NORTHERN EDGE COUNSELING

You Don't Have to Know How to Fix It

A guide to supporting someone you care about when they seem stuck or are having a hard time.

You've noticed something. Someone you care about seems stuck, frustrated, or carrying more than usual. You might not know why. You might not even know if it means anything. But you can still ask how they're doing.

Noticing and wondering are good. Figuring out someone else's life for them is where things get tricky.

This guide comes from how we approach people at Northern Edge Counseling: curiosity before certainty, respect for the whole person, and support that leaves the big decisions in the person's own hands.

WHAT YOU MIGHT NOTICE

There's no checklist here. Just a few situations where a conversation might make sense.
Maybe the person you care about:

- keeps coming back to the same frustrating pattern, or seems to be using more energy than usual just to keep things together
- seems tired of managing how other people see them, or talks about wanting their relationships to feel different
- has done real work on themselves, like therapy, reading, and practice, and feels like something still hasn't shifted
- understands exactly what's going on and still feels stuck
- says they don't know what else to try
- or simply tells you they're having a hard time

None of this means something is wrong. These are just moments when asking might help.

HOW TO START THE CONVERSATION

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When you're ready, pick a reasonably private, low-pressure moment. Begin with something you've noticed or something they've already told you. Then check whether you've got it right. "Am I reading that right?" gives them room to tell you you're not. You want them to feel cared for, not judged. Curiosity is your best friend here—keep asking questions as long as it feels natural to you and helpful to them.

Solutions may be tempting at this point. Before offering any, ask what they think would help. If they're not sure, it's fine to leave it there and come back to it another time.

Try questions like these:

- You've mentioned this more than once—do you want to talk about it?
- What would feel helpful right now?
- Do you want me to listen or help think through options?

Remember: This is a conversation starter, not a fix-it clinic. They don't have to agree with you or tell you everything they're feeling. Even if you suggest therapy, they may not be on board. And that's okay.

HELPING WITHOUT TAKING OVER

When it's time to go further—you'll know because they asked—offer your support without becoming their therapist or trying to overhaul their life. Take them seriously. Help them think through the options. Share what you know from your own experience, if it's useful. Make resources easy to find by sending links or finding phone numbers. And stay available for another conversation.

Your job is to be in their corner. It's not your job to diagnose a problem, convince them something is wrong, find the perfect treatment, push through their reluctance, or make sure they follow through.

Caring about someone isn't the same as taking charge of them. You can do the first without the second.

THERAPY AS AN OPTION

If therapy comes up in your conversation, frame it as something worth looking into, not a verdict. Therapy doesn't have to mean something is seriously wrong, and it isn't only for a crisis. It can simply be a way to work on something that isn't changing on its own. Try connecting it to what they want to feel different, not to what you think is wrong. Good therapists offer knowledge and tools—their clients remain the authority on what they want to change.

A few ideas to consider:

Be curious, not certain

Invite discussion without pressure

Describe what you've noticed, but don't diagnose

Try "Would you be interested in…?" instead of "You need…"

HOW NORTHERN EDGE COULD FIT IN

If the person you care about is open to talking about what therapy might look like. Northern Edge Counseling may be worth a look.

Many people who come to Northern Edge have already done real work to understand themselves. They've made progress, maybe with another therapist, and still feel stuck or disconnected. They may be tired of describing the problem without feeling much change, and wonder if there's another way.

Northern Edge therapists pay attention to what's happening in the body and nervous system, not only in thoughts. The relationship between client and therapist is a real part of the work. And therapy adapts to what each person brings, rather than following a predetermined path.

IF THEY WANT TO EXPLORE NORTHERN EDGE

Choosing a therapist is a little like dating. Credentials matter, but so does whether you click. That's why the first step at Northern Edge is a free 15-minute pre-consultation. They can choose any Northern Edge therapist who sounds like a good match, or schedule with Jakkie, who'll help figure out who might fit best. If no one at Northern Edge seems right, Jakkie will help point them toward another therapist when she can.

It's a conversation about fit, not a commitment to start therapy. If they seem interested, they can learn more about Northern Edge at northernedgecounseling.com/explore.

Ways we work:

- Individual therapy
- Couples therapy
- Ketamine-assisted psychotherapy (KAP)
- Equine-assisted psychotherapy
- Other body-aware and experiential approaches, such as EMDR, IFS, and biofeedback

Neither of you needs to know which one fits. That comes later.

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THIS GUIDE ISN'T FOR EMERGENCIES. IF YOU OR A PERSON YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT IS IN CRISIS, CALL OR TEXT 988 (SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE) OR CALL 911.

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