

BE CAREFUL WITH ADVICE TO A FRIEND

MOVE COULD BACKFIRE, WRITES MELANIE MCGREGOR



MELANIE MCGREGOR
Column

Even when asked, it is best for us to avoid giving advice for all of these reasons and more. However, there are some more subtle and helpful ways we can encourage people in our lives to consider options to improving their situation. Following are some ideas for doing just this:

- Get their ideas. Asking, "What do you think would be helpful?" or "What have you thought about doing?" gives them a chance to share and talk out what might be on their minds and get your support if needed. We can't assume that others always need advice and don't have ideas of their own.

- Give options and information. You may know something that could be helpful, and it's all about how you present it. Your response could sound like, "There are counsellors available, or groups that could help or books that might have some tips." Provide some options and see what they latch onto - pushing something on them that might not be meaningful will cross the

line into advice-giving.

- Ask questions. Rather than saying, "You need to tell her to stop that," ask instead, "Have you thought of talking to her?" or "What do you think might happen if you tried talking to her about this?" Questions are a gentler way of exploring options, and if others have ruled out or don't want to consider particular solutions, we can move on and continue listening to help them feel heard and possibly develop their own next steps.

- Share an experience. We don't want to go on and on and make the conversation about us, but something short like, "I know when I went through something similar, I found talking to family really helped me. Do you think that could help you?" Keep it short, make sure it's relevant and leave the choice up to them.

That's the advice about not giving advice.

Melanie McGregor is the communications and advancement specialist at the Canadian Mental Health Association Halton Region Branch, which provides mental health/addiction community support and education. Visit www.halton.cmha.ca for more information and follow @cmhahalton on Twitter.

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Here's a bit of advice ... giving advice isn't always good.

Imagine a friend comes to you talking about a problem with her partner. She likely needs someone to listen, try to understand and be supportive. However, as listeners, our minds often go to possible solutions to the problem and we may be tempted to say something like, "You need to go to counselling" or "You need to stop doing this or that."

While usually well-intentioned, giving advice can backfire. Your friend may think you don't trust her to find her own solutions.

She may think that you are rushing her and that you just want to get to the solution and end the conversation.

She may not agree with the advice and feel awkward. Or, she may take the advice and then blame you or trust you less if things go south.

Did you think incontinence was just a "woman's issue"?

Learn how physiotherapy can help men with Pelvic Health, including incontinence and pain after prostate surgery.

Incontinence can be dramatic following prostate surgery or radiation treatment. Men are alarmed by the immediate decrease in their quality of life that comes with being reliant on urinary pads throughout the day.



Did you know?

The scientific research clearly shows that men who receive physiotherapy BEFORE and AFTER prostate surgery gain control of their bladder quicker.

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NOTICE OF CONSTRUCTION

Watermain Installation and Water Servicing on Hornby Road and Sixth Line, Town of Halton Hills

Project number: PR-3263
Scheduled start date: October 2019
Scheduled completion date: August 2020
Contractor: Avertex Utility Solutions Inc.

For more information about Regional improvement projects:

- visit halton.ca
- sign up to receive email notice and updates
- email accesshalton@halton.ca or call 311

Meetings at Halton Region, 1151 Bronte Rd., Oakville, L6M 3L1
Visit halton.ca for full schedule.

Nov 20 9:30 a.m. Regional Council

Please contact us, as soon as possible, if you have any accessibility needs at Halton Region events or meetings.

Building a Better Halton

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