

# How to Help a Friend

Notice, ask, listen, connect and respond safely.

## Support, do not diagnose

A caring friend can reduce isolation and help someone reach appropriate support. Do not attempt to provide therapy or manage a serious crisis alone.

### 1. Notice

- Withdrawal, persistent sadness or fear
- Sudden behaviour changes or hopeless statements
- Major changes in sleep or routine
- Talking about death, self-harm or suicide

### 2. Ask

**“You do not seem like yourself lately. Would you like to talk?”**  
**“How have you been feeling?”**  
**“Do you feel safe right now?”**  
**“Have you been thinking about hurting yourself?”**

### 3. Listen

- Stay calm and listen without interrupting.
- Avoid blame, shame or simple advice such as “just be positive.”
- Take the person seriously.
- Do not promise secrecy when safety is at risk.

### 4. Connect

Help the person contact a trusted adult, teacher, counsellor, doctor or emergency service. Offer to stay with them while they make the call.

### 5. Act in immediate danger

**Do not leave the person alone. Involve a responsible adult or professional immediately. Call Rescue 1122, Police 15, Edhi Ambulance 115 or go to the nearest hospital.**