

5 WAYS

To Support Someone Who Might be Struggling



Let others know you are open to talking about mental health



Our everyday words and actions communicate our attitudes about mental health. Be aware of the messages you might be sending to others. Normalize that mental health is part of our overall health. If you feel comfortable doing so, sharing your own experiences getting through hard times can send a strong message to others that you are a safe person to talk to.

“Mental health is just as important as physical health.”

“I went through a rough time last year. I talked to a counselor, and it really helped.”

Start a Conversation

Sometimes it is hard to know what to say to someone we think might be struggling, so we just don't say anything at all. Talking about mental health is the first step to supporting others and helping someone get connected with resources that might help. Start by letting them know you care and that you've noticed a change. Ask questions to better understand.



“Hey, I've noticed you haven't been joking around with us like you normally do, and yesterday you seemed pretty upset. I care about you and have been wondering how you're doing.”

Really Listen



Give your full attention to the person speaking. Ask questions to better understand the person's experience, and offer non-judgmental support. We often become distracted by the urge to share our own thoughts or offer solutions. We usually can't fix what's happening for the other person, but we can offer care and encouragement.

“What you're going through sounds really hard. I'm glad you told me.”

Be Prepared to Talk About Difficult Topics, Including Suicide

If you are worried that someone is considering suicide, ask them directly. If someone shares they are having thoughts of suicide, let them know it's a signal that it's time to speak to a mental health professional, and let them know that help is available. If a person is at immediate risk of harming themselves or someone else, stay with them, call 911, or take them to the nearest emergency room. Never promise to keep thoughts of suicide a secret.



“I know you're going through a lot right now and that things are really hard. I really think talking to someone to help you get through all of this could make a big difference.”

Help Make Connections



Taking the first steps to seek mental health or substance use care can be difficult. Offer to help find a provider or make connections with someone else who can help.

“If you're comfortable, I can help you find a counselor. We can do it together.”



If you are experiencing thoughts of suicide or are in distress, dial or text 988 for free, confidential support available 24/7.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE