

“My friend has started smoking. How can I offer to help her quit without offending her?”

Your friend probably knows it’s not healthy to smoke. And if she’s a member of the Church, she knows smoking is against the Word of Wisdom. So the best way to help her is not to criticize her but to encourage her to overcome the habit.

When you discuss this problem with her, let her know you are doing so because you care about her, her health, and her spiritual well-being. If you find that she wants to quit smoking, be supportive and encouraging. You may want to read *Preach My Gospel*, page 189, which gives several ideas for helping people overcome addictions.

Many investigating the Church have been able to quit smoking when they learned about the Word of Wisdom. This change came not only because of their increased motivation but also because of spiritual blessings. The Lord blessed them to lose the desire to smoke and to gain the desire to be obedient. Consider inviting your friend to fast and pray with you for this blessing. **NE**

Ask How You Can Help



Alysha S., 13, Utah, USA

Tell her that you love and care about her. In a nice way, remind her that smoking is not healthy for the body. Tell her that you would love to help her in any way you can, and ask what you can do.

Be an Example

When I was in high school, many of my friends started smoking. I was the only member of the Church who belonged to that group of friends. They knew that I am a member of the Church. One time they asked me why I didn’t smoke. I just smiled and humbly answered, “We know that the Bible says our body is a temple, and it is a special gift given to us. Therefore, we need to love and care for the gift given to us because it comes from God.” They responded by saying that maybe I was right and that we need to care for our bodies. I shared my testimony about the Word of Wisdom with them. If we show care for our bodies, we will be blessed with good health and knowledge. I knew because of the expressions on their faces that they believed what I had shared with them. Since that day I have seen an improvement in them. Sharing your testimony with those who struggle with smoking can help them to choose the right.

Michael T., 18, Palawan, Philippines

Encourage Her to Pray



First, I would pray to Heavenly Father to touch her heart, to help her understand the importance of the Word

of Wisdom, and to help her change. I would remind her of the adverse effects of smoking, both spiritually and physically. I would also remind her of her worth as a potential mother and that her body is the temple of God and that Heavenly Father will not be happy if she defiles it. I would encourage her to pray for help.

Daniel C., 17, Rivers, Nigeria

Gain Trust



I've always thought that talking with friends about problems they are facing is the best way for them to trust

you. Showing concern lets them know that you care about them and what they are going through. Once you have a better knowledge of what they're facing, you can give suggestions and offer to help. This will show your friends that someone cares enough to tell them to stop harming themselves.

Blaine L., 18, Arizona, USA

Show Love

The first thing you need to do is show your love for and sincere interest in her. Once she knows that you care about her, you need to speak with her politely and humbly about her decision to start smoking. Remind her who she is and her worth as a person and the harm that smoking will bring her. You could

also quote the scripture passage that talks about the Word of Wisdom and the blessings that it brings (see D&C 89). If we avoid judging, it will be easier to reach people's hearts.

Mariana S., 18, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Care for Our Bodies



A friendship is such a delicate area to impose your personal feelings and opinion on. It is even more difficult

when matters of the gospel are involved. I encourage you to express your care for your friend and explain to her that smoking is unhealthy. Express that you wish no harm to come to her on the physical level; and when the moment presents itself, share your personal feelings regarding the Word of Wisdom. Heavenly Father blesses us when we take care of one of His most precious gifts to us: our bodies.

Kent P., 21, Alberta, Canada

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

NEXT QUESTION

"How should I react when I'm ridiculed for being a member of the Church and for trying to maintain my standards?"

Send us your answer and photo by September 15, 2009.

Go to newera.lds.org, click Submit Your Material, and then select Questions and Answers.

You can also write to us at:

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New Era, Q&A 9/09

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EXTEND A HELPING HAND

"Many of our young people are tugged in the wrong direction and enticed to partake of the sins of the world. Yearningly such individuals seek for the strength of those who have the ability to stand firm for truth. Through righteous living and by extending the helping hand and the understanding heart, you can rescue, you can save. How great will then be your joy. How eternal will be the blessing you will have conferred."

President Thomas S. Monson, "An Example of the Believers," *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 98.