

Name _____

Helping a Friend Shine: Supporting Someone with a Possible Eating Disorder

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. To approach a friend with a possible eating disorder, I would first privately express my concern and care for them, using "I" statements to convey my feelings. I would choose a time and place conducive to open conversation, listen actively without interruptions, and avoid making assumptions or demands. I would offer information about eating disorders and available help, gently encouraging them to seek professional assistance. Throughout the conversation and beyond, I would be patient, understanding, and ready to provide ongoing support.
2. Making demands or ultimatums when trying to help a friend with an eating disorder can strain the friendship and create additional stress for your friend. Such demands may lead to feelings of resentment, guilt, or shame, making it less likely for them to seek help. It's essential to approach the situation with care, empathy, and support rather than pressure.
3. Consistent support and understanding are crucial in a friend's recovery journey from an eating disorder because these conditions often involve complex emotional and psychological struggles. Knowing that they have a supportive friend who listens, empathizes, and stands by them can provide invaluable encouragement and motivation to continue seeking help and working towards recovery.
4. Self-care and self-compassion play a significant role in supporting a friend with a possible eating disorder and promoting their overall well-being. Encouraging your friend to practice self-care activities, such as relaxation exercises and mindfulness, can help them cope with stress and emotional distress. Self-compassion fosters a kind and understanding relationship with oneself, which is essential in overcoming the challenges of an eating disorder. It also encourages self-acceptance and self-empowerment in the recovery process.

