We believe talking about mental health can help you and those around you to be happier and healthier. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England is calling on everyone to ‘Take 10 Together’ and take 10 minutes to start a meaningful conversation with a friend, family member, a colleague or even a complete stranger on mental health.

**Starting the conversation**

**Mental Health First Aid**

Find out how to become a trained Mental Health First Aider by registering for a course at mhfaengland.org. Mental Health First Aid courses are the UK's largest and fastest growing workplace mental health training initiatives. Around 10 million people will experience a mental health issue each year in the UK.

**Choose a setting**

Make a full clock or a green of tea, or find a quiet space to have a private meeting.

**Talking tips**

Keep the chat supportive and non-confrontational. Listen to their words, tone of voice and body language — all will give clues to how they are feeling. Give reassurance that there are lots of sources of support and some of these might be available through their workplace, such as the HR or Occupational Health department, Employee Assisted Programmes or on-site counselling.

**What happens next?**

For more guidance around how to approach and respond to a colleague who is experiencing a mental health issue download the free Line Managers Resource from mhfaengland.org.

**Useful questions to ask**

Keeping the chat supportive and non-confrontational. Useful questions to ask for a quick ‘how are you’ and to ask if they want to speak more in a private meeting.

**How to listen**

Keep the conversation going — follow up and ask them how they are doing. Reassure them that your door is always open, and really mean it. It’s particularly essential to keep in touch with an employee who is off sick. Give reassurance that there are lots of sources of support and some of these might be available through their workplace, such as the HR or Occupational Health department, Employee Assisted Programmes or on-site counselling.

**Around 10 million**

We don’t often talk about our mental health so it might seem a little daunting to start a conversation about it but it’s an important part of keeping people safe. MHFA England courses are held online and in person, check online for how you can or call us on 0344 228 9289.

**Keep the chat supportive and non-confrontational.**

Keeping the chat supportive and non-confrontational. Make a full clock or a green of tea, or find a quiet space to have a private meeting.

**How are you feeling at the moment?**

Alternatively ask them ‘How are you doing?’. This gives them time to think and reflect.

**Who do you usually talk to about this stuff?**

These people may include family, friends or colleagues. You can also ask them if they have a GP or a local mental health nurse they can talk to.

**Who do you think knows about your situation?**

Think about who you feel comfortable and have trust in. It may be a formal relationship such as a line manager, or someone in a more informal role such as a close friend or family member you want to turn to for support.

**How can we help?**

This can include practical help such as arranging a day off work or arranging to have someone cover for them. It can also include emotional support where you can spend some time listening and offering reassurance.

**How long have you felt like this – is it an ongoing issue?**

This can help you understand more about their experience of the problem. They may have found coping strategies and frameworks that they have used in the past.

**How can we help?**

You can offer practical help such as recommending a day off work or offering to help with other tasks. You can also offer emotional support, by spending some time listening and offering reassurance.

**How are you feeling today?**

This can help you understand their current experience of the problem. They may have found coping strategies and frameworks that they have used in the past.

**Who do you feel you can go to for support?**

Think about who you feel comfortable and have trust in. It may be a formal relationship such as a line manager, or someone in a more informal role such as a close friend or family member you want to turn to for support.

**How can we help?**

This can include practical help such as arranging a day off work or arranging to have someone cover for them. It can also include emotional support where you can spend some time listening and offering reassurance.

**What’s the main thing that’s been affecting you?**

This can help you understand more about how the problem is impacting their life. They may have found coping strategies and frameworks that they have used in the past.

**Who do you usually talk to about this stuff?**

These people may include family, friends or colleagues. You can also ask them if they have a GP or a local mental health nurse they can talk to.

**How can we help?**

This can include practical help such as arranging a day off work or arranging to have someone cover for them. It can also include emotional support, by spending some time listening and offering reassurance.

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**Give reassurance that there are lots of sources of support and some of these might be available through their workplace, such as the HR or Occupational Health department, Employee Assisted Programmes or on-site counselling.**

**If you work in a company with limited support services it’s also appropriate to encourage the person to visit their GP for guidance around accessing the NHS funded programme ‘Improving Access to Psychological Therapies’ (IAPT).**

**Getting on their wavelength**

Place yourself in the other person’s shoes and demonstrate to them that you hear and understand what they are saying and feeling.

**Listen non-judgementally.**

Do you think we all have a mental health issue each year in the UK.

57% of UK employees say they have experienced mental health problems. Around half of those felt confident to open up about it.

**To learn more about how employers can support the mental wellbeing of their staff, visit mhfaengland.org**

Find us on Twitter @MHFAEngland and on Facebook facebook.com/MHFAEngland