Follow Up

Continue to pray. If your friend refuses to listen, follow the Matthew 18:15-17 model.

“... if they refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.”

—Matthew 18:15-17

The Prayer of a Courageous Friend

“Lord, I place myself and my friend in Your hands. For myself, I ask for wisdom in interacting with him/her and that You lead us to appropriate help and resources if needed. Help me to be caring, honest, and patient. I ask that You help us to face the problem squarely and without shame. Please give us hope when change seems impossible. Thank You. Amen.”

For Help and More Information

Office of Student Life
Student life deans are trained to help students lovingly confront a friend as well as intervene when necessary.

BC252 • ext. 6300

Counseling Services
Counseling Services provides free, confidential counseling to students dealing with a variety of relationship issues, including friendships.

Townhouse H1 • ext. 8540

Office of Campus Ministries
Campus ministries staff is available to provide spiritual support and mentoring.

HC325 • ext. 6372

Resources

- Wheaton College (Loving Acts of Confrontation brochure)

Confrontation: Putting Costly Love into Action

The Prayer of a Courageous Friend
What Does It Mean to Be a Courageous Friend?

Friendship is one of God’s greatest gifts and a true friend impacts our lives in incredible ways. As we grow in our friendships, there are many places along the way where we make choices—the degree of self-disclosure, honest communication, acceptance, forgiveness, and time spent. At times friendship may even require that we confront, which takes courage.

Confronting people we care about can feel challenging, even impossible! Included in this brochure is a suggested method that can guide your conversation. As a foundation, here are two important points worth remembering:

• God is committed to helping us in our relationships. Scripture is crystal clear—God is for you. He is committed to helping you grow healthy relationships in your life.

• No person is perfect at confrontation. As friendship is a process, so is confrontation.

A 7-Step Guide to Confrontation in Friendship

I Pray (Ephesians 6:18)
As you consider your friendship and before you confront a brother or sister, first spend time in prayer examining your own heart and life. Acknowledge your need for God’s guidance.

Sample Prayer: “Jesus, I value this friendship and need Your help to share how I feel and think. Please help me to understand how my choices, my perspective, and my attitudes are involved in this conflict. Please allow this conversation to be both real and helpful.”

I Feel (Ephesians 4:2)
Share with your friend how you feel about the ways you see him/her acting. Remove blame from the interaction.
• I get scared when...
• I feel frustrated when...

I Listen (James 1:19)
Be willing to listen carefully to what your friend says. A variety of responses can be expected. Many people will say nothing. They will not be prepared for this or will not be ready to talk to you. Some may become angry. Others may thank you and say they’ll make changes. Still others may share with you a problem that goes well beyond your ability to help. As you listen, remember to stay open to the Holy Spirit.

I Want (Colossians 3:16a; Hebrews 10:24)
Share with your friend what you hope for him/her to do.
• I want you to talk to someone about the problems you have been having.
• I want you to be honest with your professor/friend.
• I want you to get the help you need.

I Will (Romans 12:10)
Share with your friend what you are able and willing to do to help. Know your limits. For serious problems, you do not want to become a substitute for professional care.
• I am willing to meet with you regularly as an accountability partner.
• I will go with you to arrange an appointment with a counselor.

I See (Galatians 6:1a)
Share with your friend exactly what he/she has done that concerns you. Understand that you have one perspective and be open to the possibility that you are misinterpreting what you hear and see. As much as is possible, present facts, not impressions. Ask open-ended, clarifying questions where necessary.
• I see you isolating yourself and not eating.
• I overheard the hurtful things you said about me.
• I saw you cheat on the exam last week.
• I saw you come in late several times in the last two weeks, and I smelled alcohol on your breath.

I Care (1 Peter 1:22)
Let prayer continue to guide your words and actions with your friend. Choose a time to talk when you are calm and rational, not angry or upset. Reminding your friend that you care for him/her is extremely important. A defensive response will be less likely if your friend sees that you are caring, concerned, and on his/her side.
• I value our friendship, and I’m upset because I see you doing things that are dangerous.
• I care about this community, and what you’re doing goes against what we have agreed to.
• I love you, and I don’t want you to hurt yourself.

2. How will these characteristics guide my actions with my friend?
3. How might I have contributed to this issue and need to change and/or ask for forgiveness?

1Pray
2See
3Feel
4Listen
5Want
6Will
7Care

I Care (1 Peter 1:22)
Let prayer continue to guide your words and actions with your friend. Choose a time to talk when you are calm and rational, not angry or upset. Reminding your friend that you care for him/her is extremely important. A defensive response will be less likely if your friend sees that you are caring, concerned, and on his/her side.

• I value our friendship, and I’m upset because I see you doing things that are dangerous.
• I care about this community, and what you’re doing goes against what we have agreed to.
• I love you, and I don’t want you to hurt yourself.

I See (Galatians 6:1a)
Share with your friend exactly what he/she has done that concerns you. Understand that you have one perspective and be open to the possibility that you are misinterpreting what you hear and see. As much as is possible, present facts, not impressions. Ask open-ended, clarifying questions where necessary.

• I see you isolating yourself and not eating.
• I overheard the hurtful things you said about me.
• I saw you cheat on the exam last week.
• I saw you come in late several times in the last two weeks, and I smelled alcohol on your breath.

2. How will these characteristics guide my actions with my friend?
3. How might I have contributed to this issue and need to change and/or ask for forgiveness?

I Feel (Ephesians 4:2)
Share with your friend how you feel about the ways you see him/her acting. Remove blame from the interaction.
• I get scared when...
• I feel frustrated when...

I Listen (James 1:19)
Be willing to listen carefully to what your friend says. A variety of responses can be expected. Many people will say nothing. They will not be prepared for this or will not be ready to talk to you. Some may become angry. Others may thank you and say they’ll make changes. Still others may share with you a problem that goes well beyond your ability to help. As you listen, remember to stay open to the Holy Spirit.

I Want (Colossians 3:16a; Hebrews 10:24)
Share with your friend what you hope for him/her to do.
• I want you to talk to someone about the problems you have been having.
• I want you to be honest with your professor/friend.
• I want you to get the help you need.

I Will (Romans 12:10)
Share with your friend what you are able and willing to do to help. Know your limits. For serious problems, you do not want to become a substitute for professional care.
• I am willing to meet with you regularly as an accountability partner.
• I will go with you to arrange an appointment with a counselor.

2. How will these characteristics guide my actions with my friend?
3. How might I have contributed to this issue and need to change and/or ask for forgiveness?