

BETTER CONVOS

A simple guide to
checking in on your mates



Having Better Conversations

Got a feeling someone you know isn't acting as they normally would? Trust that gut instinct and act on it.

By starting the conversation and speaking up, **you could spark a mate to get help**, or just be a sounding board that helps them feel better.

Mateship is a bond that goes beyond friendship. It's a term with origins in war times and reflects a willingness and loyalty to do anything for a mate, to get in the trenches alongside them.

Courage, compassion and honesty are the characteristics of Mateship. **Good mates start tough conversations because they care.**

When you come from a place of love and concern, no one will have a problem with you checking in. **There's only good consequences to taking action.**

Know The Signs

63%

of people aren't confident they know the signs someone is struggling.

65%

of people struggling mentally don't take any serious steps.



Know The Signs

More than **40%** of people will admit they haven't asked someone because they weren't sure they knew the signs.

The good news is when we know the signs, we become more confident to talk about it.

The 5 biggest concerns of people to look for are:

- Relationship breakdowns
- Health issues
- Work stress
- Financial difficulty
- Loss of someone or something they care about

Don't underestimate
the importance of
just being there.

When it comes to recognising your mate might need a chat, 74% of us use non-verbal indicators.

These are common non-verbal indicators to keep an eye out for:

- Moody
- Seem confused or irrational
- Lacking self-esteem
- Mood swings
- Becoming withdrawn
- Changing their online behaviour
- Losing interest in what they used to love
- Less interested in their appearance
- Behaving recklessly



4 Steps To Better Conversations

If you're wanting to check on a mate, or just have better conversations there's 4 steps you can take:

1. **Ask**
2. **Listen**
3. **Encourage action**
4. **Check in**

These steps have been established by experts, they know far more than me, but I've learned some things that I want to share too.

Ask

Have a plan. Usually we're checking in if we feel somethings not right.

Give a reason in your question. Not just "How are you?" but "you've seemed quiet, everything all good?" or "I know you started a new job, how's are you finding it?".

Tomorrow Man taught me the most important question is the second or third one.

You need to practice follow up questions, do a bit of digging. It's not til we've asked a few times that our mates really open up and respond honestly.

Listen

Get them started, then take a back seat. Blokes default to being 'Mr Fixit'.

Try let them do the talking and just listen.

Give them time to think, chances are no one really asks about these things.

Be an active listener, then repeat things back to them and ask if you've understood them correctly.



4 Steps To Better Conversations

Encourage Action

Some people won't open up right away but the best thing to do is encourage your mate to take positive steps if somethings bothering them.

The idea is getting what's in their head, out of it.

Fresh air, exercise and a bit of socialising will almost always make them feel better.

Remember that it's not on you to solve anything. If things are serious, do what you can to get them to professional help.

A counsellor is a non-judgemental expert that gives you coping strategies. **It's by far and away the best thing anyone can do.**

Check in

Set yourself a reminder to follow up on the conversation. Too many times if we have a breakthrough conversation with a mate, we feel too uncomfortable to bring it up again.

The best way to check in is just to book a catch up. Either way, **it only takes 2 minutes to pick up the phone and check in on a mate.**

There's nothing more rewarding than being there for your mates and knowing they'd do the same for you.



Summary

It doesn't take much to check in regularly and start having better conversations with your mates.

Statistically, most blokes suffer in silence and find it tough to open up. When you come from a place of care, checking in won't seem hard.

There's only good consequences to taking action.

1 in 5 Aussies will experience some form of mental health struggle in their lifetime, so like it or not this is happening to people you know.

Key Points

- It's more important to listen than to talk.
- Asking questions is different to advice, you don't need to fix anything.
- Call out things that have led you to check in.
- Silence is powerful, don't rush to jump in.
- Show that you've listened by repeating back what you've heard.
- Ask if you have understood them properly.
- Be positive about the role of professionals in tough times.
- Set yourself reminders to check in.
- Tee up something beyond a check in, spend time together.

