

Mental Illness Awareness

This October, we're given the opportunity to raise awareness and show support for mental health. With the tandem of World Mental Health Day on October 10 and Mental Illness Awareness Week rolling out the week prior, it's a great time to hold conversations around this important topic.



Four Strategies to start the Mental Health Conversation with Someone You Care About

1.

The Casual Check-In. Break the ice by saying something like, "Hey, I haven't talked with you in a while; I just wanted to check in to find out how you're doing — the good, the bad and the ugly."

2.

The Universal Touch-Base. Break the ice by saying something like, "These last couple of years have been really tough on everybody. Can you tell me what it's been like for you?"

3.

The Direct Observation. Consider saying something like, "I don't want to be intrusive, yet I have noticed that you have not been yourself lately. If you'd like someone to listen, I can offer you a nonjudgmental ear."

4.

The Strategic Share. A final conversation starter might be to share your own experience but tread lightly; remember that the conversation isn't about you. Consider saying something like, "Last year, when I was struggling at work, I found it helpful to talk to a therapist."



The incredible thing about treating mental health like a taboo topic is that we will all likely experience some form of poor mental health at some point in our lives. After all, our mental well-being affects nearly everything we do — from how we think, feel, and act to how we handle stress and relate to others. It affects us whether at work or home, and it doesn't discriminate. One tiny emotional push in the wrong direction can easily impact our overall well-being. Given that our days are filled to the brim with stressors that can lead to an adverse emotional reaction, the likelihood of us experiencing a bout of poor mental health is almost a foregone conclusion.