

know the five signs.

Reach out, connect, inspire hope, and offer help.



personality changed?



agitated?



withdrawn?



poor self-care?



hopeless?

#ChangeMentalHealth

visit

www.changedirection.org

Toolkit



**TO SUPPORT HELPING
PERSONS IN EMOTIONAL DISTRESS**



- Recognition of Five Signs will help recognize emotional distress. Important!
- Then what?
- Toolkit
 - Goal: to provide guidance in responding
 - Audience: patients & community members
 - Proposed Dissemination
 - ✦ Posting online for downloading
 - ✦ PCP & urgent care areas
 - ✦ Community centers
 - ✦ Others with interest

Five Signs of Emotional Suffering

Nearly one in every five people, or 43.8 million American adults, has a diagnosable mental health condition.¹ Half of all lifetime cases of mental disorders begin by age 14.² In addition, 1.7M Americans sustain a traumatic brain injury each year - which may affect their cognitive and emotional functioning. Drug use is on the rise in this country and 23.5 million Americans are addicted to alcohol and drugs. That's approximately one in every 10 Americans over the age of 12.

Often our friends, neighbors, co-workers, and even family members are suffering emotionally and don't recognize the symptoms or won't ask for help.

Here are five signs that may mean someone is in emotional pain and might need help:



Personality changes.

You may notice sudden or gradual changes in the way that someone typically behaves. People in this situation may behave in ways that don't seem to fit their values, or the person may just seem different.



Uncharacteristically angry, anxious, agitated, or moody.

You may notice the person has more frequent problems controlling his or her temper and seems irritable or unable to calm down. People in more extreme situations of this kind may be unable to sleep or may explode in anger at a minor problem.



Withdrawal or isolation from other people.

Someone who used to be socially engaged may pull away from family and friends and stop taking part in activities that used to be enjoyable. In more severe cases the person may start failing to make it to work or school. Not to be confused with the behavior of someone who is more introverted, this sign is marked by a change in a person's typical sociability, as when someone pulls away from the social support typically available.



May neglect self-care and engage in risky behavior.

You may notice a change in the person's level of personal care or an act of poor judgment. For instance, someone may let personal hygiene deteriorate, or the person may start abusing alcohol or illicit substances or engaging in other self-destructive behavior that may alienate loved ones.



Overcome with hopelessness and overwhelmed by circumstances.

Have you noticed someone who used to be optimistic and now can't find anything to be hopeful about? That person may be suffering from extreme or prolonged grief, or feelings of worthlessness or guilt. People in this situation may say that the world would be better off without them, suggesting suicidal thinking.

If you are concerned:

- Speak to your healthcare provider
- Help with substance concerns: www.nhtreatment.org or 211 or 844-711-HELP
- Help with mental health concerns: www.naminh.org or 603-448-4400 (crisis hotline)
In the Upper Valley: www.uvmentalhealth.org

Helping Someone with Emotional Distress

Actions Steps

Recognize



Express Concern For example:

I've noticed you don't seem yourself...
I care about you and I feel concerned...

Offer Support For example:

I'd like to help...
Would it help to talk?

Find Help For example

If it's okay with you, lets see if we can find you some help...
(If the person declines and you have serious concerns, consider contacting help resources yourself to describe the problem and get advice on how to proceed or call 911 for emergency help)

- **Speak to your healthcare provider**
- **911 for life-threatening emergencies**
- **Help for substance concerns: www.nhtreatment.org or 211 or 844-711-HELP**
- **Help for mental health concerns: www.naminh.org or 603-448-4400 (crisis line)**
- **In the Upper Valley: www.uvmentalhealth.org**

Supporting Someone in Emotional Distress

(One page)



- Active listening
- What to do if someone is suicidal
- Instruction for calming breathing
- Other actions to help distract or calm

Trainings to Help You Help Others



- **Mental Health First Aide**
- **Recovery Coach Training**
- **NAMI Family to Family trainings**
- **CADCA Trainings for Effective Community Action**

Words Matter



- Person with...
- Avoiding dirty talk: In recovery, not clean. Urine positive for, not dirty.
- Pharmacologic or medication treatment (rather than substitution therapy)
- Opioids rather than narcotics
- Unhealthy or risky use, rather than abuse
- Disorder rather than a habit



- Currently at www.neias.org with conference materials
- Will be at Dartmouth Hitchcock Substance Use * Mental Health Initiative website, launch target: January 1st.
 - We'll send a link to conference attendees.

Thank You



- **TOOLKIT CURRENTLY POSTED AT WWW.NEIAS.ORG WITH CONFERENCE MATERIALS**
- **WILL BE POSTED AT DARTMOUTH HITCHCOCK SUBSTANCE USE & MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE WEBSITE, LAUNCH TARGET: JANUARY 1ST**

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