

How to Check-in on Other People

Checking-in on someone's mental health is an important step in providing support for a friend, family member or colleague who is living through a difficult time.

By simply asking “Are you OK?” you are demonstrating that they will be supported when they need it.

The perceived stigma behind asking this question may hold you back but remember that the benefits of raising the topic far outweigh any potential negatives. Even if the person is fine, they are likely to appreciate you asking and may even open up to you at a later date.

That being said, the conversation is more likely to be successful if you follow these simple suggestions:

- Be sure that you have picked a moment when there is enough time to have a conversation and a place that is a safe space for a conversation
- Be relaxed and friendly and show that you feel genuine concern for their health
- Ask questions like “How are you going?” or “Is everything OK?”
- Actively listen to what they say and avoid being judgmental
- Encourage them to take action so that they can begin their journey towards feeling better

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AT WORK - FOR MANAGERS

As managers, it's important to check-in with your team to ensure they are doing okay mentally. However, the employee is more likely to admit to a mental health issue if you have cultivated an environment where they feel safe in disclosing their personal feelings.



To achieve this, it's important to:

Check-in on your team members or direct reports from regularly with simple questions like ‘Are you okay?’ or ‘How are you travelling?’.

Talk about observations you have made, or learnings you have gained through experience of dealing with similar situations. Focus on positive stories that normalise these workplace dynamics.

Respectfully shut down gossip about work colleagues who are known to have, or even suspected of having a mental health problem in their lives that might be impacting their ability to work. Salacious speculation and assumptions are rarely accurate or helpful and should be assertively discouraged.

Be mindful of what you say in shared workspaces versus in a private meeting as more vulnerable people are acutely sensitive to embarrassment.

Share your own past struggles or vulnerabilities and how you transitioned through those tough times. Obviously, this requires mutual trust and cannot be forced, but this demonstrates humility, empathy and that mental health is not about hierarchy.

FIND OUT MORE

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REFER TO FURTHER SUPPORT

Sometimes, just talking about an issue is enough to help someone's immediate wellbeing. However, if it's more complicated or deep-seated, remember there's professional help you can refer them to:

- **Your EAP provider**

If that is Converge International Employee Assistance Program (EAP), you can make an appointment to speak with a qualified EAP counsellor by calling **1300 OUR EAP (1300 687 327)**.

You can access emergency support at any time by calling this number. You can also make an appointment using the EAP Connect smartphone app or the Live Chat function on **convergeinternational.com.au**.

- **Crisis Support**

Emergency services - Ambulance 000

Lifeline crisis support and suicide prevention - 13 11 14 or **www.lifeline.org.au**

“(We chose) “A conversation could change a life” because it is the one thing all of us can do to make a difference.”

Gavin Larkin

Founder of R U OK Day

FIND OUT MORE

 [1300 our eap \(1300 687 327\)](tel:1300687327)

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