

# A word from good friends does much

## NOTES FROM ELISE:

I heard from a friend this past weekend. Nothing special to say — just hello. My friend knew I'd been through a rough time recently and wanted to check to see that I was okay. It made me feel good to know my friend cared. It felt good to have an uncritical ear hear my story.

I started to realize then how good friends can help you stay healthy. Having them there —

knowing they care, knowing they'll listen when you need a shoulder to cry on — and knowing that when you're making a fool of yourself they'll find a private way to let you know.

Most people have lots of friends but all of us have a few special ones who are in a category all by themselves. Many times these longstanding friendships are people we have known most of our lives. But

some of them are relatively new friends who have just struck the right note.

Imagine how grim life would be without them. When the times are good, having a friend to share them with makes them so much better.

And when the times are bad, they share the burden and ease the pain so you can make it through each day. The mental and emotional strength they willingly share with us can make the difference between

coping or going under with stress.

The funny thing is that people can be good friends even when distance and time keep you apart. I have childhood friends I only see once or twice a year — yet the warmth has never departed. When I'm with them, the love reaches out and envelopes us, made more poignant by the memories and experiences we share.

As trite as the saying may

sound, it bears repeating. Have you hugged a friend today? Have you let them know how much they mean? Funny, isn't it? How strange it seems to think about telling a friend how much they mean.

We all tend to just assume they know. And most of the time, they do. That's what makes them so special. But when something is important, it's worth a little extra effort, isn't it?

'Til next month . . .