



# UNPACK U

Discovery is within.



The Jed Foundation

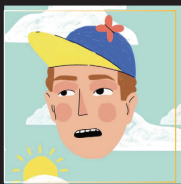
SEIZE THE AWKWARD

## KNOW THE SIGNS

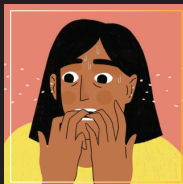
Is your friend going through a tough time? There's a number of signs to watch out for. But you know your friends best, so trust your gut. And if something seems wrong, ask.



They don't feel like hanging out as much



Their mind seems to be somewhere else



They're so anxious, they can't relax



They've gotten negative about life



They're not acting like themselves and are more irritable than usual



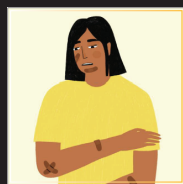
They're taking more risks than usual



They talk about feeling hopeless



They're taking more drugs or drinking more



They're harming themselves

# STARTING A CONVERSATION

**NO NEED TO BE AN EXPERT, JUST BE A FRIEND.** These tips should make starting a conversation about mental health a lot less awkward.

- ❖ Keep it casual. Relax: think of it as a chill chat, not a therapy session.
- ❖ Listen up. Let them take the lead.
- ❖ Avoid offering advice or trying to fix their problems.
- ❖ Let them know it's OK to feel the way they do.
- ❖ Make yourself available. Be the friend they can rely on.
- ❖ Ask open-ended questions. Help them talk, not just say "yes" or "no".
- ❖ Let them open up at their own speed.
- ❖ Don't demand answers or force them to say anything they're not ready to.
- ❖ Encourage them to talk to an expert.
- ❖ Tell them you won't ever judge them.
- ❖ Let them know that this won't change how you feel about them.
- ❖ Ask them if they have seen a doctor.

## AFTER THE CONVERSATION

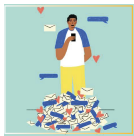
### You seized the awkward. What now?

Keep checking in, and if you want to do more, there's a bunch of other ways to help.



### DON'T GIVE UP

Maybe the first attempt didn't go so well or maybe they just weren't ready to talk. Show your friend that you're there for them. Stay available and keep checking in.



### KEEP INVITATIONS COMING

Even if they don't accept, it's important to keep offering because it still helps. Rejection probably isn't personal. Let your friends know you're there for them.



### HANDLE THEIR TRUST WITH CARE

You may be the only person they talk to about this. Show you care and avoid gossiping about them or turning people against them.



### GET SOME OUTSIDE HELP

You don't have to do this on your own. If you need to talk to someone, that's fine. Don't be afraid to reach out for help from a parent, teacher, counselor or someone you trust.

*If you're worried or not sleeping out of concern for a friend, it may also be a good idea to get some outside support. Even if you aren't sure that the problem is serious, you should still ask for help.*

CRISIS TEXT LINE:

Text **START**  
to **741-741**