

NO PROBLEM TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL

A help-seeking resource: for students by students

MAKE TIME FOR SELF-CARE

Self-care is an important part of wellness. Take time and discover what helps you to feel good and recharge.

Here are a few ideas:

- **Do things that make you feel happy as often as you can.** What makes you happy may not be what others find fun, and that's okay! We're all different.
 - If you're going through a tough time or if you're feeling low, this can seem like a lot of effort and you may not be interested in things you once enjoyed. Take it slow to increase your level of comfort.
- **Help others.** Getting involved in something bigger than yourself or doing nice things for others can give you a mental health boost.

Volunteering or even small stuff that doesn't take a lot of energy, like giving a compliment, can make a big difference to someone else.

- **Take care of your body.** Getting enough sleep, eating well, and getting outside are a few ways to support your physical health. And it turns out this really helps your mental health too!
- **Relax and do nothing.** If you've been super busy, allow yourself to stop and relax. Doing "nothing" is actually doing something - it's helping you build your strength for the next challenge.

A student said...

"My friends were having a get-together Friday night, but after a long week, I knew I needed some rest. So I decided to stay in, watch videos and just relax."

NOTICE WHEN YOU MIGHT NEED HELP

We all go through times when we don't feel mentally well or we experience difficult periods in our lives. Changes in feelings and emotions are expected and sometimes they affect how we act.

But how do you know when you could use someone's help to get through this?

Here are some questions to reflect on:

- Is how I'm feeling affecting my everyday life in a negative way?
 - Not as social or not doing things you used to enjoy
 - Finding it hard to concentrate or focus
 - Feeling drained, exhausted, low in energy or unmotivated
- Have I been feeling this way for more than a couple of weeks?
- Am I dealing with my problems in unhealthy ways?
 - Taking part in risky and dangerous activities
 - Using alcohol or other drugs to try to escape from my problems
- Have I been thinking negatively lately or being self-critical?
- Do I feel alone, that I don't have anyone to talk to?

These are a few signs of low mental health. Because the signs aren't the same for everyone, it's important that you notice when things are changing for you and reach out for help.

It can help to talk to someone you trust - it can make you feel better and prevent things from getting worse.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

School can be one place where you can find support. There is always someone you can reach out to. This could be your teacher, coach, guidance teacher, principal or a staff person in your school.

There are also people outside of school that you can turn to like your family or friends, a faith or cultural leader, an Elder, or someone in your community.

When thinking about who to reach out to, think of a person who:

- you trust and respect
- listens to you
- you find easy to talk to
- supports your goals and interests

There are also professionals who you could talk to like a family doctor, social worker, psychologist or counsellor. Figuring out where to get professional help can be confusing: check out your school's guidance office, that's a good place to start.

Ask a teacher where the office is located in your school.

Have someone in mind?

You can contact Kids Help Phone anytime to speak with a trained counsellor at 1.800.668.6868 or text CONNECT to 686868.

HOW TO START THE CONVERSATION?

It can be awkward asking for help. But you'll probably feel relieved after you do.

I don't think my problems are important or big enough to talk to anyone about...

I'm worried I might be labelled or that people might judge me...

Will my teachers see me differently?

Not at all! It's best to reach out and talk to someone.

We all have mental health, and talking about it is one of the ways we can take care of it.

Your teachers are there to help you!

There is no problem too big or too small to ask for help. There are people around you who can help.

Here are a few suggestions to help you start the conversation. What works for you?

"I can't seem to get past the feelings I'm having. I wanted to reach out before things got worse."

"I don't know if you can help me, but I'm hoping you can help me to find someone who can."

"I've been feeling _____ lately, can I get your help?"

"I have a tough situation, it's really bugging me... Can I talk to you about it?"

Some people say it's easier to break the ice in a difficult conversation by writing things down on paper. For example, you could give a note to a trusted adult:

"Hey Mr. _____, it's _____. Do you have some time to meet with me tomorrow? I have a problem I want to talk to you about..."

NOT EVERYTHING THAT WEIGHS YOU DOWN IS YOURS TO CARRY ALONE

Need help immediately?

Call 911 or contact

Kids Help Phone

1-800-668-6868.

AFTER REACHING OUT:

- You might be asked some questions about yourself and how you've been feeling.
- It can take time to feel better.
- The person you reach out to may not be able to "fix" the problem, but they may be able to connect you with someone who can support you better.
- They may need to set up an appointment for you to see someone else that can help you.

If you find the person doesn't seem to understand or you don't get the reaction you were hoping for, **don't give up.** Keep trying, you'll find someone who will support you and let you know that you are not alone. Your wellness is important.

"I am capable, I am worthy."

Reach out for help, your problems don't have to be big to talk to someone about.

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