



take time.

*Together we may
change someone's life.*



OKLAHOMA
State Department
of Health

By taking the time to listen and understand others, we can foster safe decision-making and provide supportive methods to deal with stressful situations. Take time. Together we may change someone's life.

**Use these sentence starters to begin
conversations with people in your life.**

1.

Gather information.

Make sure you know enough about the situation.

- Would/could you tell me a little more?
- Can you tell me what you need right now?
- Is there anything else you'd like to share?
- Would you like my help figuring this out?

3.

Model listening.

Show you're listening and paying attention to body language.

- It sounds to me like this might feel...
- I can see that you are feeling [emotion]...
- I can hear how [emotion] you are feeling.
- Your face is telling me that...
- I can hear in your voice that...

2.

Clarify understanding.

Reflect back what you think you've heard.

- Let me see if I have this right...
- I want to make sure I understand what you're telling me.
- What I'm hearing is...
- What I hear you saying is... Is that right?

4.

Affirm feelings.

Acknowledge vulnerability and affirm that feelings aren't right or wrong.

- Thank you for sharing this with me.
- I understand you feel that way.
- That sounds like an [adjective] experience.
- I hear you.
- I'm not sure what to say right now, but I'm here to listen.