



Stigma Free
Lanarkshire

| Caring | Conversations

We hope that these tips will help you challenge stigma at the time it is heard or experienced.



1.

Let them share as much or as little as they want to

Let the person lead the discussion at their own pace, with no pressure on them. Try to leave any questions or comments until the person has finished so you don't interrupt them. Use positive body language, and encourage the person to continue with small verbal comments like 'I see' or 'what happened next?' This makes clear that you are paying attention and really listening to them.

2.

Don't try to diagnose or second guess their feelings

You probably aren't a medical expert and, while you may be happy to talk and offer support, you aren't a trained counsellor. Try not to make assumptions about what is wrong or jump in too quickly with your own diagnosis or solutions. The important thing is to listen rather than to give advice.

3.

Listen carefully to what they tell you

Repeat what they have said back to them to ensure you have understood it. You don't have to agree with what they are saying, but by showing you understand how they feel, you are letting them know you respect their feelings.

4.

Keep questions open ended

Try to avoid asking too many questions, especially questions that only require a 'yes' or 'no' answer, or that begin with the word 'why'. Ask open questions to invite a more detailed response:

- Tell me how you're feeling?
- How do you look after yourself?
- What support do you have in place?

5.

Provide reassurance

Reassure them that it is positive that they want to talk about their experience, what's happening with them, or that they are looking for support (if this is the case). Mental health problems are more common than people think and can affect anyone at any time. If they need further support, encourage them to see their GP or even offer to go with them if you can.

For mental health support and info, check out...

Samaritans

Offer a 24 hour confidential support service

Call: 116 123

NHS 24

Provides urgent health advice

Call: 111

Mon – Thurs 6pm – 8am
Fri 6pm – Mon 8am
(24hr at weekends)

Breathing Space

Offer advice and support if you need someone to talk to

Call: 0800 83 85 87

Mon – Thurs 6pm – 2am
Fri 6pm – Mon 6am
(24hr at weekends)

Wellbeingmatterslanarkshire

Lanarkshire's first stop for online mental health and wellbeing

www.wellbeingmatterslanarkshire.co.uk