

Give Me a Call

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Since I'm living alone in an apartment, a lot of my friends often ring me up around midnight. As is often the case with university students or ESS members, some of them give me a call even past one or two.

The other day, one of them woke me up around 12:30, I wondered who it was and got very angry. But as soon as I heard the voice of the caller, smile spread over my face, because, as you may have already noticed, it was from a girl. But she was very serious on the phone. So I asked her, "What's the matter?" After a few seconds of silence, she answered in a feeble voice, "I just want someone to talk to."

I'm sure that some of you here have had the same kind of experience before-making a telephone call just because you need someone to talk to. Especially, when we are confused, we often call our friends or we meet them to discuss those matters until they make sense.

Similar cases can be found in our society. For example, a variety of personnel advice services are available on the telephone such as "Life-line." If we take a look at newspapers or magazines, we can find a multitude of personal advice columns everyday. "Ann Landers" and "Dear Abby" are among the most popular. In fact, Ann Landers receives thousands of letters a week.

Of course, I don't think that many people here have sent letters to such columns or made telephone calls to these personal advice services. Some of you might even say, "I'm not so weak."

But what about tomorrow? Can anybody say with confidence that they will never be depressed? Can anybody really say that they will overcome all adversity? Can you face all adversity by yourself?

I doubt I can. But even when I am down, if I have someone to talk to, someone who encourages me, and at times criticizes me, I find that my problems are that much easier to deal with.

Let me talk about a very funny couple here. The husband doesn't talk much at home. On the contrary, his wife was always talking. She looks really happy when she is talking. But last spring, she had to undergo an operation to remove a polyp in her throat and she was prohibited from speaking for several weeks. This order depressed her. She thought that she will lead a miserable life. But knowing her serious condition. Her husband suddenly changed. He became a talkative person or at least tried to be such a man. After coming back from work, he sat beside her bed. He talked to her, encouraged her, and tried to cheer her

up every day. Thanks to his efforts, she recovered earlier than expected. But just after her recovery he lost his voice from talking too much, and he had to go to the hospital where his wife had been staying. Can you guess who these people are? As a matter of fact, they are my parents.

Of course, I didn't mean to make fun of them. Nobody can deny my father's role in my mother's recovery. After getting out of the hospital, my mother said that she never felt lonely because my father had encouraged her and he had always been at her side.

In the course of our lives, we often face troubles and meet hardships. Sometimes we feel lonely and miserable because it's so hard to overcome them. So, sometimes we make as many telephone calls as possible to our friends. Some of us talk to as many people as we can. Some of us write to personal advice columns. The reason is, I'm sure, that deep in our hearts we seek someone who supports us, who always encourages us, and who is always with us.

Each individual is not strong enough to solve all the problems by himself. But we can help each other and encourage each other, we will never feel lonely or miserable. At least, when my friends are in trouble, I want to be the one they can always talk to, and when something good happens to them, I want to be the one with whom they can share that happiness.

Well, let's get back to my girlfriend's telephone call. Our conversation lasted for an hour. I don't know whether or not I could encourage her. But if I may quote a poem, here is what I would like to say:

*When you need someone
To talk to
Talk to me
When you need someone
To laugh with
Laugh with me
When you need someone
To advise you
Turn to me
When you need someone
To help you
Let me help you*

And to everybody here today, I would like to say, if you are ever lonely and need a friend, "Give me a call." I will be the one you can talk to.

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