



Unsure how you can help someone who may be struggling with their mental health?

**Spot. Support. Signpost.**  
could help...



**Spot | Support | Signpost**

# Spot the signs

- Changes in **behaviour and habits**
- Changes in **mood**
- Changes in **thoughts and feelings**
- Changes **physically**

**...or none of the above?**

Don't forget that everyone is unique, and we all have different ways of showing or talking about our experiences!



# Support them



Supporting someone with their mental health may seem daunting. **But small actions can make a big difference.**

Use Mind's **SUPPORT** acronym to help you...

See

Understand

Pose

Provide

Offer

Reassure

Thank

## See if urgent help is needed

Do you believe the person may have seriously harmed themselves, or taken steps to end their life? Or believe they may do this in the near future?

**If you or others feel at risk of harm  
call 999**

**If they're not safe by themselves  
help them get to A&E or stay with them and call  
999 for an ambulance**

**If you think they can keep themselves safe  
help them to make an emergency GP  
appointment or to contact a helpline;  
Samaritans (call 1116 123), Shout (text SHOUT to  
85258) or call NHS 111**

# Understand the best time and place for a conversation

## Time

Before or after the session.

It may be not always be possible to speak there and then. Instead, explain why you can't talk now and arrange a time to catch up.

## Place

A quiet, informal space away from the activity and group. Or maybe suggest going for a walk where there will be no distractions





# Pose open-ended questions

Try to give the person your full attention, and actively listen to what they're saying.

Asking open-ended questions can help you to learn more and understand better. Questions like:

“How have you been feeling since I last saw you?”

“Have you felt like this before? What happened, and what helped?”

“Can you tell me more about how you're feeling?”

# Provide validation for their feelings and experiences



Try to avoid assuming you know how they're feeling. "I understand how you're feeling," may not be helpful if you haven't gone through the same experiences as them.

Instead reassure them their feelings are valid – "It's okay to feel how you do."

And let them guide the conversation. If in doubt, ask – don't assume.

# Offer emotional support and show empathy

Listen to them without trying to fix their problems.

Try to avoid unhelpful cliches such as “pull yourself together”. Instead, show them you see what they're saying with phrases like “I appreciate this must be challenging”.



## **Reassure them it's good to talk**

**“I'm glad you spoke to me. I know it might have been difficult to talk about this, but you've taken a big step today.”**

**Empower the person to decide what they want to do next.**

## **Thank them and summarise**

Thank them for sharing how they are feeling. Summarise the conversation and anything you or they have agreed to do.

## Signpost them to help and services

“Ask them if they want information on how to find further support. You could signpost to the below.

It could be the first step into them getting help.

### Mind (18+)

call 0300 123 3393  
(9am-6pm weekdays)

### Childline (under 19s)

call 0800 1111 or  
access online chat

### Hub of Hope

local support via  
hubofhope.co.uk

### Childline (under 19s) ROI

call 1800 666 666 or  
access online chat

### Pieta House ROI

call 1800 247 274

### Shout text service

text SHOUT to 85258

### Samaritans

call 116 123

### Text About it (ROI)

text HELLO to 50808

### NHS

call 111 or make a GP  
appointment

### HSE (ROI)

call or make a GP  
appointment



# Look after yourself

We know supporting someone can be very rewarding. But it can also be emotionally overwhelming, and time consuming. Don't forget to look after yourself and prioritise self-care.

**TAMHI Toolkit**