Are You Okay?

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Expressions to have mental health talks with the people in your life. Phrasal verbs. Practice conversations. Listening comprehension practice.

Activity One - Discussion Questions

Ask and answer the questions with your partner or teacher.



1. When you notice a colleague or friend acting strangely, do you try to have a conversation with them?
2. Do you appreciate when other people ask you how you're *really* doing?
3. How important is it to you to talk about mental health with the people in your life?
4. Do you think the stigma around mental health is growing or shrinking in our society?
5. Do you have any specific practices that you do to take care of your own mental health?
6. Would you say there are 'DOs and DON'Ts' to approaching the people in your life about their mental health?

Activity Two - "R U OK?" Reading Comprehension

Read the following excerpt from the 'R U OK?' health promotion charity guide then answer the questions and discuss what you understood and what you think with your partner or teacher.

How conversations can make a difference

Did you know? Life's challenges can leave people feeling helpless, hopeless, afraid, disconnected and at genuine risk. Early-intervention and open communication can reduce stigma, break down barriers and build trust which in turn promotes long-term, positive behavioural change. A simple way to provide support is by genuinely asking "Are you OK?" and being prepared to have regular meaningful conversations to help someone who might be struggling to feel supported when confronted with challenges in life whether at home or work.

If you've noticed a change, no matter how small, trust your instinct and ask 'Are you OK? The signs that it might be time to start an 'Are you OK?' conversation won't always be obvious. When someone's not doing so well, these are changes you can look out for that might signal they need some extra support.

Do they sound:

- Confused or irrational
- Concerned about the future
- Concerned they're a burden
- Lonely or lacking self-esteem
- Concerned they're trapped or overwhelmed

Are they:

- Experiencing mood swings
- Dismissive or defensive
- Self-medicating

- Becoming withdrawn
- Behaving recklessly
- Unable to concentrate
- Losing interest in what they used to love
- Less interested in their appearance and personal hygiene
- Changing their sleep patterns

Have they experienced:

- A traumatic incident
- A change in work circumstances or job responsibilities
- Issues at school
- Increased pressure from relocation or changed living arrangements
- Conflict at work or at home
- Relationship issues
- Becoming a parent
- Major health issues or an injury
- Constant stress
- Financial difficulty
- Loss of someone or something they care about

Getting ready to ask

Are you in a good headspace? Are you willing to genuinely listen? Can you give as much time as needed? Be prepared. Remember that you won't have all the answers (which is OK). Listening is one of the most important things you can do. If someone is talking about personal struggles this can be difficult and they might be emotional, embarrassed or upset.

More info at ruok.org.au

Questions:

1. Why can having a conversation with someone make a difference?
2. What changes in someone's behavior do you think would make you want to check in with them?
3. Why do you need to ask yourself questions before having a conversation with someone else?
4. Have you ever had the experience of talking to someone who was going through something difficult?

Activity Three - Phrasal Verbs

Here are some common phrasal verbs that are related to mental health and interpersonal relationships. Match the phrasal verb to the definition then make an example of how you might use it in a conversation with someone.

1. **Take care of** When you're stressed, it's important to *take care of* yourself.	a. To happen
2. **Care about** I *care about* you so I wanted to talk.	b. To resolve
3. **Get over** It can be difficult to *get over* someone important to you.	c. To endure ; to suffer
4. **Go on** I have a lot of things *going on* right now	d. To recover from ; to stop loving

5. **Go through** I'm *going through* something personal	e. To tend to someone
6. **Check in** I wanted to *check in* with you - how are you?	f. To progress
7. **Work out** Everything will *work out* in the end.	g. To feel affection ; to find important
8. **Let up** Work just doesn't *let up* these days!	h. To make contact
9. **Get on** How are you *getting on*?	i. To survive
10. **Get through** You will *get through* this!	j. To stop ; to ease

Activity Four - Listening Comprehension

Watch the video and answer the questions below.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8B5ESnyQZXs - "How to ask R U OK? at work" from R U OK?



1. What did Alec notice about Jenny?
2. When and where should Alec ask Jenny how she's doing?
3. What sort of actions can Alec encourage for Jenny?
4. What should Alec do a few days later?
5. What does ALEC stand for?
6. What do you think of this advice?

Activity Five - Expressions for a Meaningful Conversation

Take a look at the expressions from the 'R U OK?' health promotion charity guide and then practice using them in the scenarios in Activity Five. ***Find the phrasal verbs that we learned!***

Expressions to Start the Conversation

- "I've noticed a few changes in what you've been saying/doing. How are things for you at the moment?"
- "I know there's been some big life changes for you recently. How are you dealing with that?"
- "You don't seem yourself lately – want to talk about it?"
- "Just checking in to see how you're doing?"
- "With everything that's going on, you've been on my mind lately, how are you?"
- "You've got a lot going on right now. How are you doing?"

Expressions to Show You're Willing to Listen

- "Have you been feeling this way for a while?"

- “It sounds like that would be really tough. How are you doing with managing it?”
- “So, what was that like?”
- “What you’re going through isn’t easy. It’s good we can talk about it.”
- “Thank you for sharing this with me. That can’t have been easy for you.”
- “Take your time, I’m here for you.”
- “If there’s something you’re unsure about sharing with me right now, I just want you to know I’m here when you’re ready”

Expressions to Encourage Action

- “What do you think is a first step that would help you through this?”
- “What can I do right now to support you?”
- “Have you had much support around you?”
- “What’s something you enjoy doing? Making time for that can really help.”
- “Do you think it would help for you to talk to someone else about some of these things, maybe a health professional?”
- “Is there anything you’ve tried in the past that’s made you feel better when you’ve felt like this?”
- “I know when I went through something similar, talking to a professional really helped me out. Would you like me to help you find additional support?”

Expressions to Check In Later

- “I would like to keep checking in with you, is that OK?”
- “Hey, how have you been since we last chatted?”
- “Just wanted to check in and see how you’re doing?”
- “Have things improved or changed since we last spoke?”
- “What’s been working for you since we last chatted?”
- “Is the support we discussed working for you?”
- “Do you need more support?”

Activity Six - Song time

Listen to the song and complete the lyrics. Then answer the questions.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjF9IqvXDjY - “You’re Gonna Be Okay” by Brian and Jenn Johnson

I know it's all you've got to just be strong
And it's a [1]_____ just to keep it together, together
I know you think that you are too far gone
But hope is never lost, hope is never lost
Hold on, don't let go
Hold on, don't let go

Just take one [2]_____ closer
Put one foot in front of the other
You'll get through this
Just follow the light in the darkness
You're gonna be ok

I know your heart is [4]_____ from those nights
But just remember that you are a fighter, a fighter
You never know just what [5]_____ holds
And you're stronger than you know, stronger than you know

Hold on, don't let go
Hold on, don't let go

Just take one step closer
Put one [3]_____ in front of the other
You'll get through this
Just follow the light in the darkness
One step closer
Put one foot in front of the other
You'll get through this
Just follow the light in the darkness

You're gonna be ok

And when the night is [6]_____ in
Don't give up and don't give in
This won't [7]_____, it's not the end, it's not the end
You're gonna be ok
When the night is closing in
Don't give up and don't give in
This won't last, it's not the end, it's not the end
You're gonna be ok

Questions:

1. What do the phrasal verbs 'hold on' and 'let go' mean?
2. Can you find any idioms in this song? What do they mean?
3. What is the message of this song?
4. What do you think of the message?

Activity Seven - Role Play

Create a dialogue for the following situations and act out the scenarios with your teacher or a partner. For each scenario, find out what is wrong and figure out the best way to help using the expressions and phrasal verbs we learned.

A. Your colleague is normally quite optimistic and fun-loving. You notice for the past week they have been very quiet and negative.
B. Your child usually comes home from school in a good mood ready to talk about their day with you. Lately, they have seemed very upset and have stayed isolated in their room.
C. One of your employees has been late submitting work. They seem distracted in meetings and have not been themselves recently.
D. You find out a co-worker has been dealing with a stressful time at home due to an unexpected family emergency. They have been missing deadlines and seem very disorganized.
E. Your friend and colleague just got dumped and is feeling very sad

