff, MA, is an author, consultant, and educator, recognized for his novel, perceptive and sometimes surprising approaches to helping people solve problems in their business and personal lives.

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