



AGRIWELLBEING ALLIANCE

How does talking help?

Having supportive conversations



We want to help you feel confident in managing your own mental health and wellbeing, and for you to encourage others to be open with you about their experiences.

Noticing and naming our feelings is the first step in managing them, and having honest conversations about how we feel allows us to support one another.

We do not need to solve one another's problems, the simple act of listening and validating each other's experience has a positive impact.

Having supportive conversations



A problem shared is a problem heard, and being heard helps us to feel emotionally supported.

This leaflet gives you prompts for how to have supportive conversations and information on organisations that can provide more help.

Remember, you do not need to be able to solve the problem. Listening and signposting to the help that is available is enough.

Talking about mental health and wellbeing

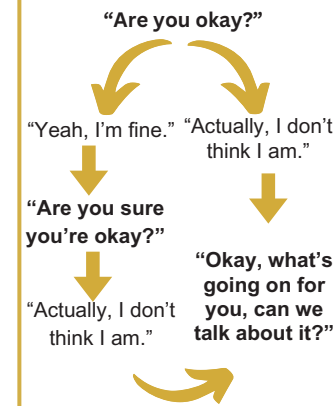
You already know how to have conversations, which ones are easy, and which ones you enjoy.

Talking about shared interests, past experiences and hopes for the future can all be good conversation topics, as can a shared grumble about the weather.

However the conversation starts, talking about mental health and wellbeing can feel difficult, and many people dismiss it when asked how they are.

That's why keeping it simple and natural helps. A follow-up like "Are you sure?" shows you genuinely care and aren't just asking out of habit.

How to check-in with someone



Our Vision: A farming sector where mental health and wellbeing are prioritised, supported, and openly discussed.

Our Mission: To collaborate with rural landowners, farming families, mental health organisations, agricultural contractors, agricultural advisors, and all those that could cross the farm gate to raise awareness, reduce stigma and promote access to services that support mental health and wellbeing.

Conversation prompts

- "Are you okay?" or, "I noticed you've been different recently, are you okay?"
- "How are you?" or, "How have you been?"
- "Can I help with anything?"
- "Would you like to talk?"
- "Is there anything you want to talk about?"
- "Have you felt stressed or under pressure lately?"
- "Have you been eating and sleeping well?"
- "Would you be willing to talk to someone?"
- "Can I help you contact a support service?" (See on other side)
- "When is the best time to check in with you again?"
- "You know it's okay not to be okay?"
- "I am here whenever you are ready."
- Encourage the person by saying "tell me more."

Non-verbal cues

When listening to someone talk, non-verbal cues play a crucial role in showing empathy and understanding. Being mindful of your body language, facial expressions and overall presence can create a safe environment for an open conversation.

- Maintaining eye contact to show attentiveness.
- Nodding to acknowledge understanding.
- Open body posture (avoiding crossed arms).
- Leaning slightly forward to convey interest.
- Mirroring their tone or pace to create connection.
- Offering a calm, steady presence through your facial expressions.

Open questions



Asking open-ended questions gives people the freedom to share as much or as little as they feel comfortable with, creating a safe space where they can navigate the conversation at their own pace.

"What's that been like for you?"

"How has that impacted your feelings towards work?"

"How does that make you feel about the future?"

Reflecting



Repeating or paraphrasing what the person has said shows understanding and validates their emotions.

This reassures them that they're being listened to.

"It all feels too much?"

"So it's ... that's causing you the most worry at the moment?"

"I didn't realise how much ... was having an impact on you."

Summarising



Bringing together key points of what they've shared to reinforce understanding and offer clarity. This can help them process their feelings and consider next steps.

"So what you're telling me is you've felt stressed since ..."

"To summarise what you've just told me, you're feeling very ..."

"What I'm hearing is that you are feeling very low, is that right?"

Clarifying



Asking follow-up questions to ensure you fully understand what they mean. This helps avoid assumptions.

"To confirm, in what ways has this impacted your work?"

"What do you mean by this?"

"You mentioned ... could you tell me more about this?"



ONE FARMER,
ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME.

www.agriwellbeingalliance.co.uk

Short words of encouragement



Small, simple statements of support can make a big difference. A few encouraging words reassure the person that they are not alone and that what they're going through matters.

"You're not alone, we're here to help you."

"You're doing really well."

"What happened next?"

Bringing the conversation to a close

Your role isn't to provide a solution, but to listen with empathy and without judgement. By responding with kindness and guiding people towards further support, you help them feel heard, valued and empowered.

"That's so frustrating, I know how hard you work and so it's understandable you feel that way."

"Thank you so much for telling me this, I can understand why you feel like this."

A simple pause or gentle prompt like, "Is there anything else on your mind?" can give them the opportunity to continue the conversation.

Bringing the conversation to a close

A natural next step in the conversation is to gently check in on what they need from you.

You might ask if they'd like to talk again soon or if there's anything specific you can do to support them.

This helps them feel cared for beyond the immediate conversation.

"It sounds like you're going through a lot right now. What can I do to help?"

Before wrapping up, you can also provide details of available support services, which can be found on the back of this Z card.

Self check-in

After having a conversation about mental health or wellbeing, it's just as important to check in with yourself.

These discussions can be heavy, so rather than diving straight back into work, take a moment to pause and reflect on how you're feeling.

Acknowledge any emotions that have come up and consider whether you need to talk to someone yourself.

Supporting others can be challenging, so make sure you're also putting into action whatever you need to feel supported in that moment - whether that's taking a short break, speaking to a colleague, or simply giving yourself time to process.

Check-in



Start

Continue

Stop

In the 'green' zone, you're feeling good and can keep going.

When you shift into 'yellow,' you might notice signs that you're not okay, but you carry on as normal.

Once you reach the 'red' zone, it's time to stop and focus on taking care of yourself, as continuing will only harm your own mental health and wellbeing.



AGRIWELLBEING ALLIANCE

Who are the AgriWellbeing Alliance?

Building a resilient and healthy farming community for future generations.

We want everyone to be able to spot the signs in themselves and others that they might be struggling, to have the confidence to start a conversation, and know how to access support.



Our Commitment



Support Mental Health and Wellbeing:

Equip farming families and those working in the agricultural sector with tools and resources to prioritise their wellbeing.



Our Commitment



Raise Awareness:

Use our convening power to foster open conversations and reduce stigma around mental health and wellbeing.



Our Commitment



Promote Collaboration:

Work with farming families, rural landowners, mental health organisations, agricultural contractors, agricultural advisors, and all those working in the agricultural sector, to signpost to those organisations that can provide support.

Our Commitment



Drive Change:

Drive initiatives that embed mental health and wellbeing as a core priority in the agricultural sector.



AGRIWELLBEING ALLIANCE

What can I do if someone is suicidal?

If you are worried about someone, don't be afraid to start a conversation.

Start the conversation

- **Show you care:** Focus on the other person, make eye contact, put away your phone.
- **Have patience:** It may take time and several attempts before a person is ready to open up.
- **Have a deeper conversation:** Perhaps over a cup of tea or go for a walk.
- **Help them tell their story:** Don't interrupt or offer a solution, and you don't need to fill the silence.
- **Have courage:** It can feel scary, but if you're concerned that someone is suicidal, it's helpful to ask them explicitly if they have thought about ending their life. Being able to talk about suicidal thoughts and feelings can often allow someone struggling to feel less overwhelmed and more able to seek help.

Spotting the signs

Changes in behaviour can be a clue to how someone is feeling, so check-in if you notice these types of changes:

- Feeling restless and agitated.
- Feeling tearful.
- Not wanting to talk to or be with people.
- Not wanting to do things they usually enjoy.
- Using alcohol or drugs to cope with feelings.
- Finding it hard to cope with everyday things.
- Not replying to messages or being distant.
- Things just don't appear to be at the same standard.
- New pattern of unexplained lateness or absences.
- Recent inability to concentrate.
- Recent inability to complete tasks.

Building rapport

Always ask twice:

"It sounds as though you are having a difficult time, can you tell me what has been happening so we can identify what might help?"

"Take your time – I know it can be difficult putting things into words sometimes."

Use all of your listening skills to prompt and encourage the speaker, leave silence and allow them to finish their sentences.

Be curious, not interrogating.

Building rapport

Use open questions:

"How have you been feeling?"

"How long has this been going on?"

"So you say this has been going on for a while, has something made it worse today?"

It is helpful to be able to signpost to specialist support.

"From what you are saying, I think it might be helpful for you to speak with someone who can offer you expert help and support."

Seeking help

There is always someone to listen to them and provide expert support.



If someone is an immediate danger to themselves or others, call 999 for 24/7 support:

NHS 111- If they need help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, get help from NHS 111 online or call 111.

Supporting someone in distress can be distressing in itself. If you're helping someone who's struggling, make sure you take care of yourself as well. For example, by talking to someone you trust about how it's impacted you.



AGRIWELLBEING ALLIANCE

Who can help?

If someone you are with feels overwhelmed by thoughts of not wanting to live or having thoughts about dying by suicide, seek help NOW.

These services are available 24/7

NHS Emergency 999

Samaritans 116 123

HOPELINE247 0800 068 4141

WHO WOULD FILL YOUR BOOTS?
FARM SAFETY FOUNDATION
Farm Safety Foundation (Yellow Wellies)
www.yellowwellies.org
farm_safety_foundation@nfmutal.co.uk

FCN THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK
03000 111 999
available daily 7am-11pm
www.fcncn.org.uk | www.farmwell.org.uk
help@fcncn.org.uk

RABI 0800 188 4444
www.rabi.org.uk
help@rabi.org.uk

Mates in Mind
Text: "BEAMATE" to 85258
This is a free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging service for anyone who is struggling to cope.

Northern Ireland
Rural Support
0800 138 1678
available Mon-Fri 9am-9pm
www.ruralsupport.org.uk
info@ruralsupport.org.uk

Scotland
RSABI
0808 1234 555
www.rsabi.org.uk
helpline@rsabi.org.uk

Wales
The DPJ Foundation
0800 587 4262
Text 07860 048799
www.thedpjfoundation.co.uk
Kate@thedpjfoundation.co.uk

Prevention of Young Suicide (Papyrus)
0800 068 41 41
pat@papyrus-uk.org
Text 88247
Papyrus provides confidential help and advice to young people and anyone worried about a child, teenager or person up to the age of 35.

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide
0300 111 5065
email.support@uksobs.org
www.uksobs.com
Offering peer-lead support to adults impacted by suicide loss through local groups, phone, email and online forum support.

Cruse Bereavement Support
0808 808 1677
www.cruse.org.uk
Bereavement Counsellors offering support through their website, national helpline, group, Zoom, telephone or one-to-one in person support.

The Addington Fund
01926 620 135
www.addingtonfund.org.uk

The Addington Fund provide a home for farming families living in England & Wales who have to leave the industry, through no fault of their own and, by doing so, will lose their home.

Step Change Debt Charity
0800 138 1111
www.stepchange.org

Step Change are a debt charity which offer free, flexible debt advice. They help people take control of their finances giving practical help, supporting clients for as long as they need.

National Gambling Helpline
0808 80 20 133

Whether you're looking for treatment, advice, or you just want to talk to someone about your – or someone else's – gambling, there's lots of support available, including a free helpline.

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)
0800 58 58 58
Daily 5pm-midnight, 365 days a year.
www.thecalmzone.net
CALM offers confidential, anonymous and free support information and signposting to anyone anywhere in the UK through their helpline.

Refuge Domestic Abuse Support
Women's Helpline 0808 2000 247
Men's Advice Line 0808 8010 327
www.refuge.org.uk
www.mensadvice.org.uk
Refuge supports women and children against domestic abuse. Respect offer support to men who are victims of domestic abuse.

Perennial
0800 093 8543
www.perennial.org.uk
info@perennial.org.uk
Perennial offer free and confidential advice, information and support to people working in or retired from horticulture and their families.