

EXTENSION UPDATE

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Neighbors Helping Neighbors

The circumstances may vary, maybe the death of a loved one, a divorce, problems with children, or a time of financial crisis. Whatever the circumstances, you may become aware that your neighbor or friend needs help and support.

Just being there and ready to listen can be one of the most powerful tools available for your friend to help him or her get through the stress and crisis.

For the hurting person, there is a sense of being wrapped up in the situation. Time slows down as he or she deals with this event.

In our busy lives, we tend to be brisk and impatient, but it is important to make some time to visit with a friend or neighbor. This may be more difficult in our COVID-19 environment, but now during the long winter it is more important than ever to keep in touch. Conversations can take place over the phone, six feet apart, with a mask, via Zoom, or FaceTime. Just make sure these conversations happen.

When visiting, listen with your heart as well as your ears. Avoid being judgmental. Allow the other person to share their feelings with you.

He or she may express pain, sorrow, confusion, guilt, helplessness, or anger. It is not your place to judge the legitimacy of these feelings. Feelings are not right or wrong.

Remember confidentiality. When a person turns to you for help or expresses concern and feelings, he or she does so in trust. Respect yourself as well as your neighbor by keeping the discussion in confidence. Gossiping to others will trivialize the situation.

Supporting one another can empower individuals to face problems and may provide a vision of how to handle the situation.

For additional help please contact the Nebraska Rural Response Hotline at 800-464-0258. The Nebraska Rural Response Hotline has helped thousands of hard working men and women since the 1980s. If someone you know is feeling overwhelmed or depressed, help is just a phone call away.

In addition to mental health counseling, the Rural Response Hotline can provide information regarding legal assistance, financial clinics, mediation and emergency assistance. And of course, it's confidential. The Rural Response Hot Line is standing by to help independent and strong Nebraskans.

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