

# Time to Listen

Your digital pack



# Time to Talk Day

Time to Talk Day is the nation's biggest mental health conversation. Happening every year, it's a day for friends, families, communities, and workplaces to come together to talk, listen and change lives.

Time to Talk Day 2024 will take place 1 February 2024. It's run by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness and is being delivered in partnership with Co-op for the third year running.

The more conversations we have, the better life is for everyone. Talking about mental health isn't always easy and sometimes it's even harder to say how you really feel. But a conversation has the power to change lives. Time to Talk Day is the perfect opportunity to start a conversation about mental health.

## Time to Listen

Often, when someone opens up to us about their mental health, our immediate reaction is to want to fix their problems. In doing so, we underestimate the power of listening. Simply giving someone space to talk, and listening to how they're feeling, can be really helpful in itself.

This Time to Talk Day we've collaborated with mental health experts across the Bradford District and Craven Health and Care Partnership to bring you top tips on how to listen and provide support when someone talks about their mental health.



**With the gift  
of listening  
comes the gift  
of healing.**

Catherine Doherty  
Social Activist



## The difference between hearing and listening

Hearing what someone says, and listening to their words, are not the same thing. There are fundamental differences between them. Listening can be harder work than hearing, but it's important to have people in our lives who listen to us and to listen to them in return.

# Top tips from our practitioners

## Take a walk

It can be daunting to sit down and speak to someone face to face so try to suggest taking a walk or going for a drive to have the conversation.



## Accept the uncomfortable emotions

It's important not to label emotions as bad or good. When listening to someone open up about their mental health, it's not about offering solutions, but accepting the emotion for what it is, and then reminding them that it's okay not to feel okay.



## Ask what they need

It's important to ask the person you're listening to what they need instead of assuming, so that we can understand how best to support them. Some people don't feel they have control in their lives and giving them choices can empower them.



## Clarify their intentions

When talking to someone about mental health, it's important to clarify what they are saying, especially if it's over text message. Asking questions to understand what they mean will make sure you can offer the right support.



## Show that you're listening

Give the person your full attention and use body language to show that you care. You can do this by nodding, making eye contact, or using affirming language if the person cannot see you.



## Listen authentically

Listen with empathy and try not to analyse what the person is saying. Remember that they are an individual, separate from you, so they may not react to a situation the same way as you would.



## Validate their feelings

Recognise and acknowledge that their feelings and emotions are important.



# Fill your own cup

Supporting someone else with their mental health can sometimes be stressful. Making sure that you look after your own wellbeing can mean that you have the energy, time and distance that you need to be able to help. Make sure to set boundaries and don't take too much on. Remember to talk to someone about how you're feeling.

# Conversation starters

There's no right or wrong way to talk about mental health. But these conversation starters may help if you are unsure how to talk to someone about their mental health. Asking questions can give the person space to express how they're feeling and what they're going through. And it can help you to understand their experience better.

“I know lots of people are finding things difficult at the moment and wondering when things will get easier. How are you doing?”

“All of these cost increases are so hard to keep up with. How are you feeling about the situation?”

“I wanted to check in and ask how you have been doing. How you have been managing with being at home/working/looking after your family?”

“You haven't seemed like yourself recently. Is there anything you want to talk about?”

“How are you feeling? I'm here to listen to you and support you.”

“I'd really like to spend more time with you. Let's go for a walk, grab something to eat, or go for coffee.”

“Would you like support or advice? What do you need from me?”

## Further resources

- [Talking tips | Time to Talk Day](#)
- [How to really listen to your child | YoungMinds](#)
- [How to support someone you're worried about | Samaritans](#)
- [Support finder | Healthy Minds](#)
- [Support for you | Mind in Bradford](#)
- [What we do | The Cellar Trust](#)
- [Roshni Ghar](#)

### First Response | 0800 952 1181

Urgent mental health crisis support 24 hours a day, seven days a week for people of all ages living in Bradford, Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven. When a First Response telephone assessment indicates the need for a face-to-face assessment, we will aim to see you within 4 hours.

### Guide-Line | 08001 884 884

Confidential, emotional support available every day and night from 8am until midnight.

You can also speak to someone on live chat at [www.mindinbradford.org.uk/chat](http://www.mindinbradford.org.uk/chat)