

THE ART OF HELPING

Often times we have individuals in our lives who are struggling, and we feel a responsibility to help. These are my tips on how to maximize our effectiveness in being helpful.

First things first: Take care of yourself

This might seem like we're heading in the wrong direction, you want to help others, not yourself right now. Hear me out.... Let's say that someone is drowning, and they need help. The best way that we can provide help is by staying in a safe place ourselves but by rallying our resources to help pull someone back to safety. Say you have a boat, then that's wonderful, you are a great person to help. But, if you dive into the water, not being a strong swimmer yourself, and you drown while trying to help, then you could cause further emotional damage to the exact person you were trying to take care of in the first place. No one wants to feel as if they caused suffering or harm to others. My friends, this means you have the very important job of listening to your own body and understanding how much help you can give without causing harm to yourself.

**SAY NO WHEN YOU NEED TO, AND YOU CAN'T WHEN YOU CAN'T.
BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, YOU WONDERFUL AND AMAZING PEOPLE,
SAY YES WHEN YOU WANT TO, AND SAY YOU CAN WHEN YOU CAN.**

Next: Know the resources

BC Wide:

- **310-Mental Health (310-6789 - no need to dial an area code):** for individuals who would like emotional support, information and resources specific to mental health in British Columbia.
- **1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433):** for individuals who are or know someone who is having thoughts of suicide. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and in up to 140 languages. Operated in partnership with Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Centre of BC.
- Read more about these services at:
<https://www.crisislines.bc.ca/services>

These are a couple helpful resources, but there are many many more. Ask your friends, family, doctor, social worker, counsellor, teacher, and more, what resources they know of. You are not alone.