

Opening up: Get a deeper conversation started

Sometimes it's clear when a person you care about needs support. But often, it's not.

Many people don't feel comfortable talking about what's really going on in their lives and minds. They may worry that you'll think less of them. They may think that sharing will burden you. They may tell themselves that it's just a phase and that they can get through it on their own, or something else.

But getting past polite check-ins ('Hi, how are you?' 'I'm good. You?') and encouraging someone to open up can make a real difference in someone's life.

Talking to a trusted ally can help them process their emotions, gain perspective and feel connected and supported — all of which are essential to mental health and wellbeing.

One great way to start is to talk about something you're going through. Sometimes sharing your own experiences can help another person feel safer sharing theirs.

You can also let them know that you care about them and are there if they ever need to talk about anything difficult.

They may also need a subtle prompt. **Here are 10 open-ended questions to get a genuine conversation started.**



1. What's something you've done lately that made you feel really good?
2. What's been on your mind these days?
3. How have you been feeling lately?
4. What helps you feel better when things get tough?
5. Is there anything you'd like to talk about? I'm here with open ears.
6. If you could change something right now about your life, what would it be?
7. How's [work, school, relationship] been going for you?
8. What's something you feel grateful for these days?
9. Is there something you're looking forward to?
10. Anything new you'd like to try?

Sources:

International Association for Suicide Prevention. [Individuals](#).

Mental Health America. [Time to talk: Tips for talking about your mental health](#).

Mental Health America. [Just checking in on friends](#).

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Region Five. [Mental illness: 10 questions to ask a loved one](#).

World Health Organization (WHO). [Suicide](#). 25 March 2025.

Better Health Channel. [Talking through problems](#).



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