

How to have a conversation about mental health



mind.org.uk

With 1 in 4 of us experiencing a mental health problem and suicide being the leading cause of death for men under 45, we all know someone who needs support. If you're worried about the mental health of a mate, read through Mind's tips on how to start a conversation.

1. Know that you can help and make a difference

For many people, starting a conversation about mental health can feel uncomfortable but remember, it could be life changing. Have confidence that it's the right thing to do and try to see it through.

2. How to get started

Where are you going to start the conversation? Try and choose a place that your mate will be comfortable in. On the way to or from a match could be good, talking and walking can be easier than sitting face to face with someone.

Practice what you are going to say. This can be in your head or out loud. Clearly, you want to ask if they are ok, but try asking a few times so they know you are serious about listening.

Be interested in their responses and show you are listening. You could say "That sounds really difficult", "Thanks for telling me", "I'm glad you have opened up to me".

You might also want to ask "What does it feel like?", "What kind of thoughts are you having?", "What are the things that make you feel better", "How can I help?"

3. Do's and don'ts

- Do be prepared to listen
- Don't dismiss or make their problems seem less important
- Do tell them you appreciate them opening up to you
- Don't compare them to anyone else
- Do ask if there is anything specific you can do to help

4. Have your mate's back

Don't treat them differently to normal. Think about what you enjoy doing together and make some plans. Whether it's going to see a band, playing sport together, taking a walk or going to the cinema, letting them know you are there can make a big difference. Let them know you have their back.

5. Point them in the right direction

You don't have to fix things for them yourself. You can point them in the right direction for professional help. See below for our services including our website: www.mind.org.uk and particularly these links: '[Helping someone else seek help](#)' '[Where to start](#)' '[Mental health problems - introduction](#)' and '[Wellbeing](#)'

Support and Information

Talk to us
Call our friendly confidential Infoline on **0300 123 3393** or text us on **86463**

Website
Explore mind.org.uk for plenty of helpful advice and information about mental health

Local support
Locate your nearest local Mind for help and support - mind.org.uk/localminds

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