



# CONVERSATION GUIDE

*We know that social connection and support are huge factors in preventing suicide. Think a friend is struggling but not sure what to say? Try one of these open-ended questions or validations to get the conversation started and make them feel heard.*

## **Open-Ended Questions:**

- How long have you been feeling this way?
- How bad do these feelings get?
- How do you think this will affect...?
- How are you coping?
- How are you handling...?
- How have you dealt with these feelings up until now?
- How would you hope \_\_\_\_\_ would react?
- How has the loss of \_\_\_\_\_ been for you?
- How often does \_\_\_\_\_ happen?
- How are you feeling right now?
- How does feeling \_\_\_\_\_ affect you?
- How are you feeling about your decision to...?
- How do you see this situation evolving?
- How can I help you right now?
- What are these emotions and feelings like for you?
- Does anyone else know how you're feeling?
- What do you mean by...?
- Tell me about...
- What has happened today to bring you to this point?
- What do you normally do when you feel like this?
- What do you fear the most about...?
- What has life been like since...?
- Have you thought about what the future might be like?
- What is it like for you to talk about this?
- What do you see as barriers to...?
- What is your relationship like with...?
- Have you thought about what you're going to do next?

## **Validations:**

- That sounds...
- That sounds really tough for you.
- That sounds very challenging.
- It sounds like you are going through a lot right now.
- I'm here for you.
- I'm glad that you called/came to see me/reached out.
- I'm sorry to hear...
- It must be difficult to feel so alone.
- I'm here to listen.
- Anyone in your situation would have a difficult time.
- That's really difficult to deal with.
- Oh my gosh, that's terrible.
- However much you decide to share is okay.
- It's okay to feel that way.
- Thank you for talking about this, it must've been hard.
- I can't imagine how you must be feeling.
- It must have taken a lot to overcome that fear.
- It has to be hard to choose between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- It's really unfair that you're in this situation.
- This isn't something you should have to go through alone.
- It's only natural to want to feel accepted for who you are.



Support for young people, by young people.

**TEXT:** 439-726 | **VISIT:** [textthesam.org](http://textthesam.org)

*Hey Sam is a program of Samaritans, Inc.*