Tips for Helping Someone Experiencing Domestic Violence

As a friend, family member or co-worker of someone in an abusive relationship, it’s easy to feel powerless. But you can do your part by starting a conversation, offering support and suggesting ways to get help. Here are some tips for having this conversation.

1. **Offer your support.**
   Let them know this is a judgement free conversation and that they’re not alone.
   - “I know this is difficult to discuss, but please know you can talk to me about anything.”
   - “You are not alone. I care about you, and I’m here for you, no matter what.”
   - “You are not responsible for what’s going on.”
   - “No matter what you did, you do not deserve this.”

2. **Express your concern for their safety.**
   Don’t be afraid to let them know you’re worried. It’s important to help them recognize the abuse while acknowledging the difficulty of their situation.
   - “I see what’s going on and I want to help.”
   - “You don’t deserve to be treated that way. Good partners don’t say or do those kinds of things.”
   - “I’m worried about your safety and am afraid you’ll get really hurt next time.”
   - “Please know that if you need to talk, you can always come to me.”

3. **Avoid confrontation.**
   If they’re not ready to talk about it, don’t force it. Recognize the right time. Make sure they know you will be there if/when they are ready.
   - “I’m here to help and am always available, even if you don’t want to talk about it now.”
   - “Remember, you’re not alone — I am here for you when you’re ready.”

4. **Let them make their own decisions.**
   Any judgement about their ability to make decisions may deter them from confiding in you in the future. Encouragement is key.
   - “I want to help. What can I do to support you?”
   - “How can I help protect your safety?”

5. **Provide ways to get help.**
   Help them look into available resources, like the National Domestic Violence Hotline (800-799-SAFE), the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV.org) or a local domestic violence agency.
   - “Here is the number to our local domestic violence agency. They can help provide shelter, counseling or support groups.”
   - “If you need to go to the police, court or a lawyer, I can go with you to offer support.”

The Allstate Foundation has been committed to ending domestic violence through financial empowerment since 2005. Visit AllstateFoundation.org/EndDomesticViolence for additional survivor and ally resources.