



Talking about how you feel: A guide for Time to Talk Day 2026

Many people keep their feelings to themselves. Not because they want to, but because they are not sure how to start, who to talk to, or whether their feelings are worth sharing at all.

You might feel like you should be coping. Or that other people have bigger problems. Or that talking will only make things awkward. These thoughts are common, especially when life looks fine on the outside.

Time to Talk Day is a reminder that speaking about how you feel does not need to be dramatic or perfect. It can be simple. It can be quiet. And it can make things feel less heavy, even if nothing else changes straight away.

This guide is here to help you think about **why talking can feel hard**, what can help, and how to start a more honest conversation in a way that feels right for you.

Why talking about how you feel can be hard

Talking about feelings sounds simple, but for many people it is not. It can feel **risky**. You may worry about saying the wrong thing, being judged, or not being taken seriously.

Some people were never taught how to talk about emotions. Others learned early on to keep things to themselves. If you are used to coping quietly, **opening up can feel uncomfortable or unnatural**.

There is also pressure to appear fine. At work, at home, and on social media, many people feel they should stay positive and get on with things. This can make it harder to admit when something feels off.

You might also tell yourself that your feelings are not serious enough to mention. That you should be grateful. That now is not the right time. These thoughts often stop people from speaking up, even when they are struggling.

Feeling unsure about talking does not mean you are bad at it. It means you are human. And it means **you are not alone in finding it hard**.



What can change when you talk

Talking about how you feel does not fix everything. It does not need to. For many people, the **first change is small but important**. Things feel a bit lighter. Less bottled up. Less lonely.

Saying something out loud can help you understand it better. Thoughts that feel tangled in your head often sound clearer once they are spoken. This can make it easier to see what is really bothering you and what might help.

Talking can also change how supported you feel. Even if the person you speak to cannot solve the problem, **being heard can reduce the sense of carrying things alone**. That sense of connection matters.

For some people, talking helps them **notice patterns**. Feeling low at certain times. Feeling stressed by the same situations. Feeling tired of pretending they are fine. These insights can be the first step towards making small changes.

You do not need the conversation to go perfectly for it to help. The act of speaking is often the part that matters most.

How to start the conversation

Starting is often the hardest part. You do not need the right words. You just need a way in that feels manageable.

It can help to pick a moment that feels **calm enough**. A walk. A quiet cup of tea. A message rather than a call. There is no single right way to do this.

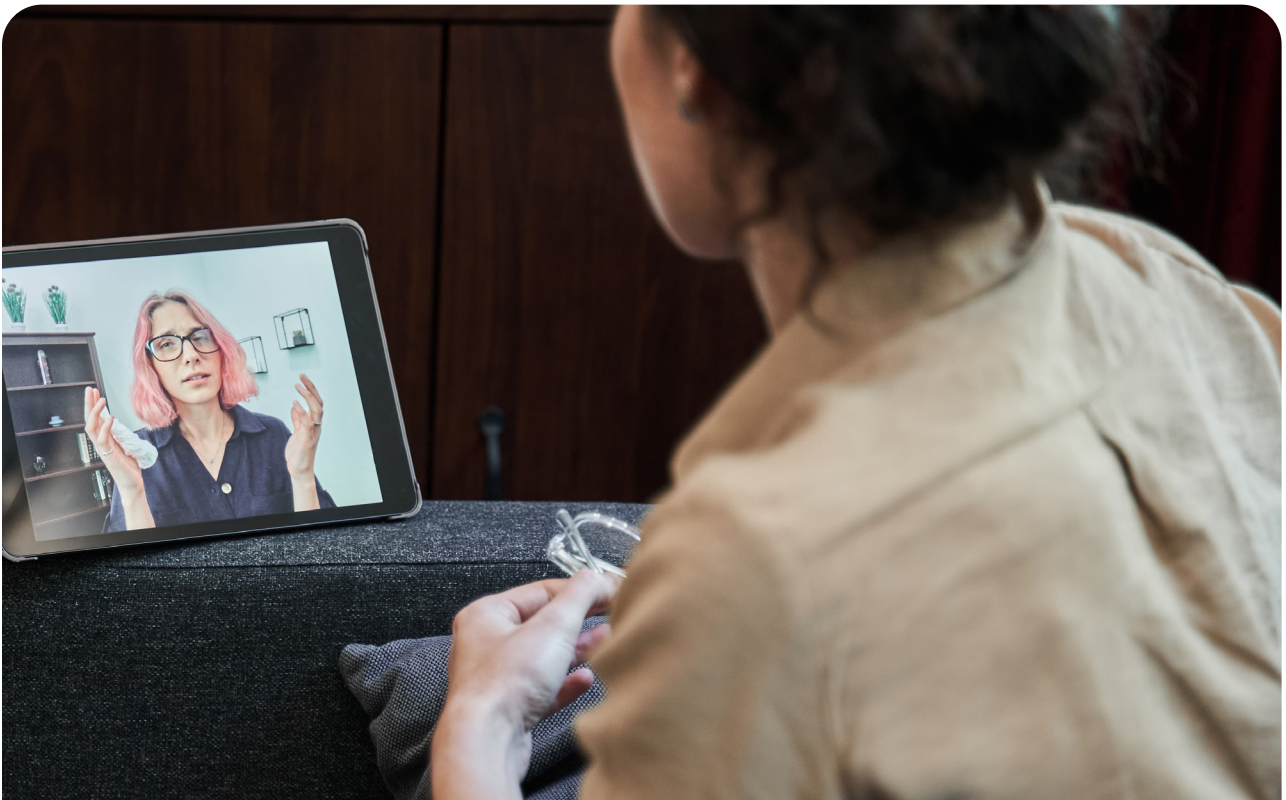
You can keep it simple. Short and honest is enough.

- *"I've been finding things a bit hard lately."*
- *"I don't need advice, I just need to talk."*
- *"Can I share something that's been on my mind?"*

You do not have to explain everything at once. You can start with **how you are feeling today**. Or with one small thing that has been bothering you.

If speaking feels like too much, **writing** can help. A text or note can open the door and make the next step easier.

Starting the conversation does not mean you have to know where it will lead. It just means you are not keeping everything inside.



As clinicians, we often hear people say they did not want to make a fuss or felt they should cope alone. But feelings do not work like that. There is no test you have to pass to deserve support.

Ongoing stress or low mood often shows up first in small ways, like poor sleep, low energy, tension, or trouble concentrating. These signs can be present for some time before people talk about how they feel.

Speaking earlier can help stop things from affecting work, relationships, or sleep. We often see better outcomes when people reach out before things start to feel overwhelming.

What to say when words feel stuck

It is common to know something feels wrong, but not know how to explain it. Many people stop themselves from talking because they think they need a clear story. **You do not.**

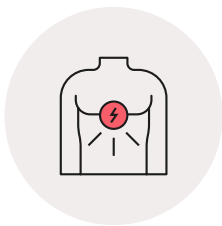
You can say that you are unsure. **That is still honest.**

- *"I don't really have the words, but I'm not feeling great."*
 - *"I'm not sure why I feel like this."*
 - *"I just need someone to listen."*
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You can also talk about **how things show up in daily life**.

- Feeling tired all the time.
- Feeling on edge.
- Losing interest in things you usually enjoy.
- Feeling low for no clear reason.

If emotions feel strong, it can help to **name the body signs instead**.



Tight chest



Poor sleep



Headaches



Feeling tearful or tense

You do not have to make sense of everything before you speak. Talking can help you **find the words as you go**. Silence, pauses, or changing your mind mid-sentence are all okay.

If the conversation feels awkward

Not every conversation will feel easy. Sometimes there are long pauses. Sometimes the other person does not know what to say. That does not mean you have done something wrong.

People often worry they have made things uncomfortable. In reality, **most awkwardness comes from care**, not lack of it. Many people want to help but are unsure how.

If the response feels off, you can guide it.

- *"I'm not looking for solutions right now."*
- *"It helps just to be listened to."*
- *"I don't need a fix. I just need to say this out loud."*

It is also okay to **pause or stop**. You can say you want to come back to it later. Or that you are glad you said something, even if it feels messy.

One conversation does not have to carry everything. Sometimes **talking is a process**, not a single moment. Even starting the conversation counts.

When it might help to get extra support

Talking to someone you trust can help, but sometimes it is not enough on its own. You might notice that how you feel is not shifting, even after opening up. Or that things feel heavier over time rather than lighter.



Extra support can help if you find that:

- low mood or worry lasts for several weeks
- sleep is poor most nights
- you feel on edge or tearful most days
- work or daily tasks start to feel hard to manage
- you are avoiding people or things you usually enjoy

Talking to a health professional can help you make sense of **what is going on** and **what might help next**. It can also take pressure off friends or family, especially if you are worried about leaning on them too much.

How HealthHero can help

If talking to someone you trust has helped, but you still feel stuck, HealthHero can help. You do not need to wait until things feel overwhelming to reach out.

With HealthHero, you can book an online GP appointment at a time that works for you. The doctor can listen to how you have been feeling and help you think through next steps.

This might include:

- talking through changes in mood, stress, or sleep
- helping you understand whether anxiety, low mood, or burnout may be playing a part
- suggesting practical next steps that fit around work and home life
- discussing next steps, such as talking therapies, if needed

Contact [HealthHero](#) today for more support and advice. We're with you every step of the way.