



## Wellbeing Update - 2nd February 2021

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Hi everyone, I hope you are safe and well

This Thursday (4th) it is national '**Time to Talk**' day and the theme is 'The Power of Small' - the idea being that a small conversation can make a big difference. Please check in with your friends and family. Give someone a call and ask how they are. You may have to ask again 'how are you really?' if you are not convinced they are ok. That may be enough for them to open up about how they are really feeling.

### **Tips for talking about mental health**

There is no right way to talk about mental health, but these tips will guide you to make sure you're approaching it in a helpful way.

**1. Ask questions and listen** Asking questions can give the person space to express how they're feeling and what they're going through, and it will help you to understand their experience better. Try to ask questions that are open and not leading or judgemental – such as “how does that affect you” or “what does it feel like?”

**2. Think about the time & place** Sometimes it's easier to talk side by side rather than face to face. So, if you do talk in person, you might want to chat while you are doing something else. You could start a conversation when you're walking, cooking or stuck in traffic. However, don't let the search for the perfect place put you off, particularly at the moment when we can't meet with people outside of our households close enough to easily have a sensitive conversation.

**3. Don't try & fix it** It can be hard to see someone you care about having a difficult time but try to resist the urge to offer quick fixes to what they're going through. Learning to manage or recover from a mental health problem can be a long journey, and they've likely already considered lots of different tools and

strategies. Just talking can be really powerful, so unless they've asked for advice directly, it might be best just to listen.

**4. Treat them the same** When someone has a mental health problem, they're still the same person as they were before. And that means when a friend or loved one opens up about mental health, they don't want to be treated any differently. If you want to support them, keep it simple. Do the things you'd normally do.

**5. Be patient** No matter how hard you try, some people might not be ready to talk about what they're going through. That's ok – the fact that you've tried to talk to them about it may make it easier for them to open up another time.

And there are lots of things you can do to support them even if you're not talking:

- Doing things together
- Sending a text to let them know you're thinking of them
- Offering to help with day-to-day activities

I have also attached a poster and a bingo game from the Young minds website which you can access by clicking on the buttons at the end of this email. There are lots more resources for you to take a look at <https://youngminds.org.uk/>

Remember if you need to talk, please contact your tutor, Head of Year or contact me. We are very happy to listen and support you in any way we can.

Online counselling through Kooth is proving to be very popular and I have heard really positive feedback about it. It is free and the waiting time is relatively short. Take a look at their website for more information about this [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

Keep going and stay positive everyone... and be kind to yourselves.

Julie Ferman

Senior Lead for Student Wellbeing and Head of Year

Talking Tips Poster

TTT Bingo