



Can you spare some change?

By Gurustu

There's something divine about helping others; not just the guilt ridden spare change of a lint filled pocket, but rather the actual, sincere effort to change the course of another's life for the better. It doesn't just change that person, but also you... and ultimately makes the world a better place; if only a little corner of it.



The way to help another can come in a million different ways, from years of intense, active listening of someone who just needs to talk to just a simple smile to a stranger who's had a bad day. There is no right way, but there are some guiding principles you can follow to help you help others.

Non-judgment

This is the thing that can trip us up the most... our own judgment. We filter what is being said, or the person's condition with what we think is right. It might not be what **they** really need. By approaching them with a clear mind and heart, we're in a better place to be more helpful.

Presence

Staying in their moment puts you in a powerful moment to make actual change. This means really **listen** to them; don't stay in your own thoughts.

Patience

The answer might seem obvious to you, but that's just your opinion. Even if it is right, and the other person understands what you're saying, it takes time for them to change their life accordingly. Don't rush to conclusions. The real solution might not be apparent to you either.

Empathy

People don't really want your sympathy. That comes from a condescending space. Really understanding how they feel is on **their** level; which is the only level that can be helped.

Honesty

Help has to be sincere, it has to be truthful. Real solutions come with dealing with reality; so vow to be honest... to them and to yourself.

Encouragement

A lot of people like to tell others what **not** to do. That's usually met my resistance. Encouragement is a sign that you support the person.

Enthusiasm

If you get excited about their change, they will too. Don't just half heartedly commit; give it your all!



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Advocacy

One of the greatest signs of support is actually “going to bat” for someone else. It’s not only talking about support, it’s walking the talk.

Mentor

Sharing your knowledge and experience can show someone the way to help themselves. It’s empowering.

Temperance

Help must also be balanced to be truly effective. Going “overboard” in helping others neither helps them or you, in the long run. However you help someone, temper it with a balanced opposite (e.g. being with someone all day one day, yet leaving them be on their own for another)

Justice

Similar to temperance, justice also needs to apply. People’s actions have consequences. Helping someone doesn’t mean sheltering them from their own deeds.

Unconditional Giving

This is sometimes the toughest thing for people to understand, let alone do. Helpers can end up feeling unappreciated, even discouraged, if they don’t get some return from the receivers (“not even a ‘thank you’ is a typical complaint). That’s a sign that you gave with some sort of expectations of a return on your investment. It’s not your place to judge the outcome either. True giving gives with nothing expected in return.

Win too

Don’t lose in order for someone else to win. If you deplete yourself, you will only be able to give for so long.

Never empty your cup into another, but rather let your overflow quench the world.