How to support a friend in need

PEER POWER PROGRAM

Use this to help yourself & your peers in times of distress

By the Emmons Peer Power Program

Step 1: Identify Signs in Yourself or Others

Concerning behaviors:

- Notable changes in work/academic performance or social behavior
- Persistent fatigue
- Self-disclosure of personal distress
- Irritability or apathy
- Feelings of anxiety/panic
- Crying, emotional volatility

Particularly concerning behaviors:

- Aggressive, threatening, or intimidating behavior
- Agitation, intense restlessness, hyperactivity
- Paranoia or suspicious thinking
- Thoughts of suicide or homicidal behavior

→ These behaviors warrant **immediate contact** with the 24/7 Oxy Crisis Line, Emmons, and/or 911.

Never worry alone!

Oxy Crisis Resources

Step 2: How to Approach a Friend or Peer

Firstly, always prioritize your safety. If the person is exhibiting hostile behavior, it might be better to call a professional. Otherwise:

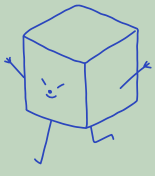
- Find one-on-one time and a private space
- Approach with care and curiosity
- Start with what you notice: "I've noticed you've been withdrawn lately, and I wanted to check in and see if you are okay."
- Try to validate their struggles, even if you haven't been in their situation

Step 3: Having the Conversation

Use active listening skills:

- Be present
- Withhold judgement
- Validate
- Ask open-ended questions
- Most importantly, use the language that is authentic to you.
- Offer choices: do they want resources, options on what to do, or just someone to talk to?
- "What can I do to support you right now?"
- It's okay if they say no to resources; by offering choices you can give them power to make decision for themselves
- Make sure you're offering only what you're able to do

How do you know when your friend needs support beyond what you can give?



- If you feel emotionally and mentally drained, and unable to be there for your peer/friend
- Your peer/friend asked you to keep their situation a secret, but it is too unbearable for you or there is a safety concern
- Your friend is behaving recklessly and you are worried they might harm themself or someone else
- Contact Emmons, a trusted staff member, or the Oxy Crisis Line if any of these are true

Step 4: Refer to Support

Is the student or someone else in immediate danger?

YES

Displaying reckless, dangerous, or threatening behavior, and/or has stated intent to harm themselves or others

Call 911 and Campus Safety at (323) 259-2599

NOT SURE

Displaying signs of emotional distress, or an interaction left you very worried about the student's well-being

Call Emmons at (323) 259-2657 during business hours/the Oxy Crisis Line at (323) 341-4141after hours

NO

Not concerned for the student's safety, but they are having significant personal/academic troubles and need support

Offer support and help connecting to campus resources

Oxy's 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line: (323) 341-4141

- You can call the crisis line when in distress to talk with a licensed professional, or to consult about a friend/peer
- They will first assess for safety and can activate emergency services and Oxy's crisis response if needed

Emmons Counseling

- Therapy is **free & confidential** for all students regardless of insurance
- **No session limits**
- Support finding long-term treatment and specialized care
- In-person and virtual therapy options
- **Urgent walk-ins** accepted every weekday from **1–3 pm**
- Schedule online via your patient portal or call (323) 259-2657

Scan here to access Student Patient Portal

Project SAFE

Offers prevention education and advocacy support related to issues of sexual assault, dating violence, sexual harassment, and stalking.

- Survivor Advocates are a **confidential resource** who can offer a wide variety of supportive measures
- Email survivoradvocate@oxy.edu, call (323) 341-4750, or click the "Schedule Appointment" button on their website

Scan here to access Project SAFE's website

Care Team

The Care Team is a **cross-disciplinary group** of Oxy staff who work to support the well-being of Oxy students by developing holistic, personalized responses to students in need.

- If you want to connect a student to the Care team, contact a trusted staff or faculty member, and they can submit a Care report
- This is not a punitive or conduct-related process

Scan here for Dean of Students Office Hours

TimelyCare

- TalkNow feature: **24/7** virtual on-demand mental health support via text, call, or video chat
- **Free scheduled therapy**, up to 12 sessions per academic year (starts over in August)
- Flexible appointment times
- Choose a provider who is right for you
- TimelyCare is **free** for all Oxy students!

Download TimelyCare here and register with your Oxy email!

Never Worry Alone!