

STRENGTH IN

THE METHOD

A set of actions to support common mental health needs

StrengthIn.us is reigniting the abilities we already have to strengthen communities as the first, most immediate response to common mental health needs.

The skills are evidenced-based, but training and implementation must be co-designed with the communities its serves. Visit www.strengthen.us to learn more.

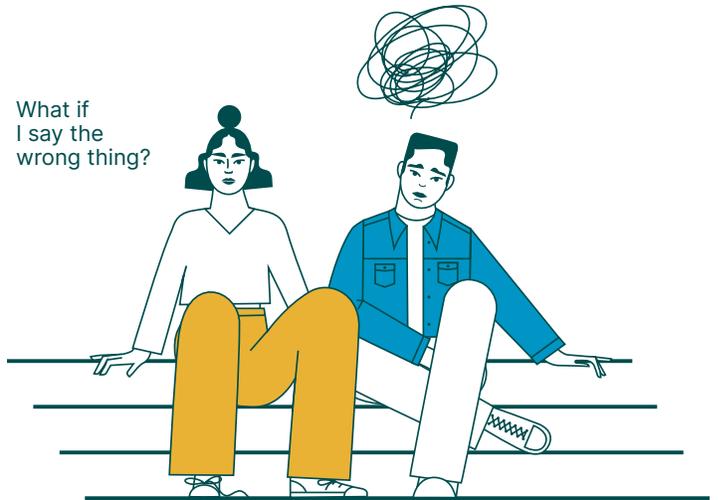


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Recognizing the strength in you to create a helping moment

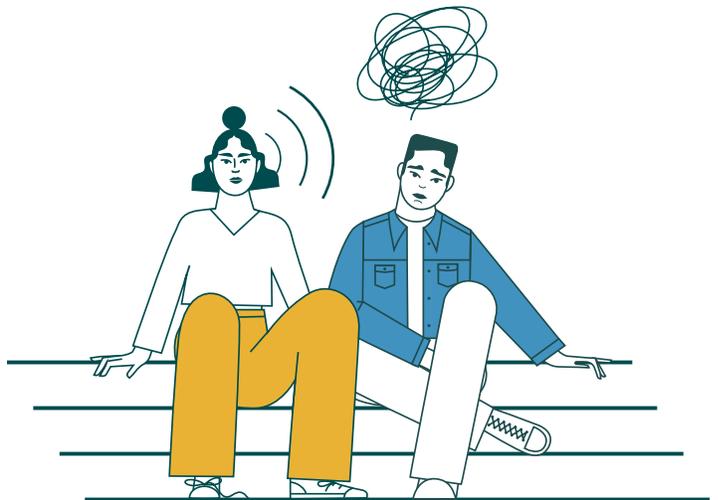
1. Empowered to *start*

We're often hesitant to engage when others seem upset, worried, or even just having a rough day. Recognize that you have what it takes to be there and do something. Because you are enough.



2. Be *present* and notice

Before we can offer help, we have to recognize when help is needed. Take time to notice what's going on with those around you and how it makes you feel. By identifying situations and your feelings, you create space to meet someone where they are.

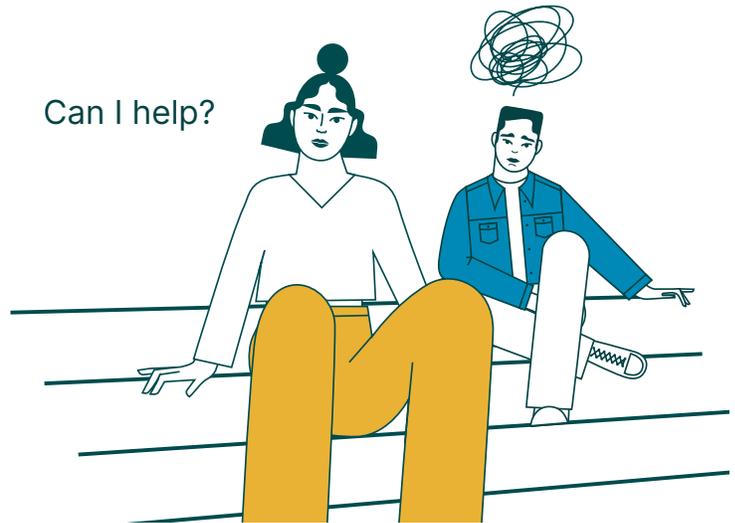


Recognizing the strength in you to create a helping moment

3. Could, should, *ready*

“Could I help? Should I help? And am I ready to help?” It’s essential to understand your own readiness before acting. Consider if it’s safe to help (“safe” can be different for everyone), you’re emotionally ready to offer help, and you can provide the time to be fully present.

Can I help?



4. *Connect*

You’ve made the observations and you’re ready to offer help. You might start by making a gentle, non-judgmental statement about what you are noticing. It may feel like a risk, but it opens a conversation. You may be correct, or someone may not want to talk now. That’s okay. You’ve opened the door. That can change a day. A choice. A life.

It seems like there's a lot on your mind today.



Move the conversation toward one that's strengths-based



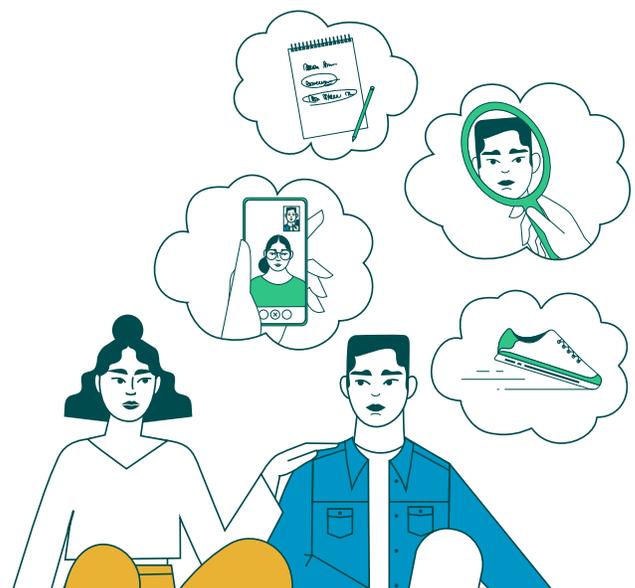
5. Listen *actively*

To understand how someone is feeling and what they may need, we first have to really listen. Create space for others to share, and avoid jumping to offering solutions or making assumptions. It's best if you find yourself listening 85% or more of the time.



6. Strengths-based *support*

Everyone has strengths they've used to overcome challenges. The goal in a helping moment is to listen deeply, and then recognize and support the strengths someone has, and help them put their strengths into action. You can help people uncover strengths by asking: "When you've felt this way before, what did you do to get through?" "Is there someone you go to for advice or support?" "What do you do to recharge yourself?"



Move the conversation toward one that's strengths-based



There are 4 common categories of *go-to strengths*:



Sharing with others

Engaging trusted people to help work through and process problems — could be a parent, sibling, partner, classmate, colleague or friend.



Moving the body and mind

Using physical activities like being in nature, exercise, dance, and yoga, or opening the mind and heart through meditation as a way to support well-being and help process problems.



Planning and detailing

Using problem-solving approaches like listing, prioritizing and planning to help clarify and map out challenging situations.



Affirming what matters

Reconnecting to who you are, your values, and how you define yourself to put things in perspective, identify what matters, and take positive actions.

7. Take one *next* step

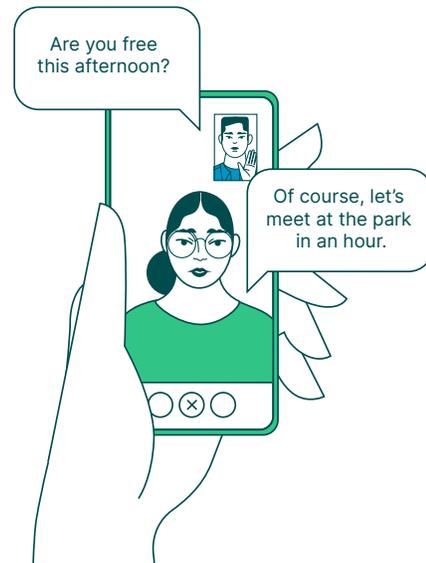
People often need support putting their strengths into action. By helping them identify a clear first step — like who they'll call and when they'll do it — they can move forward more confidently. Change may be small or incremental, but one step forward provides momentum and hope. Remember, you are not here to 'fix' anyone.



Know how to find and share resources that meet the need

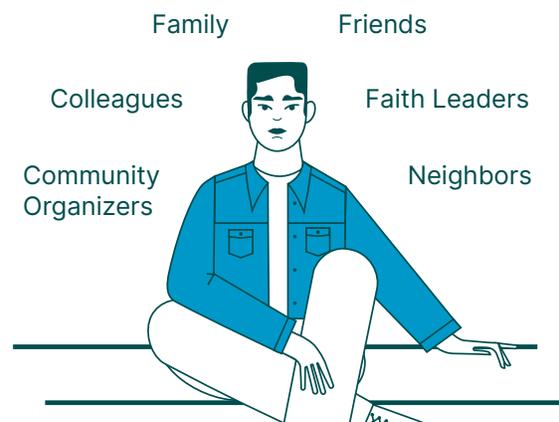
8. Identify *resources*

When someone is trying to alleviate their distress, they often don't know where to turn. You can point them toward helpful direct and indirect resources in their community:



Direct Resources

Programs, organizations, and systems designed to support specific needs — mental health services, support hotlines, economic or social services, school resources, immigration, faith-based organizations, and others.



Indirect Resources

Individuals and groups that know how systems work and can be good problem solvers — people in your professional life, family members, faith leaders, community organizers, and others.

Recognize and care for your own emotional needs



Check in with *you*

Caring for yourself is critical to your well-being and to your ability to help care for others. Take time to notice what's going on with your mind, body and heart, and how it makes you feel. Do you share how you're really feeling? Are you engaging honestly? Self-care, soul-care is not selfish, it's essential!



Recognize when you could use help

It can be difficult to acknowledge, but we all need help from time to time. Just as you would consider your own readiness to help someone else, ask: "Could I get help?" "Should I get help?" And, "Am I ready for help?"

And, consider where you find your go-to strengths. Is it sharing with others? Moving your mind and body? Planning and detailing? Affirming what matters to you?

