REACHING OUT TO SOMEONE WITH AN EATING CONCERN

DO...

• speak to the person privately and allow time to talk.
• tell the person you are very concerned about her/him.
• calmly tell the person some specific observations that have aroused your concerns.
• allow the person time to respond: listen carefully and non-judgmentally.
• keep the focus on symptoms/behaviors (eg. withdrawing from others).
• If the information you receive suggests an eating concern, share with the person that:
  ➔ you think he/she might be struggling with eating (or body image or weight management…);
  ➔ you are concerned that their behavior may need to be evaluated by someone who understands eating concerns.
• be familiar with some of the resources in your community to which the person can be referred.
• seek information and advice for yourself.
• focus positive/encouraging comments towards who they are as a person not towards their appearance.
• emphasize positive personality traits and let them know what their strengths are.
• let them know you care about them no matter what.

DON’T...

• confront the person with a group of people, all of whom are firing concerns and accusations at the person.
• threaten or challenge the person.
• be judgmental. (ie. Don’t tell the person what they’re doing is “sick”, “crazy”, or “stupid.”)
• reinforce or focus on your friend’s appearance.
• diagnose.
• get into an argument or a battle of wills: Calmly repeat your specific observations, your concern, and your strong belief that they need to have the situation evaluated. End the conversation if it is going nowhere or if either of you becomes too upset.
• try to keep track of what the person is eating or try to force the person to eat or not eat.
• let the person monopolize your time or energy.
• alienate the person by ending the conversation on a negative note.

Remember

☐ educate yourself about eating concerns
☐ be positive and encouraging
☐ take good care of yourself

For More Information Contact:
Office of Health Education & Promotion,
Health Services  862-3823
www.unh.edu/health-services
Counseling Center 862-2090
www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

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Help a Friend...

Stearwell Secrets and How You Can Truly

Jessie Werner

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Love and friendship are two of the most important things in life. In my life, I've learned that if you want to be happy, you need to surround yourself with people who will make you happy. Friendship is being there for each other in good times and bad times. It's having someone to talk to when you need to vent, and someone to celebrate with when you achieve something. Friendship is genuine care and support.

If you're struggling with depression, you're not alone. Depression is a real thing, and it affects millions of people. It's okay to ask for help. There are resources available to help you through this difficult time. It's important to take care of your mental health, just as you would take care of your physical health.

If you're experiencing any of the symptoms of depression, don't hesitate to reach out for help. You don't have to face this alone.

I hope my words can help you understand that you're not alone. There is help available, and you're stronger than you think.

by Jessie Werner

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