

FIRST AID TO HELP OTHERS WITH THEIR CHALLENGES

- It's their challenge – One thing that was hard for me as a mother was to realize that my child's challenges were his to deal with. I was there to help and fight for him every step of the way but I couldn't take it from him, it was his challenge to handle. We must remember that with loved ones that we can help but we can't take it from him.
- Express love – Touch is so important. People need to feel affection and love. A hug often goes a long way in helping someone face their challenges. They realize that there are others there for them. Sometimes when I'm ready to pull my hair out I just have to shrug my shoulders and give him a big hug. It helps both of us, we are both equally frustrated.
- Withhold judgment - I worked with a coworker that I judged and labeled with bad character flaws and horrible work ethic. Later after the person no longer worked with me I found out that person discovered he had a severe mental illness. I felt awful for judging him when he had a challenge that accounted a lot for his behavior. Although my son looks normal, he is not and people judge and expect him to act a certain age and way. With all of his problems he rarely lives up to those expectations and he angers and frustrates people. If they only knew and withheld judgment on him his life could be easier.
- Give needed help – Often it is nothing physical we can do to help but keeping aware of them and being there when we are needed helps. Notice things in their life and what is needed and don't ask about helping just do what you can. Sometimes it is just being a support system for them.
- Include them – EVERYBODY feels lonely when they are going through challenges. Invite them places with you; have them come over to your house. When going to church activities that they may be going to also invite them to come with you and include them in conversations with others.
- Pray for others – Sometimes when praying we get the inspiration we need as to what we can do to help them. There is such strength felt by the person having challenges when they know others are praying for them.
- Be a good listener – Truly listen don't be thinking of what you will say next. Don't try to analyze their problems or tell them what to do to solve them; just listen with your heart and love. If they want to talk about their challenges be open and available to listen. On the other hand if they want to talk about everything else but that don't push them to talk about it. Elder Jeffery R. Holland said, "If we listen with love we won't need to wonder what to say."
- Humor – Humor appropriately timed help to lighten people's moods and helps them to see beyond their challenge for a minute. Abraham Lincoln said, "With the fearful strain that is on me night and day if I did not laugh I should die." Pres. James E. Faust (March 2000 Ensign, p. 3-5) said, "We will find that it is easier to ride over the bumps and come quickly to (our) own identity if (we) cultivate the good humor that comes naturally. It is important that we all learn to laugh at ourselves."

Neal A. Maxwell in his book, "All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience" (pg. 56) said, "We, more than others should carry jumper and tow cables not only in our cars, but also in our hearts, by which means we can send the needed boost or charge of encouragement or the added momentum to mortal neighbors."

RESOURCES

(www.lds.org) under Provident Living

(www.nimh.nih.gov) National Institute of Mental Health

(www.itsaboutlove.org) 1-800-537-2229 LDS Family Services internet site and free crisis telephone service to women pregnant out of wedlock

(www.lds-fshelp@ldschurch.org) for help with pornography

(www.ldsfamilyservices.org) For all kinds of counseling from parenting to addictions

LDS Family Services offers a course called “Strengthening the Family”. They have agencies all over, contact them for details.

Don’t forget some of the most important resources: bishops, family members, good friends, family doctors, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, social workers, to name just a few.