

# Tips for helping someone open up when something's up



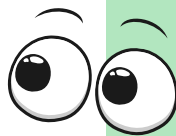
**MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK**  
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Here are some tips to help you spot when something might be up, open up a conversation and be a good listener.

## How to spot when something might be up

These are some of the signs that someone may not be okay:

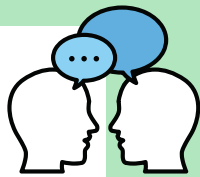
- Not wanting to do things they usually enjoy.
- Finding everyday things overwhelming.
- Not replying to messages, or being distant.
- Avoiding people or seeming quiet.
- Appearing restless or agitated.
- Easily tearful.
- Drinking or using drugs to cope with feelings.



## How to open up a conversation

Don't be shy to ask how someone's feeling:

- Choose a good time, and somewhere without distractions.
- Use open questions that need more than a yes/no answer.
- 'How are things? I've noticed you don't seem quite yourself.'
- Listen well. 'How's that making you feel?'
- Avoid giving your view of what's wrong, or what they should do.



## How to be a good listener

Showing you care builds trust to open up:

- Make eye contact and put away your phone.
- Focus completely on the other person.
- Pauses are fine, try not to jump in to fill a silence.
- Say back what you think it is they are wanting you to hear.
- Resist putting your own interpretation on it.
- Don't give up. Sometimes it can take a few tries!



## How to help someone get more help

If it feels like the person is really struggling to cope:

- 'Would you like to get some help?'
- 'Have you tried your GP?'
- 'Would you like me to come with you?'
- 'Did you know you don't have to be feeling suicidal to call Samaritans?'
- 'Samaritans is free, 24 hours a day if you're feeling low or worried too.'
- 'If it helps, you can talk to me any time.'

