

How to Support Your Friends

Friends are a crucial part of your social network. While they can provide valuable support mechanisms for you, you must also be there when they need your help (Wendler, 2020).

This worksheet examines a situation when a friend needed your support and asks:

- How did you respond?
- How can you help them in the long term?
- How can you protect yourself?

Think of a recent situation where your friend needed your support.

The following questions will help you assess how you responded and what else may be needed:

Briefly describe the situation. What was it? What was the situation? What support did your friend need?

How did you respond in the moment?

Supporting friends, it is important to (Wendler, 2020):

- Be present
- Remember this is not about you
- Offer support rather than solutions
- Accept their feelings, don't tell them how to feel
- Try not to panic

How could you have responded?

Big problems don't usually disappear after they are shared. Follow up to see how they are doing and educate yourself on the difficulties they face. Suggest professional help if appropriate – this may be something that requires more than your support.

How could you help your friend in the long term?

Healthy relationships involve both giving and receiving. Giving 100% over a long time can be exhausting and even harmful. Remember to consider your needs – self-care is important.

How can you take care of yourself?

References

- Wendler, D. (2020). *Improve your social skills*. Portland, Or.: Daniel Wendler.

Dr. Jeremy Sutton