HEALTH HERO®

Time to Talk Day 2023

Time to Talk Day is a UK-wide initiative to get people talking about mental health. Approximately only 1 in 8 adults with a mental health problem are currently getting any treatment. On Tuesday 2nd February, it's time to break the silence and start conversations that could improve lives.

By talking about our own experiences, listening to others, and encouraging open dialogue about mental health, we can help reduce stigma and make it easier for those struggling with mental illness to seek support. We encourage everyone, whether they are experiencing poor mental health or not, to join the conversation. Together, we can help create a more inclusive society that embraces differences and celebrates positive mental wellbeing.

February

02

Only **1 in 8 adults** with a mental health problem are currently getting treatment

The importance of mental health

Mental illness affects 1 in 4 people each year across the UK, and it's time to take mental health seriously. Recognising that mental illnesses are real, have serious consequences, and can be managed with time, support, and care is important. Mental health is a complex issue but talking about it openly is the first step towards understanding it. By participating in conversations like Time to Talk Day, we can create a more inclusive society where everyone feels welcomed and supported regardless of their mental state. We encourage everyone to use this day as an opportunity to open up conversations about mental health and help reduce the stigma around the topic.

Ending the stigma

The conversation surrounding mental health must move away from judgement and instead focus on compassion and understanding. Time to Talk Day gives us an opportunity to start this movement and make mental health a priority in our society. We must come together and support each other, particularly those who are struggling with mental illness. It's time for everyone to speak out about their own experiences, listen to others, and show understanding for one another.
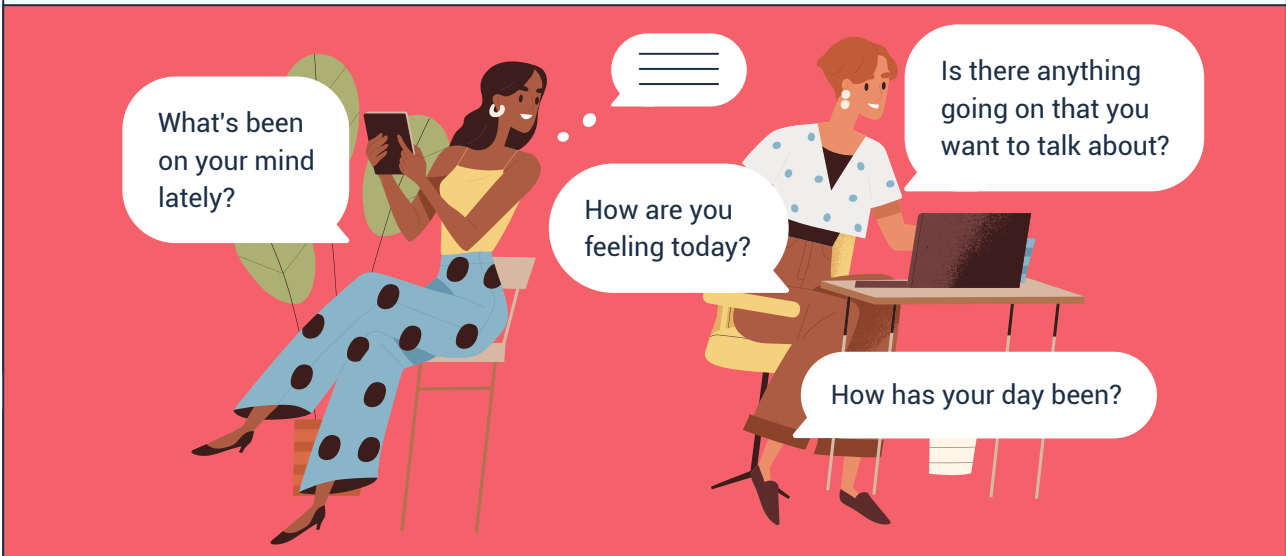
Discussing mental health with colleagues

Mixed anxiety and depression is Britain's most common mental disorder – and is estimated to be the cause of one fifth of days lost from work in Britain, according to the Mental Health Foundation. Mental health can affect an individual's ability to work, which is why it's important for co-workers to be aware of how they're doing and what they might need.

There are many ways to start a conversation about mental health with a colleague. Some easy conversation starters include:

What's been on your mind lately?

How are you feeling today?

Is there anything going on that you want to talk about?

How has your day been?

You can also ask your colleague if they need help with anything, or if there's something specific you can do that would make their day easier. The key is to listen without judgement and be supportive.

Learning to be an active listener

It's not your job to diagnose or offer mental health treatment, but being present and listening can make a big difference. It's important for them to feel like you're paying attention.

If your colleague is open to talking, try to understand their mental health needs and work with them on a plan for managing their mental health. Ask what kind of support they need and how you can help them. If the conversation makes you uncomfortable, remember that it takes courage to talk about mental health.

1

Making eye contact with someone during a conversation shows that they are the only person who matters to you at the moment. Looking at them while speaking makes for a more engaging conversation and removes any doubts about where your attention lies.

2

There are a few things to keep in mind about eye contact: not everyone is comfortable with looking directly at someone or being looked at. Some people may be shy or uncertain, others may be on the autistic spectrum, or there may be cultural aspects to consider. This is okay as long as you remain focused in a relaxed and gentle way on the other person.

3

Making judgments and jumping to conclusions can make it hard for you to communicate with other people. You need to be open to their point of view if you want to understand them. When you are listening, show empathy and patience by letting the person speak at their own pace. Don't interrupt them. Wait until they ask for your opinion before giving it. If you can't wait, check with the other person first if they want to hear it.

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Empathy is the ability to understand how someone else feels. You do this by imagining how you would feel if you were in their place. Empathy is important for good communication because it helps you understand what the other person is saying.

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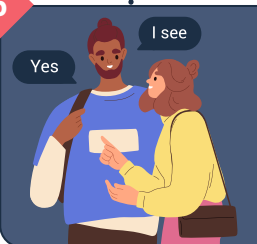
Making small gestures to show you're listening is important. You can do this by nodding, saying things like "I see" or "Yes", and reflecting what the other person has said. This means using similar language or paraphrasing what they've said.

6

Listening is an art that takes patience, skill and practice to master. One of the most important skills in being a good listener is asking meaningful questions. Try not to interrupt. Wait for a pause, and ask the speaker something like: "Can we go back to what you said a bit earlier? I want to make sure I understand…".

By having an open and honest conversation about mental health, you can help your colleague access the right support. This could be a mental health professional or work-related resources, such as counselling services or Employee Assistance Programs like Validium.

Mental health is an important issue that deserves our attention. Time to Talk Day provides us with a platform to discuss mental health openly and honestly, hoping to create a more inclusive society. Taking part in conversations like this can break down negative stereotypes and support those struggling. Our experts are here to help. Contact your HealthHero or Validium service if you need support.

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