



Recognizing mental health distress in others

Are you OK?

It's a simple question. For someone who is struggling, it can be difficult to answer.

Mental health problems are common.¹

Anyone can experience them.² If someone you know is struggling, they may have trouble speaking up for themselves.

Most people with mental health problems can, and do, get better. How can you help? You can start by recognizing signs in those around you. Early warnings can include:¹

- ☑ Eating or sleeping more or less than usual.
- ☑ Confused thinking, forgetfulness or reduced ability to concentrate.
- ☑ Feeling on edge, upset, angry, worried or scared.
- ☑ Extreme mood changes of highs and lows and fighting with or yelling at family and friends.
- ☑ Withdrawing from friends and activities.
- ☑ Significantly low energy.
- ☑ Feeling numb, helpless, hopeless or like nothing seems to matter.



Starting the conversation can open the door to getting your loved one the help they might need. Express your concern and offer your support.²

Here are some conversation starters you can use:

- ✓ I've been worried about you. Can we talk about what you are experiencing?
- ✓ How can I help you talk with your parents or someone else who cares about you?
- ✓ I am someone who cares and wants to listen. What do you want me to know about how you are feeling?
- ✓ Who or what has helped you deal with similar issues in the past?
- ✓ Sometimes talking to someone who has dealt with a similar experience helps. Do you know of others who have experienced these types of problems you can talk with?
- ✓ It seems like you are going through a difficult time. How can I help you find help?
- ✓ How can I help you find more information about mental health problems?
- ✓ I'm concerned about your safety. Have you thought about harming yourself or others?

Seek immediate medical assistance if you think your friend or family member is in any danger of harming themselves.

Talking about feelings of depression, anxiety or any mental health issues is never easy for anyone. Recognizing these symptoms is a step in the right direction toward getting them the right help. Offering to help them can make a difference in both your lives.

If you or someone you care about is considering suicide, call 988 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255).

Not a Livongo member? See if you're eligible for personalized health support at Go.Livongo.com/STATEOFVERMONT/New.

¹<https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/what-is-mental-health#early>

²<https://www.mentalhealth.gov/talk/friends-family-members>