

**How can
I help?**

**What type of
questions might
you ask someone
who you are
concerned about?**

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How can I help?

The more open the question the better.

Questions that help someone explain what's on their mind instead of promoting a 'yes' or 'no' answer are the most useful.

Questions like:

- **When** "When did you realise?"
- **Where** "Where did that happen?"
- **What** "What did you think about that?"
- **How** "How did that make you feel?"

**How can
I help?**

**What changes might
you see in someone
who is struggling
and could
need support?**

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How can I help?

There is no one single answer to this question. There are lots of different things you might see but the most obvious one could be that you notice someone's behaviour differing from what you are used to.

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**How can
I help?**

**You think someone
needs support.**

**How can you
check they know
where to get help?**

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How can I help?

If someone has been feeling low for a while, it's a good idea to encourage them to seek support. That could be by talking to someone; a friend, colleague or counsellor but it could also be encouraging them to seek more practical help.

Useful questions you might ask them include:

- Have you talked to anyone else about this?
- How do you feel about asking for help?
- Would you like someone to come with you?

Or, for someone who is reluctant to get help:

- Is there someone you can talk to about this who you trust?
- If it helps, you can always talk to me.

You can also suggest that the following sources of help may be useful:

- Samaritans (by phone on **116 123** or email jo@samaritans.org).
- NHS 111 offers health advice in the UK and is free from landlines and mobiles.
- Your organisation's wellbeing/mental health champions or employee assistance programme.

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**How can
I help?**

**What can you do if
someone you care
about won't seek help?**

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How can I help?

If someone you care about is clearly struggling but can't or won't reach out for help or won't accept any help you offer, it's understandable to feel frustrated, distressed and powerless. It's important to accept that they are an individual, and that there are always limits to what you can do to support another person.

You can:

- Be patient. You won't always know the full story and there may be reasons why they are finding it difficult to ask for help.
- Offer emotional support and reassurance. Let them know you care about them and you'll be there if they change their mind.
- Inform them how to seek help when they're ready.
- Look after yourself, and make sure the support you're offering is not affecting your wellbeing.

You can't:

- Force someone to talk to you. It can take time for someone

to feel able to talk openly and putting pressure on them to might make them feel uncomfortable telling you about their experiences.

- Force someone to get help. As adults, we are all ultimately responsible for making our own decisions. This includes when, or if, we choose to seek help when we feel unwell.
- See a health care professional for someone else. A doctor may give you general information about symptoms or diagnoses but they won't be able to share any specific advice or details about someone else without their consent.

**How can
I help?**

**What emotional
support can I offer?**

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How can I help?

If someone lets you know that they are experiencing difficult thoughts and feelings it's not uncommon to feel unsure what to say. You don't need any special training to show someone you care about them.

- Listen.
- Offer reassurance.
- Be patient.
- Try not to make assumptions.
- Keep social contact.

**How can
I help?**

**How should you
start a conversation
with someone you're
concerned about?**

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How can I help?

Simply asking them if they are OK and then giving them the time and space to answer can make a huge difference.

- You don't need to be an expert.
- People don't need you to solve their problems.
- They just want to tell you what's going on.

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How can I help?

You know someone who has a diagnosed mental health issue.

Should you still ask them if they are OK?

SAMARITANS

How can I help?

If you knew someone was going through a tough time, you'd ask them how they are. So why should this be any different where mental health is concerned?

If someone doesn't want to open up, it's important to reassure them that it's okay to ask for help and that you are willing to listen when they are ready.

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**How can
I help?**

**Has anyone
ever made
an intervention?
How did it make
you feel?**

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How can I help?

There is no right or wrong answer here. Everyone who makes an intervention will have a reaction unique to themselves. It's important to listen to others, share experiences and be open about your feelings.

Intervening can leave someone feeling drained. That's OK. It's important you look after yourself and reach out to others if you need support.

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**How can
I help?**

**Is there a right
place and time
to have a chat?**

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How can I help?

Getting someone to open up about emotions can be tricky. Often the conversation is one that will be personal so you don't want others listening in. Choosing the right place can make a difference.

- Find somewhere comfortable and private.
- Try to remove any distractions before you start. If your colleague is thinking about work, they'll be unfocused and perhaps not in the right frame of mind.
- Making eye contact is a good way to get their attention.
- Listen and be present. You can make a huge difference just by listening.
- It's natural to feel nervous, but try and use relaxed body language. Not crossing your arms and legs but sitting next to them or facing them shows that you care and are ready to listen. If they decide they're keen to talk about things, give them space to open up to you.
- Don't push it. If they're not ready to talk, let them know you're completely fine with that. Be patient if they need to think over your offer to talk. If they really don't want help, don't give up on them, just be patient.