

**Talk To Us Month
& Samaritans 24/07
Awareness Day**

About the campaigns

Talk to Us Month and **Samaritans Awareness Day** are annual awareness raising campaigns aiming to encourage people to open up about their emotional wellbeing and reach out to others for help. The campaigns are run by [Samaritans](#) - a UK charity which offers listening and support to people and communities in times of need. They are here to listen without judgement or pressure to anyone who's struggling to cope, at any time of the day or night.



#TalkToUs

#SamaritansAwarenessDay

Did you know...?



**Every 10 seconds
Samaritans responds to
a call for help.**

**During 2021, around
22,000 people volunteered
their time for Samaritans.**



**In 2021 Samaritans
volunteers spent over **one
million hours** responding
to calls for help.**

Talking to someone

Struggling to cope with everyday life doesn't look or feel the same in everyone. You may feel tired, lacking confidence, frustrated, angry and worried, and you might not want to do the things that you usually enjoy. If you are feeling low, try to open up to others and don't bottle up your emotions. Talking and expressing what you are experiencing and feeling allows you to become accustomed to those feelings in a way that gives you control. It also helps you gain a better understanding of how you are feeling and offers opportunity to reflect – there are many situations that leave you emotionally overwhelmed and tense. Whilst you cannot always change what has happened, you can find yourself unable to move forward and stuck in despair. At these times talking can be cathartic and offer a sense of relief. Finding someone to talk to not only provides connection, comfort, and understanding but also prevents feelings of loneliness and isolation.



If you feel that you are not coping and there's nobody that you can talk to, get in touch with Samaritans who can support you. Whatever you are going through, their trained volunteers are there 24/7 to talk with you. They'll focus on your thoughts and feelings, and help you talk through your concerns, worries and troubles. Calls and webchats are free, anonymous, non-judgemental and confidential.

You can talk to us about anything that's troubling you

👉 We're here to listen 24/7

SAMARITANS

Call free on 116 123 or
email jo@samaritans.org

**Talk
to us**

we'll listen

A registered charity

Listening to others

Samaritans are also encouraging all of us to become better listeners. Reaching out to someone you believe may be struggling could help them know that someone cares and help them to access the support they need. You may think that it is difficult to make the first step but remember that there is no perfect recipe or format to start a conversation. It's all about being there for someone that can make a huge difference.

“Everyone has the ability to talk and look out for others.”

- Damon, Samaritans volunteer



There is no right way to have a conversation, but once someone starts to share how they're feeling, it's important to listen without any judgement. These **S.H.U.S.H.** listening tips from Samaritans can help you to make sure you're approaching the conversation in a helpful way, and you give the best support you can.

Show you care

To really listen to somebody, you need to give them your undivided attention – focus on other person, maintain eye contact and be fully engaged. Listen to the person without being distracted - choose a suitable setting for the conversation, put your phone away and ensure you have plenty of time. Use positive body language and encourage the person to continue with small verbal comments like 'I see' or 'what happened next?'. This will let them know that you are paying attention to what they are saying and actively listening to them.

Have patience

Remember that no matter how hard you try, some people might not be ready to talk about what they're going through. It may take time and several attempts before a person is ready to open up. Don't rush she person - effective listening is about creating trust with the other person. Try to leave any questions or comments you may have until the person has finished so you don't interrupt them. Remember that pauses are fine, you don't need to fill any silences. Allow them to relax into the conversation and to use it as a place to reflect or work through difficult emotions.

Use open-ended questions

You can simply start the conversation by asking a colleague, friend or relative how they are doing and take time to listen and engage with their response. Use open-ended questions that need more than a 'yes' or 'no' answer, and follow up with phrases like *'Tell me more'*. Asking such questions can give the person space to express how they're feeling, and it will help you to understand their experience better.

Say it back

Repeating something back to somebody is a really good way to reassure them that they have your undivided attention. And you can check to see that you're hearing what they want you to hear, instead of putting your own interpretation onto the conversation. Don't interrupt the person or offer them a solution. You could reflect back actual words they have used to them, as this can encourage them to open up more. For example, a good reflection to *'I just feel so lonely'* could be *'lonely?'*

Have courage

Don't be put off by any negative responses from the person and don't feel that you have to fill a silence during conversation. The most important thing is that you are there for someone to open up. Sometimes it is exactly what somebody needs to be able to share what is going on their mind.

References:

SAMARITANS

**LET'S CONNECT.
FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA.**



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