



Inviting the conversation:



- ✓ Building a relationship of trust
- ✓ Recognizing mental distress
- ✓ Creating a response plan
- ✓ Questions / Discussion

Building an alliance of trust



1) Think of a time when you felt **at ease** in the presence of another person. What was the other person doing to facilitate that?

2) Think of a time when you felt **uncomfortable** in the presence of another person. What contributed to that experience?

Building trust by:

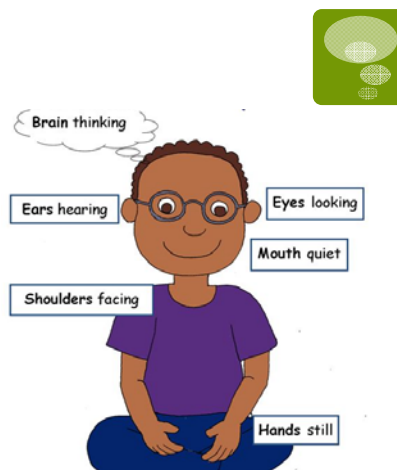
✓ Listening with attention:

- Open ended questions
- Space for response
- Body language / Breath

✓ Expressing care:

- Reflect understanding
- Convey genuine concern

✓ Not judging, Not fixing!



Assessing Mental Health



BASIC FUNCTIONING:

- Sleeping
- Eating
- Mood
- Grooming
- Presentation

ASK/OBSERVE:

- ☐ How are you sleeping?
- ☐ How is your appetite?
- ☐ Can you rate your mood on a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 feeling overjoyed and 1 wishing you were no longer here.
- ☐ Observe physical hygiene and appearance
- ☐ Observe presentation: affect, speech, thought pattern

Assessing Mental Health



HIGHER FUNCTIONING:

- Academics
- Work
- Relationships

ASK/OBSERVE:

- ☐ How is your ability to concentrate and focus?
- ☐ Are you keeping up with your workload and deadlines?
- ☐ Assess support systems (near and far)
- ☐ Absenteeism
- ☐ Feedback from others (peers, faculty, staff, colleagues, partners) – decrease in social interactions? Ability to perform tasks?

Anxiety



ASK:

- ☐ Are you experiencing increased worry?
- ☐ Can you describe your worries? What are you most afraid of?
- ☐ Do you have moments when you can relax?
- ☐ Do you feel that your heart is racing, your chest is tight, or you have difficulty breathing?
- ☐ Has your worry effected your eating, sleeping, work, or personal relationships?

Depression



ASK:

- ☐ Are you feeling down or hopeless?
- ☐ Are you having trouble falling or staying asleep, or oversleeping?
- ☐ How is your appetite? (Poor or overeating?)
- ☐ Experiencing diminished... ?
 - ☐ Energy
 - ☐ Interest or pleasure in doing things
 - ☐ Ability to concentrate and focus
 - ☐ Self esteem
- ☐ Decreased ability to function at home, work, and in relationships?
- ☐ Suicidal thoughts or thoughts of self harm?

Bipolar Disorder



ASK / OBSERVE

- ☐ How have you been sleeping?
- ☐ How is your energy?
- ☐ Do you have a lot of projects on the go?
- ☐ Do you have so many thoughts, it seems hard to keep track of all of them?
- ☐ Are you overspending or engaging in risky behavior?
- ☐ Prior to feeling this way, did you experience low mood?
- ☐ Observe:
 - ☐ Pressured speech (difficult to interrupt, talking over people)
 - ☐ Irritability or impatience

How are you coping?



Thoughts/Behaviors

ASK:

- Self-Harm
 - ☐ Do you engage in self harm, like cutting, scratching, or hitting yourself?
- Reckless/Dangerous behavior
 - ☐ Are you engaging in high risk behavior, such as having unprotected sex, spending lots of money, or increasing your substance use?
- Substance Use
- Suicidal Thoughts

Substance Use



ASK:

- ☐ What is your substance use like? Do you drink alcohol or consume drugs? I'm not going to judge you, I'm asking to better understand how you are coping.
- ☐ How much do you consume daily?
- ☐ Have you ever felt you ought to cut down?
- ☐ Have people annoyed you by criticizing your use?
- ☐ Have you felt bad or guilty about your use?
- ☐ Have you ever had a drink or used drugs first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover?

Suicidal Thoughts



ASK:

- ☐ Do you have thoughts of killing yourself?
- ☐ What are those thoughts?
- ☐ Do you have the means to carry through with your thoughts?
- ☐ What is keeping you from acting on your thoughts?
- ☐ Have you attempted suicide in the past?
- ☐ What is your level of hope?
- ☐ What are you looking forward to in the future?

Creating a response plan

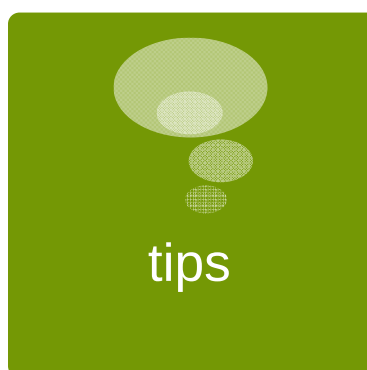


Law Schools

- Know where the counseling centre is and how to connect the student there
- 24/7 Crisis Hotline
- Mental Health Providers (out of pocket, through health insurance plans, or community based low/no cost programs)
- De-escalation
- Who do you call? Dean of Students? Campus security/police? 911?

Firms

- Employee/Lawyer Assistance Programs
- 24/7 Crisis Hotline
- Mental Health Providers (out of pocket, through health insurance plans, or community based low/no cost programs)
- De-escalation
- Who do you call? Building security? 911?



- ✓ Invite collaboration
- ✓ Address concerns about the impact on legal practice
- ✓ Assist within your abilities
- ✓ Follow up



Questions?
Comments?

To continue the conversation:



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Resources



- ABA's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Toolkit: For Law School Students and Those Who Care about Them:
http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/lawyer_assistance/lscolap_mental_health_toolkit_new.authcheckdam.pdf
- "Suffering in Silence: The Survey of Law Student Well-Being and the Reluctance of Law Students to Seek Help for Substance Use and Mental Health Concerns". (Includes a discussion section on what law schools can be doing to address these issues)
<http://jle.aals.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1370&context=home>.
- "The Hidden Sources of Law School Stress – Avoiding the Mistakes that Create Unhappy and Unprofessional Lawyers." Pamphlet by Lawrence S. Krieger.

Resources – Mood Assessments



- Free online screening tool with links to resources:
<http://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/collegeresponse>
- PHQ-9 (Patient Health Questionnaire). 9 questions to quickly assess for depressed mood:
<http://www.ubcmood.ca/sad/PHQ-9.pdf>
- GAD-7 (Generalized Anxiety Disorder). 7 questions to quickly assess for anxiety:
<http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/GAD708.19.08Cartwright.pdf>
- MSQ (Mood Swings Questionnaire). Self-assessment for Bipolar: <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/mental-health-wellbeing/bipolar-disorder/bipolar-disorder-self-test>

Resources – Substance Use



- CAGE substance use assessment from John Hopkins Medicine http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns_hopkins_healthcare/downloads/CAGE%20Substance%20Screening%20Tool.pdf
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism – has information and assessments for a diversity of populations: <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/>