



## **Push back**

- If they don't want to talk, don't criticise them.
- Tell them you're still concerned about changes in their behaviour and you care about them.
- Avoid a confrontation.
- You could say: "Please call me if you ever want to chat" or "Is there someone else you'd rather talk to?"

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## **2. LISTEN WITHOUT JUDGMENT**

- Take what they say seriously and don't interrupt or rush the conversation.
- Don't judge their experiences or reactions but acknowledge that things seem tough for them.
- If they need time to think, sit patiently with the silence.
- Encourage them to explain: "How are you feeling about that?" or "How long have you felt that way?"
- Show that you've listened by repeating back what you've heard (in your own words) and ask if you have understood them properly.

### **Don't say:**

- Harden up
- Get over it mate, you'll be fine
- You're worrying about nothing

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## **3. ENCOURAGE ACTION**

- Ask: "What have you done in the past to manage similar situations?"
- Ask: "How would you like me to support you?"
- Ask: "What's something you can do for yourself right now? Something that's enjoyable or relaxing?"
- You could say: "When I was going through a difficult time, I tried this...You might find it useful too."
- If they've been feeling really down for more than 2 weeks, encourage them to see a health professional. You could say, "It might be useful to link in with someone who can support you. I'm happy to assist you to find the right person to talk to."
- Be positive about the role of professionals in getting through tough times.

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**The truth is, some conversations just become too big for family and friends. If you're worried about someone and feel urgent professional support is needed, contact your local doctor or the agencies over the next page.**

## **4. CHECK IN**

- Pop a reminder in your diary to call them in a couple of weeks. If they're really struggling, follow up with them sooner.
- You could say: "I've been thinking of you and wanted to know how you've been going since we last chatted."
- Ask if they've found a better way to manage the situation. If they haven't done anything, don't judge them. They might just need someone to listen to them for the moment.
- Stay in touch and be there for them. Genuine care and concern can make a real difference.

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## EXPERT HELP and SUPPORT OPTIONS

### A local GP

GPs are the best starting point for someone seeking professional help. A good GP can:

- make a diagnosis
- check for any physical health problem or medication that may be contributing to the anxiety and/or depression, or may affect your treatment
- Provide information and discuss available treatments, taking the person's preferences into account
- Work with the person to draw up a Mental Health Treatment Plan so he or she can get a Medicare rebate for psychological treatment
- Provide support, brief counseling or, in some cases, more specialised talking therapy
- Prescribe medication
- Refer a person to a mental health specialist such as a psychologist or psychiatrist.

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#### Lifeline

13 11 14 [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

Lifeline is a 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention service.

#### BeyondBlue

1300 22 4636 [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

Anxiety, depression and suicide prevention.

Men related information [www.mantherapy.org.au](http://www.mantherapy.org.au)

#### New Access Coach

1800010630 NewAccess is a program developed by beyondblue that provides free and confidential support to help you tackle day-to-day pressures.

#### Suicide Call Back Service

1300 659 467 [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

The Suicide Call Back Service is a 24-hour, nationwide service that provides telephone and online counselling to people 15 years and over who are suicidal, caring for someone who is suicidal, or bereaved by suicide.

#### GriefLine

1300 845 745 <http://griefline.org.au/>

Conselling services for people suffering grief.

#### SANE Australia

1800 18 SANE (7263) [www.sane.org](http://www.sane.org)

SANE Australia is a national charity helping Australians affected by mental illness lead a better life through support, training, and education via their helpline and website.

#### MensLine Australia

1300 789 978 [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

MensLine Australia is the national telephone and online support, information and referral service for men with family and relationship concerns.

#### Reachout.com.au

ReachOut is Australia's leading online mental health organisation for young people and their parents. Our practical support, tools and tips help young people get through anything from everyday issues to tough times – and the information we offer parents makes it easier for them to help their teenagers, too.

#### mindhealthconnect

[www.mindhealthconnect.org](http://www.mindhealthconnect.org).