



How to Support Your Teammate

Connecting with Your Community

Inspired by Mental Health Month | In partnership with the Brisbane Broncos

Whether it's family, friends, or the people you work beside - we all have teammates. They're the ones who've got our back, share the load, and celebrate the wins with us. But sometimes a teammate might be doing it tough - maybe they're withdrawn, short-tempered, developing concerning habits, or just not themselves. It can be hard to know what to say or do.

This guide is here to help you spot the signs, start the conversation, and show up for your mate - in a way that's supportive for both of you.

Understanding the Difference

Supporting vs. Enabling

When someone close to us is struggling, our first instinct is to jump in and fix it. But sometimes, what feels like helping can accidentally keep them stuck.

It helps to remember: your mate isn't the problem - what they're going through is. You can't force someone to change, especially before they are ready, but you can support them in a way that encourages healthier choices.

What Enabling Can Look Like

- Avoiding tough chats or pretending things are fine
- Losing your cool or trying to control the situation
- Covering for them when things go wrong
- Offering help that might make it easier for them to keep up unhealthy habits

What Supporting Looks Like

- Setting clear, healthy boundaries
- Encouraging them to talk about what's really going on
- Letting them take responsibility for their choices
- Reminding them they're not alone - and that support is available

Improving mental health and wellbeing begins with your teammate's decision to seek help - but your role in encouraging that step can be invaluable.

Remember, you don't have to carry their load - just walk beside them.





Communicating with Care

Language that heals, not harms

'Care-Fronting': Tackling Conversations with Care

When emotions are running high, it's easy to react instead of respond. But taking a breath and approaching the moment with calm and care can completely change how the conversation goes.

This approach - sometimes called **care-fronting** - is all about being honest and kind at the same time.

If things start to feel tense, hit pause and come back to it later. When you do talk, keep it simple and open:

"I've noticed things have been tough lately - how can I support you?"

"What do you need from me right now?"

These kinds of questions take the pressure off and show that you're on their team.

And when you share how you feel, focus on your experience - no blame:

"I feel worried about you and what's been happening." instead of "You're stressing everyone out."

Conversation Toolkit

How you phrase things can make all the difference. The goal isn't to fix - it's to connect.

Instead of...

"You make me so angry when you do this."

"I expect better from you."

"You've let everyone down."

Try saying...

"I feel so worried about you and what's been happening."

"I know you're capable of more, and I want to help you get there."

"We're all here for you - let's figure out what might help."

These shifts keep the focus on care and teamwork.
They remind your mate that you're *for* them, not against them.



Starting the Help Conversation

Talking about getting help can be tough - but when it's done with empathy, it can open the door to change.

Understand their Situation

Try to learn a little about what might be going on - whether it's stress, anxiety, or challenges with substances or behaviour. Showing understanding builds trust.

Pick the Right Moment

Choose a calm time when you can both talk openly. Avoid labels or judgement. You might say something like:

"It seems like things have been really tough lately. Have you thought about getting some extra support?"

If you're unsure where to start, our team can help you find the right next step.

Come Prepared with Options

When the time feels right, it helps to have a few ideas ready - maybe seeing a GP, talking to a helpline, or looking into professional support like The Banyans.

You don't need all the answers. What matters most is showing up with care, respect, and hope.

The Banyans offers a range of wellbeing programs - from residential to day and online options. And if we're not the right fit, we can connect your teammate with trusted services that are.

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

Words matter - but it's the follow-through that really builds trust. Keep your promises, check in regularly, and show you care through your actions.

It's okay to protect your own boundaries too. Waiting for consistent, genuine change before rebuilding trust isn't unkind - it's healthy.

Looking After Yourself

Because you matter too

Supporting someone else can take it out of you. You can't pour from an empty cup - and your wellbeing is just as important.

Try to:

- Spend time doing things that recharge you - sport, time outdoors, music, or catching up with mates
- Move your body - even a short walk helps
- Take mindful moments - a deep breath, a cup of tea, a quiet pause
- Reach out to someone who lifts your spirits
- Talk to a professional if you need some support yourself





Professional Support Services

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation

<https://adf.org.au/>

Black Dog Institute

<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/>

Family Drug Support

<https://www.fds.org.au/>

Lifeline

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/> | 13 11 14

You Are Not Alone.
Help is available.

There are people who can help you too. A GP, mental health helplines, and services like The Banyans can all offer guidance.

Sometimes the most supportive thing you can do is start the conversation.

Because no one should have to face life's challenges alone.



THE BANYANS

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