

Let's Talk: Providing support to others.

Supporting someone's mental well-being isn't about having all the answers — it's about showing up.



When you recognize the signs that someone might be struggling, your support can make all the difference.

Be the support someone needs.

People don't always say when they are struggling, but their actions can show it. If you notice changes in someone's behavior, mood, or energy, they might need support.

Signs that someone may be struggling include:

- Pulling away from friends or family
- Lacking energy for activities they once enjoyed
- Acting irritable or having mood swings
- Losing interest in things that once mattered to them
- Expressing hopelessness or helplessness
- Using substances like alcohol or drugs more often
- Talking about wanting to escape or harm themselves

Approaching them with care and respect.

You don't need the perfect words; sometimes just letting them know you care and are there to listen when they're ready to talk is enough. Listening without judgment can help someone feel heard and understood.

Not sure how to start? Try one of these:

- I've noticed some changes in you lately. Are you okay? Want to talk?
- It seems like you're going through a lot. I'm here if you need someone to listen.
- Sometimes talking helps. I'm here whenever you're ready.
- You've seemed stressed. Is there anything I can do to help?

Overcoming barriers to talking about mental health.

Talking about struggles isn't always easy, especially in communities where mental health conversations are rare. But stigma doesn't have to stop us from reaching out.

Need immediate support?

Call or text 988, or chat at 988Colorado.com to connect with trained mental health specialists. Free. Confidential. 24/7.



| Question: | Answer: |
|---|---|
| <i>We don't usually talk about mental health or feelings in our family or community. How do we start?</i> | In many families and communities, struggles are kept private. But by speaking up, we can help break down barriers and create a more open and understanding environment. |
| <i>How can I help remove shame and make it safer to talk about mental health?</i> | Lead by example. Share your own experiences, offer resources, and remind people that asking for help is a sign of strength. When we talk about struggles openly, it helps others feel safer doing the same. |
| <i>How do I reassure a friend that they aren't a burden?</i> | People often stay silent because they worry that they're a burden. Let them know their feelings matter and they aren't alone. Remind them you care and want to hear what they're going through. |
| <i>What if they don't want to talk?</i> | Respect their space. Let them know you're there when they're ready. Check in again later, maybe then they'll be ready to share. |
| <i>What if they get mad or upset?</i> | Your goal is to show you care. If they react negatively, give them space and try again later. If the conversation is tough, take care of yourself too. Talk to someone you trust, set boundaries, or reach out for support. |
| <i>What if they want to talk, but it's not a good time for me?</i> | Let them know you want to listen and suggest a time when you can give them your full attention. Then circle back with them to make sure they know you really want it to happen. |
| <i>What if they think I'm overstepping my boundaries?</i> | Approach with empathy. Say, "I just want to check in because I care about you." |
| <i>What if I make things worse?</i> | You don't need to fix everything. Just being there and listening can make a difference. |
| <i>What if I don't know how to help?</i> | You don't need all the answers. Encourage them to reach out for professional support if needed. |

Know When to Seek Professional Help

Sometimes, a situation is too much to handle alone. Encourage professional support if you notice:

- They say life feels unbearable.
- Their mood swings or hopelessness seem severe.
- They withdraw completely from loved ones.
- They talk about harming themselves or others.
- They give away personal belongings.

What You Can Do:

Encourage them to reach out for professional support.

Help them connect with a crisis service, like 988 Colorado (call, text, or chat online).



Find more helpful tips at
[LetsTalkCO.org](https://www.LetsTalkCO.org)