HOW TO CHECK ON A FRIEND

Checking on a friend in need of support can be tricky for a few reasons. You might be uncertain about how they would react, whether they are open to discussing their needs or concerned that you won’t have the right answers or words.

Supporting a friend does not mean you are responsible for solving the issue. However, showing care and approaching outreach with genuine individualization can reinforce the strength of your relationship and provided comfort.

Here is some DO guidance when it comes to checking on a friend.

• **Do send a text.**
  The immediacy of a phone call can put added pressure on someone, where a text can allow them to connect when they are ready.

• **Do be specific.**
  Avoid “how can I help” and “how’s it going.” You already know the answer and are unintentionally putting the responsibility on your friend to provide you with a solution. Instead, take an active approach with a specific task in mind. Ask them to take a walk, join you in an activity, or offer to bring dinner. A small action can go a long way.

• **Do express empathy and understanding.**
  Acknowledging what your friend is managing while not rationalizing it or comparing it to your past experiences is key. Avoid phrases like “everything will be fine,” “it’s not that bad,” and “the same thing happened to me.” Instead share the weight of what is troubling your friend with “I’m sorry you are going through that” and “we will figure this out.”
• Do let your friend lead
  Each situation is different. Practice active listening skills with your friend to learn more about their needs in that moment.

If your friend needs support immediately, reach out to Emory Student Intervention Service (SIS) crisis line at 404-430-1120.

Oxford students experiencing an emergency should call EPD at Oxford (770-784-8377) to reach the Residence Life Coordinator (RLC) on-call. The RLC on-call triages and will connect Oxford students to appropriate resources.

For escalated emergency, danger, or medical crises please refer to these additional resources:
  • Emory Police Department (EPD): 404-727-6111
  • Emory University Hospital (EUH) Emergency Room: 1364 Clifton Road, 404-712-7109
  • Emory Emergency Medical Services (EMS): 404-727-6111