
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everybody:

Just for your information, this edition of WUD is the 251st time that this message is coming to you. Yes, that's right – do the math! We started in 2008 (August, to be exact) – that's 52 weeks times five years, with no WUD for two different weeks in 2011 and an extra issue each in 2009 and 2010. So far this year we've logged 24 WUDs and we are almost mid-way in the year. People always told me I was full of BS and now there's proof. (I know what you're thinking, but that's not it. It's Blue Skies.)

Shifting gears, I have a book of daily devotionals that I look at every day, thus a “daily devotional” – however I'm not always consistent. Sometimes I get into a rush to get out the door and don't take time to read it. But this morning I was able to read my thought for the day. It talked about the difference between being friendly and approachable to everyone, but at the same time, not everyone can be our friend.

Of course, that not only applies to us as staff, but also to our youth. Think back, that's a lesson that is part of the maturation process and it's a really hard thing to learn. Our youth are challenged by this concept, as peer relationships are simultaneously very important to them and a daily struggle to maintain. I'm sure it's very difficult for some of our kids (and some of us adults, too) to discern when someone is good for them or when a so-called friend is trying to use them.

When you think about the people you call friends (as opposed to acquaintances), do they add to your life or do they only take from you? Are they genuine friends, or only acting at being your “friend” for what they can get from you? When you make the effort to reach out time after time and you never hear from your “friends” unless you make the effort, you really find out who your friends are. Do they rely on you for comfort in sorrow, solving their problems, picking up the pieces when they are upset, helping them when money is short, but are never there for you when you need a friend? The question to ask yourself is, “Am I doing all the giving, or is this a mutually beneficial relationship?” You've heard the old saying, “A friend in need is a friend indeed.” That's what we are talking about here.

We consistently teach our kids to make healthy decisions and choices, and there may be no more important area for them in which to make healthy decisions than when they are choosing their friends. Peer relationships, for better or worse, are often the most important ones to teenagers, and our youth in particular need to learn discernment. They must learn to choose well, or they will choose poorly, which can in turn have a positive or negative effect on their future.

As a member of the staff, in choosing my own friends, do I demonstrate to the youth that healthy choices lead to a healthy life? Believe me when I tell you, both our own children and the youth we work with will see the result of our choices.

But for now, I'll close with my thanks to each and every member of the OJJ family, in every office and facility, because you all have a choice, and you choose to work with OJJ kids, and to give 100 percent every day to meet the mission.

Sincerely,
“Doc”

Dr. Mary Livers

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