

## Time to Talk Day - However you do it

**RECONNECT** - With your family, friends & colleagues. As we have learnt to live with COVID and the restrictions are now being eased, it is now easier to arrange to meet in person. Alternatively, have chat over a virtual cuppa, pick up the phone, send a text or use social media messaging, this lets people know that you there to talk to and ready to listen. Even just receiving a message can be enough to let them know they are not alone

**ASK QUESTIONS & LISTEN** - Asking questions can give the person space to express how they're feeling and what they're going through, and it will help you to understand their experience better. Try to ask questions that are open and not leading or judgmental, like "how does that affect you?" or "what does it feel like?"

**THINK ABOUT THE TIME & PLACE** - Sometimes it's easier to talk side-by-side rather than face to face. So, if you do talk in person, you might want to chat while you are doing something else. You could start a conversation when you're walking, cooking or stuck in traffic. However, don't let the search for the perfect place put you off!

**DON'T TRY AND FIX IT** - It can be hard to see someone you care about having a difficult time but try to resist the urge to offer quick fixes to what they're going through. Learning to manage or recover from a mental health problem can be a long journey, and they've likely already considered lots of different tools and strategies. Just talking can be powerful, so unless they've asked for advice directly, it might be best just to listen.

**TREAT THEM THE SAME** - When someone has a mental health problem, they're still the same person as they were before. And that means when a friend or loved one opens up about mental health, they don't want to be treated any differently. If you want to support them, keep it simple. Do the things you'd normally do.

**BE PATIENT** - No matter how hard you try, some people might not be ready to talk about what they're going through. That's ok - the fact that you've tried to talk to them about it may make it easier for them to open up another time.

**LOOK AFTER YOUR WELLBEING** - Getting enough exercise and being active can be important for both your mental and physical health. Some medications might make you feel more tired. However, moderate exercise can help to improve your mood and general well-being and help you to feel better about yourself.

Regular exercise can also lower the risk of physical diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, stroke and certain types of cancer. Being more active can also help you to be a healthier weight.

Meditation can be great way to relax. There are free apps available such as [HeadSpace](#) & [Smiling Mind](#).

**SUPPORTING LOVED ONES** - If you or your loved ones are struggling or finding it difficult then encourage them to seek support. Remember that [IPS's Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) is available to all IPS employees and family members.

