

When Someone You Love Is Having a Tough Time, Remind Them of These 20 Things

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If someone you love is having a tough time right now, there are some things that you can remind them of which will help them through their difficulties. Whatever you say to someone who is struggling, the most important thing is to ensure your tone of voice and demeanor is appropriate. Remind your loved one of the following things in a warm, encouraging way, and not in a “pull your socks up” way. Your approach will make all the difference to the response you get.

1. It's OK Not to Be OK

When people are struggling, they often make themselves feel worse by placing unrealistic expectations on themselves. They beat themselves up for having a problem and feeling unable to cope with it. Remind your loved one that they are no less of a person just because they are facing something challenging right now. You love them and will support them in good times and bad.

2. You're Not Alone

Identifying with the person who is struggling can help them feel better. They realize, then, that they are not bearing the weight of the world alone. Remind them that others have had this problem, and that they already have found a way through it. Just knowing that they are not alone can help them feel less lonely and more hopeful. Encourage your loved one to join a support group or forum if appropriate.

3. Let Go of Blame

Sometimes when people are struggling, they either want to blame themselves or other people for their circumstances. It's OK to initially express anger and frustration, but wallowing in feelings of unfairness or blame will make them feel worse and wastes their energy. Help your loved one to see that the way out their difficulties is in looking for solutions and not in assigning blame or hanging onto angry feelings.

4. Struggles Make You Stronger

Wisdom, strength and resilience can all be built from the foundations of tough times. Help your loved one to see how they're growing as a person, even if they feel like they're going through hell. It's so important not to be glib or patronizing when you're saying this – actually tell your loved one the new strengths you see in them.

5. Take a Step Back

People going through tough times often lose perspective, because they feel so mired in the problem itself. Reminding someone to step back from the situation can help them to see things in a fresh light, and will help them find new solutions.

6. Nothing Lasts Forever

The terrible thing about really tough times is that they feel like they will go on forever. But, in reality, nothing lasts forever – not even the most horrible emotions or the direst circumstances.

Reminding your loved one of this can help them gain perspective and feel comforted at the same time.

7. Take Things Step By Step

Tough times can often bring complex and confusing feelings, and those who are struggling may feel paralyzed and unable to make decisions. Remind them that they don't have to solve the whole problem at once. If they just do the next right thing, they will start to make progress.

8. Look For The Open Door

When life shuts one door, another one will always open. Losing something will always lead to new opportunities, but only if you are open to them. Remind your loved one to stay alert to fresh opportunities and solutions.

9. Just Do Your Best

People who are struggling can put so much pressure on themselves to get things right that they feel even more upset when they don't meet their own unrealistic expectations. Remind them that as long as they just do their best, that's all that matters. They are human, after all. Their best is good enough.

10. You've Come Through Tough Times Before

If someone you love is having a hard time, it may be difficult for them to see their strengths. Reminding them that they have already survived tough times before can show them that there is an end in sight, and that they have the strength to reach it.

11. You're Brave

Most people who are struggling refuse to acknowledge how strong and brave they actually are. They may see themselves as weak and scared. Remind them that courage is not the absence of fear. It's the willingness to go on even when you're afraid.

12. There Is Something Good in Each Day

Going through difficulties can lead to a negative mindset. If someone is really going through a desperately hard time, and dealing with something like depression, being all happy-clappy with them won't work. But do ask them about the good things in their life, what has gone well, and what they have achieved. It will help them to see a glimmer of hope, even in the darkness.

13. Look at What You're Gaining

Even when someone has a difficult problem, there will always be an upside to it. Whether it's finding out who their true friends are when they're struggling, or having the opportunity to develop patience, strength and problem-solving abilities, there will always be a silver lining. Help your loved one to find it.

14. It's Not Your Fault

Sometimes when people are struggling, they take their problems very personally, almost believing that their difficulties are sent in some way to punish them. If your loved one is doing this, reminding them that it's not their fault can help them feel relieved.

15. Well Done

Validating someone for their efforts when they're having a miserable time can make a big difference in their day. If someone is struggling, they may not acknowledge their own hard work. Giving them praise can help them feel rewarded and appreciated.

16. Focus on Now

Often people make their tough times even tougher by worrying about the future or fretting about the past. They may add to their misery by letting themselves think back to all the times life has treated them badly or that they've failed before; or they may fear that their current difficulty will lead to yet more problems. Remind them to focus on now, because that's the only part of the story they can change at the moment.

17. Nothing Is Ever the End of the World

Very few problems, however big or small, can actually stop you from breathing. You can encourage your loved one by reminding them that everything is survivable and beatable. They *will* find a way of dealing with this issue, however tough, if only they keep trying.

18. Be Kind To Yourself

When someone is going through a hard time, they may feel so frustrated by their problems that they resort to beating themselves up or not allowing themselves a minute of reprieve from the issue. Remind your loved one that tough times are easier when we're kind to ourselves. They are allowed "time off" from their problem to have a laugh, treat themselves, and be around good people. Relieving stress can actually help them to come back to the problem refreshed and recharged.

19. People Want to Help

If your loved one is suffering, they may believe that they have to go through it all by themselves. They may not want to burden others with their problems, and won't want to ask for help. Remind them that most people are amenable to helping; in fact, helping feels good. The reason people have different strengths is precisely so that they can help each other. Encourage your loved one to seek extra help should they need it.

20. I'm There For You

The strength of these words can not be underestimated. Letting your loved one know that you're there for them, and that you will listen to their feelings, dry their tears, or even just be around, can mean everything to someone going through hell. Just being a non-judgmental, caring presence in your loved one's life can make a massive difference in how they feel and how they cope.