Be there for a friend with a mental health condition...

**Reach out to Someone you Trust.** You don’t need to go at it alone. You may want to involve others who can help provide the right support. Here are some people you can reach out to:

- Friends and family
- Residential assistants/advisors
- Campus counseling center staff
- On-campus health care providers
- Faith-based leaders
- Faculty advisors
- Sorority and fraternity chapter mentors and advisors

**Share your Concerns.** Share your observations with your friend. Focus on being nonjudgmental, compassionate and empathetic. Use these “I” (instead of “you”) comments to get the conversation started:

- “I’ve noticed you’re [sleeping more, eating less, etc.]. Is everything okay?”
- “I’ve noticed that you haven’t been acting like yourself lately. Is something going on?”
- “It makes me afraid to hear you talking about dying. Can we talk to someone about this?”

**Offer Support.** Ask the person what you can do to help. You can suggest specific things that might help like:

- How can I best support you right now? Is there something I can do or can we involve others who can help?
- Can I help you locate mental health services and supports? Can I help you make an appointment?
- Can I help you with your errands until you’re feeling better?
- Would you like me to go with you to a support group or a meeting? Do you need a ride to any of your appointments?

**Be a friend.** You can play an important role in helping your friend build a positive, social support network:

- Check-in regularly
- Include your friend in your plans
- Learn more
- Avoid using judgmental or dismissive language, such as “you’ll get over it,” “toughen up,” “snap out of it”

Raising mental health awareness about *how to help a friend* provides hope and lets others know that they are not alone.

Learn more at [www.nami.org/aka](http://www.nami.org/aka).