

WHAT TO DO IF...

YOU ARE STRUGGLING

Talk to a Trusted Adult

Whether it's a parent, a teacher, a coach, or a small group leader, find someone to be honest with about what's going on in your life. This is scary, but you can't keep going through what you're going through alone! There are people in your life who want to help you and walk alongside you through whatever it is you are going through!

FACT: You are worthy of love and help NO MATTER WHAT! Let other people hope on your behalf on the days you can't find hope for yourself.

YOUR FRIEND IS STRUGGLING

Listen and Be A Friend

Just listening and being there for your friend can go a long way. Ask how they're feeling, let them know you'll listen if they want to talk, and be compassionate towards them. **Remember: It's not your job to fix your friend or to give them the right answers.**

Do say affirming and encouraging things like:

"Thank you for sharing with me. I imagine this is hard to talk about, but I'm so glad you trust me enough to share this with me."
"I understand why you would feel that way."
"Let's together think of one helpful next step."

Don't say things that minimize or judge your friend like:

"You must have done something to cause this."
"It could be worse."
"Everything happens for a reason."

NOTE: While these phrases are not bad in and of themselves, they are not helpful or encouraging for someone who's struggling. Sometimes, we default to phrases like these because we don't know what else to say, when in fact, it's better to simply say, "I'm not sure what to say."

Talk to a Trusted Adult

No matter what your friend is struggling with, always encourage them to talk to a parent, teacher, or a small group leader about it. Offer to go with them if they're afraid to talk to someone on their own!

If your friend tells you they want to hurt themselves, hurt someone else, or that they are in some sort of danger, your **ONLY** job is to tell an adult! That is always the most caring and loving thing you can do for your friend in that situation.