

→ WHERE TO START ←

LETTER: TIME TO TALK

Starting conversations about mental health can be scary and you might be unsure about how to start. Use the letter below and fill in the blanks to figure out what you want to say. You can pick from the options we've listed or use your own words. Once you're finished, you can send (or email) the letter, turn the letter into a series of texts, or have it with you to guide a face-to-face talk.

Dear _____,

For the past (*day/week/month/year/_____*), **I have been feeling** (*unlike myself/sad/angry/anxious/moody/agitated/lonely/hopeless/fearful/overwhelmed/distracted/confused/stressed/empty/restless/unable to function or get out of bed/_____*).

I have struggled with (*changes in appetite/changes in weight/loss of interest in things I used to enjoy/hearing things that were not there/seeing things that were not there/feeling unsure if things are real or not real/my brain playing tricks on me/lack of energy/increased energy/inability to concentrate/alcohol or drug use or abuse/self-harm/skipping meals/overeating/overwhelming focus on weight or appearance/feeling worthless/uncontrollable thoughts/guilt/paranoia/nightmares/bullying/not sleeping enough/sleeping too much/risky sexual behavior/overwhelming sadness/losing friends/unhealthy friendships/unexplained anger or rage/isolation/feeling detached from my body/feeling out of control/thoughts of self-harm/cutting/thoughts of suicide/plans of suicide/abuse/sexual assault/death of a loved one/_____*).

Telling you this makes me feel (*nervous/anxious/hopeful/embarrassed/empowered/pro-active/mature/self-conscious/guilty/_____*), **but I'm telling you this because** (*I'm worried about myself/it is impacting my ability to function at school or work/it is impacting my friendships/I am afraid/I don't want to feel like this/I don't know what to do/I don't have anyone else to talk to about this/I trust you/_____*).

I would like to (*tell my family/talk to a doctor or therapist/talk to a guidance counselor/talk to my teachers/tell my boss/talk about this later/create a plan to get better/talk about this more/find a support group/_____*) and I need your help.

Sincerely,

(Your name _____)