Conversation Guide: Talking to someone about mental health

Spotting the signs of poor mental health - notice the changes

Physical symptoms

symptoms

others

Behavioural

• Eating more, eating less or comfort eating

 Using alcohol, Self-harm substances or smoking

Dos and don'ts to having a supportive conversation

Do choose the right environment

Consider who else potentially overhear the phone or online, could you use headphones to allow for greater privacy? Ask them: where would you like to talk?

Do give your full attention and listen without iudgement

Offer reassurance that

Signposting

Learn more about mental health conditions

that you are dedicating

to be an expert. If you remember that you don't or even understand their them know you care.

Don't challenge, ignore or invalidate

Don't assume you

know the answers

Don't silver-line situations or try to make the person feel better. If someone says they feel worthless

silly" we are invalidating what they have said.

Don't compare

their situation to someone else's or your own. can show empathy, but it into you telling your story rather than listening to

Do reflect back and clarify

Emotional

symptoms

If someone says and you don't know what they meant, repeat back what they have said and ask them to explain. Don't

Do show empathy

show that you're trying to see where the person something like "That must be awful, I'm so sorry." Instead of "I'm sorry for you"

Do empower the person

Ask: "What do you than tell them what you think would help. Give information rather than advice. This makes it

Cognitive symptoms

past or future Racing thoughts

 Memory lapses/ Difficulty making

Mental -lealth

JK

Don't try to find an easy solution

someone or what they want to happen will be different for everyone give advice as your



Don't diagnose







Find



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put words in their mouth.

rather than sympathy



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vour full attention to Do ask open auestions

Ask them "How are noticed you haven't

how are you feeling?" prevent the ubiquitous "I'm fine" response.