

Mental Wellbeing: What to Say

One way to help stop mental health stigma is to talk about mental health. Have conversations about it. Easy right? Well... no, not really. For many, having a conversation about it can be stressful and can be a source of anxiety. Thoughts of "What do I say?" or "What if I say the wrong thing?" are common and it often keeps people from saying anything- which only adds to the stigma.

So, what can you say to someone if they express to you they are having mental health challenges? Here are some helpful Do Say and Don't Say phrases from MakeltOK.org:

Learn what to say to Make It OK



DO SAY

- "Thanks for opening up to me."
- "Is there anything I can do to help?"
- "How can I help?"
- "Thanks for sharing."
- "I'm sorry to hear that. It must be tough."
- "I'm here for you when you need me."
- "I can't imagine what you're going through."
- "People do get better."
- "Oh man, that sucks."
- "Can I drive you to an appointment?"
- "How are you feeling today?"
- "I love you."

DON'T SAY

- "It could be worse."
- "Just deal with it."
- "Snap out of it."
- "Everyone feels that way sometimes."
- "You may have brought this on yourself."
- "We've all been there."
- "You've got to pull yourself together."
- "Maybe try thinking happier thoughts."

Stop the Silence - Make It OK



Mental illness is a touchy subject, creating voids in conversation. Here are some tips to help you:

STOP THE SILENCE

If someone shares with you that they are experiencing a mental illness, they are opening up to you in a big way. Ask questions, show concern and avoid awkward silences.

BE NICE

It sounds simple enough, but try to say the right things with openness, warmth and caring.

LISTEN

In your conversation, try to do more of listening and less searching for a solution.

KEEP IN CONTACT

Offer to be available by phone, text, email, or meet up in person. Just be there.

DON'T IGNORE IT

Don't be afraid to ask about someone's well-being if you think they might be hurting. Trust your judgement.

OFFER HELP

Everyone is different, and may want very specific help or no help at all. Either way, ask and be open to the answer.

Learn more at Make It .org