

ITS OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP



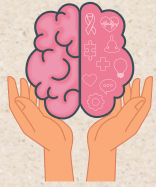
REACHING OUT SHOULD BE EASY

According to JED's new research on mental health, studies show that people recognize the importance of seeking support for mental health challenges, yet often struggle to reach out for help. While Stigma — feeling shame or embarrassment about mental health issues — is a bigger issue for middle and older adults, JED's research shows that one barrier to young adults seeking mental health support may actually be “their fear of being misunderstood and their discomfort discussing difficult emotions” (JED, 2024).

TOP REASONS FOR NOT SEEKING HELP INCLUDE:

- fear that others won't understand them
- talking about difficult feelings would make them uncomfortable
- they don't want to be a burden
- fear their peers will tell others
- worry their peers would not want to hear about the problem
- feel unsure how their peers could help

HOW TO ASK FOR HELP:



Going to a COUNSELOR or THERAPIST when you're feeling SAD or OVERWHELMED should be as normal as going to the DOCTOR when you feel SICK!

Think about what you want

We all desire to feel supported and understood, particularly during times when things feel out of control. When reaching out for help, it's crucial to articulate your needs clearly.

- Are you looking for assistance in locating a healthcare provider or a support group?
- Do you seek emotional validation and support?
- Are you in need of advice or simply someone to lend an ear?

Make sure to communicate these needs from the start.



Identify your support

Decide who to talk to. It's important to talk to someone you trust and can speak openly to without feeling judged.

Consider reaching out to:

- Family Members
- Peers
- Teachers
- Coaches
- Mental Health Professional
- Other trusted individuals in your circle.
- **Helpline** (If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text [988](tel:988) or chat [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org). You'll be able to speak with a trained crisis counselor any time of day or night.)



Identify your Feeling/Needs

It's ok to not be okay. It's okay to not know how to put your feelings/thoughts into words.

There are steps you can take to get more familiar with your emotions and needs.



Use emotional tools: Having the language for your emotions can help you increase your emotional vocabulary and identify your feelings.



Use the "**How We Feel**" app to expand your emotional vocabulary. It's a great way to tune in and pay attention to your emotions and notice any patterns.

Use a feeling wheel to increase your emotional vocabulary and label what you are feeling.

Practice feeling your feelings: Draw on mindfulness techniques to lean into your feelings.


1 Name the Feeling: When you become aware of a feeling, pause.

3 Investigate the cause: What is driving the emotion? Remember to avoid judgement or blame.


2 Allow the feeling sensations in your body: See if you can mindfully observe the physical sensations in your body without judgment.

4 Be Compassionate to yourself: Bring kindness to your experiences. Provide a caring stance to your feelings.


Use creative arts: Creative arts have long been used to help communicate our feelings and understand our experiences in different ways than using language.



Writing out your thoughts in a private journal can be a great way to identify how you're truly feeling and understanding your emotional experiences.



Music is a great way to be mindful about how you feel. What names would you give the emotions that come up for you while listening?



Painting using colors that relate to your emotions is an effective tool for emotional expression that avoids judging the feelings.