

#timetotalkday



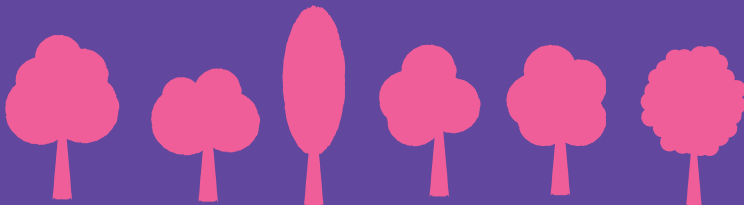
time to change

time to talk
day 2018

let's end mental health discrimination

ANY PLACE IS THE RIGHT PLACE TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Hiya!



Funded by



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GET INVOLVED WITH TIME TO TALK DAY ON THURSDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2018

It's easy to think there's no right place to talk about mental health. But the more we talk about it, the better life is for all of us.

Mental health problems affects one in four of us yet people are still afraid to talk about it. For people with mental health problems not being able to talk about it can be one of the worst parts of the illness. So by getting people talking about mental health we can break down stereotypes, improve relationships, aid recovery and take the stigma out of something that affects us all.

Too many people right now who are struggling with their mental health are made to feel **isolated, worthless and ashamed**. Time to Talk Day is a chance for all of us to be more open about mental health - to talk, to listen, to change lives.

Too often, people who experience a mental health problem are also left with the burden to talk about mental health in the wider sense. Time to Talk Day encourages everyone to talk about mental health. And this year we propose that Any Place is the Right Place to talk about mental health, whether you are at home, at work or up the top of mountain like Andy Brellisford - Champion at Highways England!



ANDY SAYS...



I am never in the country for actual Time to Talk Day itself. I am invariably skiing, usually in the French Alps. So - literally - I am up a mountain taking Time to Talk Day international as I sit on chair lifts and have conversations with captive audiences. Unfortunately some of the time there is the inevitable blank expressions of complete incomprehension from some folk who simply don't understand the lingo! But I can usually find some Brits to deliver to, or occasionally other English speaking folk.



Have your conversation about mental health on Time to Talk Day and like Andy make any place the right place to talk about mental health.

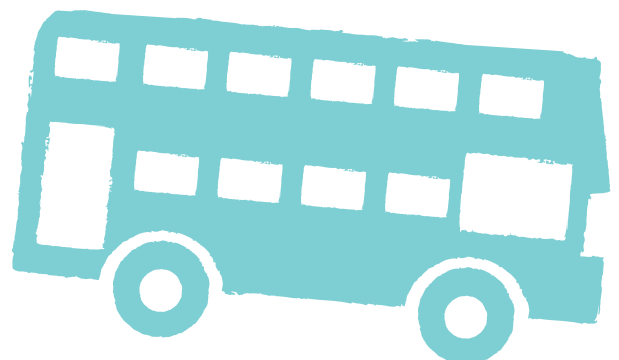
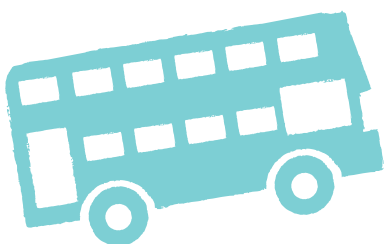
STOP PRESS... HOLD IT RIGHT THERE TIME TO CHANGE!

“ Well that’s great thanks Time to Change but you know it’s not really that easy for me – how can I start these conversations and make any time the right place? A worried Champion ”

Starting conversations at the best of times is very nerve wracking for many of us, so starting conversations and encouraging one another to be open about mental health can be just as, if not more, nerve wracking putting us off from taking that first step. So, if you are a worried Champion don’t worry, we have views about this and our thoughts are captured in this pack just for you.

This pack includes:

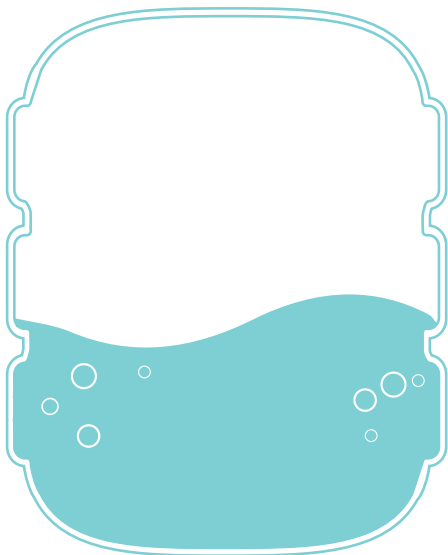
- Secrets revealed to help you prepare (and overcome the challenges) for starting those quality conversations, making any place the right place
- What to do if you find yourself in close range to a senior colleague like your CEO, or just someone who you admire and/or respect. (And that admiration / awe / respect/authority manifests in you feeling tongue tied and/or anxious and struggling to say just “hello”)
- Tips on how to make one conversation count more than once
- How to join the Champions Online Forum and have conversations with other employee champions employed by other organisations



SECRET REVELATION ONE

WE NEED TO STOP OUR INSECURITIES GETTING IN OUR WAY!

When approaching conversations we are not comfortable with, many of us automatically find ourselves imagining the conversation going horribly wrong. These worries can quickly turn into anxieties and as a result often stop us from making that first crucial step. However, taking that first step is never as bad as we think.



Watch Dave's colleague battling with the same kind of scenario

Like Dave's colleague, imagining the worst case scenarios keeps us focused on our worries and fears, which then makes us unavailable for the conversation we wanted to start in the first place.

By refocusing on why we wanted to start the conversation and diverting attention from ourselves towards the person we want to talk to, stops us from letting our anxieties get to us, making us available for that conversation once again.

TIPS ON HOW TO CHANGE FOCUS FROM OURSELVES TO THE COLLEAGUE WE WANT TO START A CONVERSATION WITH

YOU CAN COMMENT ON THE WEATHER

A tried and tested opening gambit that often leads to a conversation

ASK FOR INFORMATION / OPINION ABOUT SOMETHING (RELEVANT)

Asking a question is great because not only do you start a conversation, you also invite the other person to answer and offer their thoughts which can lead to a longer conversation.

Take a look at your surroundings - are their posters about upcoming events, topical information about your Employer or even better, information around upcoming key events such as LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans) History Month or wait for it...Time to Talk Day 2018?



ASK FOR ASSISTANCE / OFFER ASSISTANCE (IF AN OPPORTUNITY ARISES)

Something around helping others or asking for help points towards our vulnerability. By offering to help you show that you care and that you can be trusted. By asking for help you show that you see your colleague as helpful and trust them. Both situations make the space a little safer to start a conversation. So never miss an opportunity by watching out for your colleague who might be struggling to reach that top shelf (or unjam the photocopier they have just jammed) and of course don't forget to ask for help when you need it yourself.

MENTION A MUTUAL / SHARED EVENT / EXPERIENCE

Do you sometimes find yourself bumping into someone you recognise (but hadn't spoken to) who might have attended the same event as you, or was on the same course / briefing as you? If yes then that shared experience can be a great way to start a conversation. A simple *"Hi I noticed you at the Time to Change event, wasn't that a great event..."* or you can ask a question - *"Hi I noticed you at the Time to Change event - what did you think of it?"*

SECRET REVELATION TWO

WE ALL MAKE JUDGEMENTS – RAISE YOUR GAME BY RAISING YOUR AWARENESS OF THEM

As human beings we are predisposed to making judgements – it's just how our brains work regardless of whether making judgements is useful to us or not as a species.

Subconsciously we judge a person on how they look, the roles they hold, how they perform, if they are outspoken or shy and the list goes on. Allowing these judgements to influence how we behave can actually stop us from starting that all important conversation, one that could help us to know and understand our colleagues and whether the judgements about them were indeed right or wrong. By letting go of your judgement, you free yourself to be more curious about the person you are about to start a conversation with. Starting a conversation about mental health is like building a bridge between the two of you.

TIPS ON HOW TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND THEN SHELVE YOUR JUDGEMENTS

When you find yourself judging

If you make the effort to start a conversation (or not) with a certain colleague and/or in a certain place, try challenging that judgement by asking yourself **“Why”**. If the answer you give yourself seems incomplete – continue asking yourself **“Why”** until you get to the route of your judgement. Then make a decision if you should start that conversation or not. Now it might be the case that your “Whys” result in a missed opportunity and if that happens try not to be disappointed.

You have already prepared yourself for the next time an opportunity arises and you are unlikely to miss that one. Don't worry if missing this opportunity means missing an opportunity on Time to Talk Day 2018... When it comes to mental health – every day is a Time to Talk Day!

Imagine what it would be like to be in their shoes

Imagine what it's like for them working in your organisation, in the team they are working in, the pressures they might be facing and how that can impact on them and their mental health. By empathising, you empower yourself to be more curious and engaged in that moment and about that person. You can follow that up by showing your interest in them and asking an open ended question like *“Hey, how's your day treating you?”*

Actually this is more b) part 2 – asking open ended questions is likely to result in a conversation

Don't forget to share information about you too so that the conversation doesn't feel like an interrogation for your colleague.

Sarah Burgess-Parker, Employee Champion at Pearson tells us how she found herself having conversations in a place where she didn't expect to.

SARAH SAYS...



At work, I'm known by many as Time for Change Champion, Mental Health First Aider and Coach and therefore have often had a quick 'how's you' turn into something more. However it's outside of work that my most amazing out of the box experience took place. I've spent a good time in hospitals over the past couple of years, with sick Mum and brother, both sadly no longer with us.

It appeared that whenever I took a little time to step away and find somewhere to be quiet, very soon I found someone in that space talking to me and slipped naturally in to coaching mode. Lots of thanks from total strangers which created short friendships in a place of healing. Rarely was I asked why I was there, though that sometimes came later. The clearest memory of the slightly bizarre was talking of my brother's mental health problems with the organ donation coordinator.

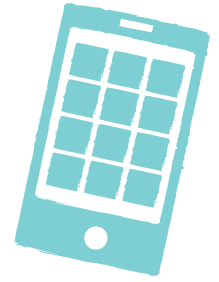
They ask lots of questions to paint a picture of the donor and half way through the conversation she made a comment about a relative, in empathy I think, to what I said. I slipped in to my natural, curious, supportive and coaching style and in minutes she was off loading. This went on for about 5 minutes or so when she suddenly put her hands over her face and exclaimed, 'Lord what am I doing, I'm supposed to be supporting you, not the other way round'. I smiled and assured her it happens all the time and please not to worry.

She assured me that this had never happened before and that she found me so easy to talk to. Later that night, as we communicated often through the process, I gave her a hug and assured her it was fine and I was happy to listen more if needed. I did point her in the direction of some help too, which as well as the organ donation brought some light in to what was a very dark night of waiting, before the life support machine was switched off for my brother.



SECRET REVELATION THREE

MAKE IT ALL ABOUT THEM



When someone notices something positive or complimentary about us and show that they are interested in what we have to say, it generally makes us feel good about ourselves because we feel valued and important.

This piece of wisdom (only when it's genuine) is a great foundation for starting conversations in any place at any time. The following tips will help you on your way to becoming a **"Conversation Guru"**.

a) Give the gift of your inner smile

Smiling is nature's way of helping us to appear approachable, warm and friendly, so technically just by smiling you are already three quarters of the way to starting a conversation. However, smiling when you aren't feeling it or don't mean it, can show you are not being genuine and so can **have the opposite effect**.

b) Compliment something about them

It might be their smile, or the way their hair is styled, or what they are wearing. It helps them to feel great and also helps to get a conversation going. (Usually starting from what you complimented about them.) Bear in mind that some people can become overwhelmed by receiving compliments and not know how to respond, so a follow up question about what you complimented them on can help to further the conversation. "Wow that shirt looks great on you" (wait for their response - none coming or a very shy "thanks" and you realise your conversation is fast ending) ask them something like "Can I ask where you got it from?"

c) Praise them about some work they did / something they achieved that you would know about

As tip b).

d) Could what they are holding help you to start a conversation?

If they are holding a book, you can ask them about it. If they are holding their lunch you can ask them what it is and did they make it etc.

e) Simply introduce yourself

The fact that you went out of your way to start a conversation makes the other person feel important which of course makes them more open to having a conversation with you.

Kat McGinness, Employee Champion at VSG Compass Group tells us how she found herself having a conversation about mental health in an unusual place. Hear what Kat has to say.

For those times when you find yourself in close proximity to someone in authority like a senior colleague (like the CEO) or someone you admire / respect and/or in awe of....

“ I was going to a conference that our CEO was attending and we ended up in the same carriage. I was mortified and felt really anxious. I felt like if I opened my mouth I would say something so silly that they would instantly fire me on the spot. That train journey despite being only 10 minutes felt like 10 years to me..... Starting a conversation was a long way away from my mind. Runa - Senior Employer Champion Officer ”

If, like me, you find yourself tongue-tied and panicky in a situation as described above then my invitation to you is to take what I have learnt from my excruciating experience.

STEP 1

Turn your attention away from your insecurities and towards your “CEO / person who can get you tongue-tied”

STEP 2

Try to establish eye contact and then when you have it - smile and say hello, (or mouth hello if you are still tongue-tied)

STEP 3

Manage your expectations, they might say hello back or they...might not. This could be because they haven't recognised you or have a lot on their mind. That's ok and their reaction or the lack of; bears no reflection on you, so hush that critical voice in your head if it starts to use this as a way to be mean to you.

STEP 4

As a Champion you can always talk about what you are doing to change how people think and act about mental health. So take the time to learn / update yourself on what's happening in your organisation around all things mental health. This is also a great way to impress your “CEO / person who can get you tongue-tied”

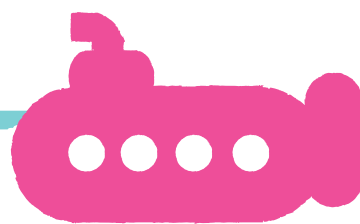
STEP 5

Whatever you talk about, try to make sure it's positive and progressive as that is likely to keep them engaged. Remain solution focused and avoid complaining. This puts you in a stronger position to continue the conversation and they are likely to remember you as a great staff member / person. Which also means you can try and engage them for their hands on support later on around changing how colleagues think and act about mental health.

AND FINALLY HOW TO MAKE ONE CONVERSATION COUNT MORE THAN ONCE

You can make one conversation count more than once by helping some of your colleagues prepare to start their own conversations on Time to Talk Day, making any place the right place to have a conversation about mental health!

YOU CAN...



- A** Share this pack with your colleagues.
- B** Hold a lunch and learn for interested colleagues and go through some of the points on this pack, then make time for a group discussion exploring their experiences around having conversations in unusual places and sharing tips, ideas and challenges.
- C** Share The Time to Change video - **5 tips on how to start a conversation** where 5 people with experience of mental health problems give us their top tips on how to start a conversation about mental health.
- D** Encourage colleagues to join the movement by registering as a Time to Change Champion for your organisation. They can register via this **Registration Link**
- E** Share details of your Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) if you have one, highlighting what it's for and that it is not just for counselling but also practical and emotional support. Explain that it is 24 hours and that it is completely confidential, which means anyone can have a conversation about mental health with trained people from your EAP, making any time and any place the right time and right place!
- F** Remind people why it's so important to have conversations about mental health by sharing **this video made by Champions at Sky Home Services** talking about their personal experiences of mental health problems. *****TRIGGER WARNING*** This video contains information that may trigger / upset people.**

WHAT ABOUT OTHER CHAMPIONS?

Connecting with others on the Champions Forum online anytime - making it the right time

All registered Champions can connect with one another online at the Champions Forum on Google Groups. It's a really easy way to communicate and you don't need any computer or social media experience.

The best things about the Champion Forum:

- The Champions Forum can only be used by you, will only be for you and essentially run by you too.
- You are able to share practices, thoughts, experiences, blogs, files and more over this network via email.
- You can ask questions or post queries that you need support on, seek guidance from other Champions and make comments and suggestions.
- You can motivate and empower one another - either on a one to one basis via email or over a group email.
- There is no need to log into Google Groups because you can participate in any conversation through your normal work email. However, logging in will give you access to older / archived threads, so that you don't have to post already answered queries anymore.

Once you have joined - you can do any or all of the following:

- You can contact one another - whether it is whole group / group of interest or individual champions
- You are able to post updates about what's happening for you and/or your organisation
- You can post updates and media information that you feel would be relevant and of interest to others
- You can post blogs, vlogs or other expressions.
- You can have online discussions
- You can post questions and/or obstacles that you want support on i.e. problem solving
- You can access old threads so you don't have to ask the question again if it's about a specific query.
- You can support one another by motivating one another - sharing practice and ideas.



IT'S REALLY EASY TO JOIN

For more information about the Champion Forum and how to join please email the Senior Employee Champion Officer: employers@time-to-change.org.uk

SIGNPOSTS TO SUPPORT



It's great to start the conversation in your workplace and we hope that our campaign materials and ideas help you to do this. Sometimes this can mean that people currently experiencing mental health problems will need some support as sensitive conversations may bring up difficult things.

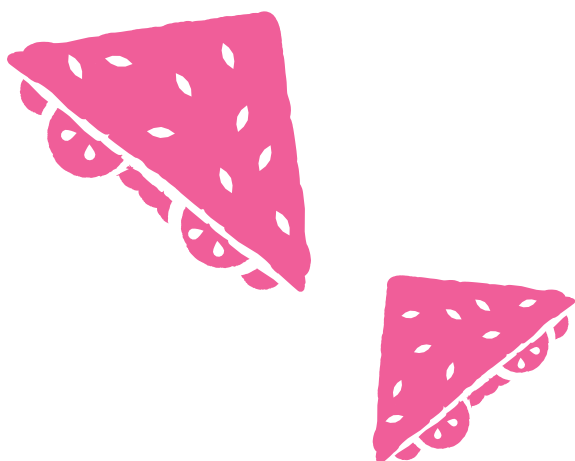
We would encourage you to highlight the support tools that are offered within your organisation but you may also like to use some of ours too so please feel free to use the below text or link to our **support page** online.

If you are experiencing mental health problems or need urgent support, there are lots of places you can go to for help:

SAMARITANS

Telephone: 116 123
(Free 24 hours a day)
Email: jo@samaritans.org
Website: www.samaritans.org

Provides confidential, non-judgmental emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those that could lead to suicide. You can phone, email, write a letter or in most cases talk to someone face to face.



MIND INFOLINE

Telephone: 0300 123 3393
(9am-5pm Monday to Friday)
Email: info@mind.org.uk
Website: www.mind.org.uk/help/advice_lines

Mind provides confidential mental health information services. With support and understanding, Mind enables people to make informed choices. The Infoline gives information on types of mental distress, where to get help, drug treatments, alternative therapies and advocacy. Mind also has a network of nearly 200 local Mind associations providing local services.

ELEFRIENDS

Website: www.elefriends.org.uk

Elefriends is a supportive online community where you can be yourself. Elefriends is run by **Mind**.

RETHINK MENTAL ILLNESS ADVICE LINE

Telephone: 0300 5000 927
(10am-2pm Monday to Friday)

Email: info@rethink.org

Website: [www.rethink.org/about-us/
our-mental-health-advice](http://www.rethink.org/about-us/our-mental-health-advice)

Provides expert advice and information to people with mental health problems and those who care for them, as well as giving help to health professionals, employers and staff. Rethink Mental Illness also runs **Rethink Mental Illness services and groups** across England and Northern Ireland.

SANELINE

Telephone: 0845 767 8000
(6pm-11pm)

Website: [www.sane.org.uk/what_we_
do/support/helpline](http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/helpline)

Saneline is a national mental health helpline providing information and support to people with mental health problems and those who support them.

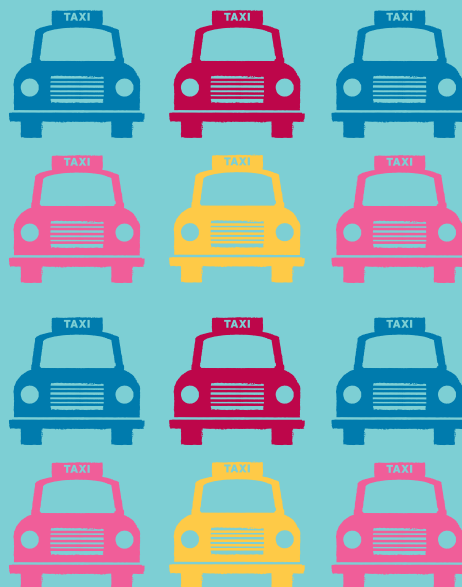
If you're a carer needing support you can contact all of the above as well as **Carers Direct** and the **Princess Royal Trust** for Carers, both of whom are able to provide support and advice on any issues affecting you.

You can also create your own Signposting document that lists all the support offered internally, for example Employee Assistance Programme or linking in with existing networks in your organisation for example the Disability Network.

PLEASE NOTE

Some activities could bring up difficult feelings. It is likely there are people in the group who have personal experience of mental health problems. Create a safe, positive and a learning environment by agreeing ground rules at the outset.

People should not be asked to disclose personal information unless they choose to. At the end of the activity, make sure everyone knows where support is available in and out of the workplace and how to access this support.



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