

Everyday Caring: Guide

Everyday caring conversations are essential to support each other, promote our wellbeing and build our EY culture of caring. In the past few years, burnout, loneliness, increased mental health needs, and other related issues have become major challenges worldwide – sometimes without noticeable signs. This guide provides tips to have everyday caring conversations to support one another and show that we care.

What are they?

- ▶ Regular and informal one-to-one dialogues in which we feel safe to ask each other how we are doing and share freely what we are feeling. They are a natural and routine way for us to interact with one another.

When can they happen?

- ▶ On a regular and routine basis
- ▶ When there is a specific reason
- ▶ When there are serious concerns

Who needs them?

- ▶ Everyone can benefit from a caring conversation. There doesn't need to be an issue to check in. It is as simple as asking how your teams, counselees and colleagues are doing.

How can they help us?

- ▶ Provide a shared language to support each other's wellbeing
- ▶ Make it more comfortable to share our personal concerns
- ▶ Find EY resources that can support us in a variety of ways when we need them

Who is responsible for them?

- ▶ We are all responsible for everyday caring conversations because having an open and honest dialogue to support one another can make a difference to those who are struggling.
- ▶ People in certain roles are responsible for initiating caring conversations as part of their regular work activities. These roles include:
 - ▶ All Talent consultants
 - ▶ Anyone with direct reports, including PPMDDs, senior managers, managers, and seniors
 - ▶ Wellbeing champions

What is expected of you?

While it is important to recognize the signs of struggle or burnout (see page 3), you should not:

- ▶ Attempt to diagnose or fix someone's issue
- ▶ Make assumptions about someone's feelings or their situation

Instead, you are strongly encouraged to:

- ▶ Ask your colleagues how they are doing regularly; if you notice specific changes in their behavior, address them quickly
- ▶ Be familiar with resources that are available for support
- ▶ Encourage people to seek support

Where can they happen?

- ▶ In person in a space that is conducive to having a private conversation without others overhearing
- ▶ Virtually in a video call where each person can speak freely and in a place that is comfortable for them
- ▶ Integrated as part of one-to-one check-ins (virtual or in person) to make them more natural and frequent

Tips to effectively engage in a caring conversation ...

1. Before the conversation, please prepare.

Be in the right frame of mind.

- ▶ Stay focused and calm.
- ▶ Pay attention, minimize distractions (e.g., phone, email, chat) and actively listen.
- ▶ Spend the time needed for a meaningful conversation.

Pick the right moment and location.

- ▶ Pick a moment that is convenient for both of you.
- ▶ If the concern seems urgent, have the conversation as soon as possible.
- ▶ Allow ample time to talk.
- ▶ Prioritize privacy and ask if the person is in a place where they can speak freely. If not, offer to reschedule.

Address specific concerns.

- ▶ Think through any behaviors or changes that concern you so you can bring them up in the discussion.
- ▶ Identify EY resources, support, and potential ways to help the person navigate the struggle (e.g., flexible hours).

2. During the conversation, using CARE will help people feel safe and at ease.

Curious

Notice things that are unusual or out of character for the person. Tip: Pay particular attention to any changes in appearance, behavior, expression, mood, work and social interactions. This is especially important if you are addressing a specific issue or concern

Authentic

Express genuine concern for the person's wellbeing. Tips: Start the conversation by asking a question, such as:

- ▶ How are you doing?
- ▶ How's family? Your work?"
- ▶ "You don't seem like yourself lately. How are things going?"
- ▶ "I know you are going through a tough time. Is there anything I can do to help?"

If there are specific things you've observed, it is important to share them in your conversation.

Respectful

Take cues about how direct or indirect to be, what the person is ready to share and what action they are ready to take. Tips:

- ▶ Communicate in a simple and straightforward manner.
- ▶ Allow the person ample time to express themselves. Don't rush or dominate the conversation.
- ▶ Pay attention and listen carefully without being judgmental or making assumptions.
- ▶ Stay calm and don't take the other person's reactions personally.
- ▶ If a person is not ready to talk, let them know you will always be available to listen.

Empathic

Listen more than talk. Tips:

- ▶ Acknowledge the person's feelings and acknowledge their concerns by saying: "I'm sorry you're dealing with this."
- ▶ Use brief affirmations like: "I see" or "I understand."
- ▶ Summarize to demonstrate you're listening. You can do this by saying "It sounds like ..." or "What I'm hearing is ..."
- ▶ Encourage the person to reach out for help, or if warranted, involve their leader, Talent consultant or EY Assist.
- ▶ If the person isn't ready to talk right away, let them know you will be available when they are ready.

3. Follow up with the person in a few days.

Listen without judgment even if no action has been taken yet. If the person has not yet reached out for support, consider offering your help in making a connection. It may take time for them to seek help. Be encouraging. Never pressure anyone to get care. If you have an urgent concern about someone's wellbeing, reach out to a Talent consultant.

Recognizing the signs ...

How to recognize when someone is struggling?

While some people could be struggling without displaying any specific signs, it might be noticeable in others.

Common signs of personal struggle ...

Physical appearance

- ▶ Looking unusually tired, appearing sleepy or disengaged
- ▶ Appearing different from their usual appearance
- ▶ Repeatedly mentioning aches, illness, exhaustion, and headaches
- ▶ Gaining or losing weight rapidly

Behavior

- ▶ Acting withdrawn, distracted, or disengaged
- ▶ Exhibiting unusual, uncharacteristic, or concerning behaviors
- ▶ Expressing extreme dissatisfaction with their home or work environment

Expression

- ▶ Talking rapidly or slowly and speaking in a slurred manner
- ▶ Using confused or extremely loud speech
- ▶ Being distracted by intrusive thoughts
- ▶ Hyper focusing on a topic

Work and social interactions

- ▶ Being unresponsive to calls, texts or emails during their usual available hours
- ▶ Using excuses and blaming others
- ▶ Experiencing relationship challenges or bullying others
- ▶ Showing a decline in work performance
- ▶ Being unable to disconnect from work and/or significantly changing working hours
- ▶ Missing meetings or workdays without explanation
- ▶ Prioritizing work over personal time off and vacations for long periods of time

Mood

- ▶ Having strong emotional reactions like anger, sadness, tearfulness
- ▶ Appearing irritable and frequently complaining about many things
- ▶ Appearing overwhelmed by previously manageable tasks
- ▶ Demonstrating excessive fear, worry or restlessness
- ▶ Mentioning vague or direct comments about suicide

How to recognize burnout?

Burnout is exhaustion and overwhelm related to work and/or personal demands. It can leave one feeling physically and emotionally drained. It can impact social interactions and work performance. It is also associated with workplace turnover others.

What causes burnout?

- ▶ Feeling lack of control over decisions/assignments
- ▶ Lack of boundaries
- ▶ Unclear or overly demanding job expectations
- ▶ Perceptions of workload expectations that are impossible to meet
- ▶ Insufficient reward and recognition
- ▶ Difficult work/team environment
- ▶ Nature of work being monotonous and requiring extreme focus

What are some signs of burnout?

- ▶ Exhaustion
- ▶ Changes in behavior
- ▶ Changes in performance
- ▶ Apparent elevated levels of stress
- ▶ Changes in team dynamics
- ▶ Some people may not display signs of burnout

Help and support ...

Ways to support wellbeing

Be conscious of people and how they are doing.

- ▶ Understand the signs of burnout
- ▶ Explore ways you can help support them, while also encouraging them to proactively disconnect

Make flexibility a priority and lead by example.

- ▶ Actively listen and act when needed
- ▶ Set aside time away from work to disconnect
- ▶ Communicate in ways that show you respect others' time and sleep schedules
- ▶ Set boundaries, including "off hours" and time off

Routinely check in and discuss whether ...

- ▶ Shifts need to be made to meet personal wellbeing goals
- ▶ Expectations on role and tasks are clear
- ▶ Deliverables need to be delegated, reassigned, or adjusted
- ▶ Support is needed to obtain responses or critical information

Talk as a team about ...

- ▶ Burnout and collaborate on way to address them
- ▶ What predictable flexibility means
- ▶ Setting inclusive team norms to support one another
- ▶ Length, cadence, and purpose of meetings

Resources

Better You resources

- ▶ [Wellbeing Roadmap](#): EY Canada's many initiatives and programs to support you and your family
- ▶ [EY Live Well!](#): a one-stop shop for everything wellbeing
- ▶ LifeWorks (Employee and Family Assistance Program) 24-hour confidential, short-term counselling and referral service for you and your family: +1 844-880-9142

Emotional wellbeing support

- ▶ [Mental health benefit](#) : EY offers a \$5,000 mental health benefit for all EY staff and eligible dependents under the medical plan
- ▶ [Wellbeing benefit](#): EY offers employees 75% reimbursement up to \$1000 for wellbeing & fitness equipment, memberships and more.
- ▶ [MindBeacon](#): digital Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) for people with mild to moderate symptoms of depression, anxiety, insomnia, PTSD, panic disorder, health anxiety.
- ▶ [Healthcare Online](#): On-demand healthcare service available 24/7 for your health and wellness needs for all benefits plan members and dependents
- ▶ [Teledoc Medical Experts](#) can help EY employees (and their dependents) to understand their medical condition, obtain an expert second opinion, navigate the health care system, find a specialist that is right for you and ensure the right diagnosis and treatment. Contact: 1 877 419 2378
- ▶ [Kids & Co](#) helps provides backup dependent care services. You can feel assured that your loved ones are receiving high-quality care when your regular provider is not available. Contact: 1-866-MY-KIDCO (1 866 695 4586)
- ▶ [LifeSpeak](#): Learn more about LifeSpeak's library of videos, plans, podcasts, and tools to improve overall health

Additional external resources


- ▶ [Talk Suicide Canada](#): +1 833 456-4566 or Text: 45645. For residents of Quebec, call 1-866-277-3553
- ▶ [Wellness Together Canada](#): connect with a Mental health professional one-on-one:
 - ▶ For Youth call 1-888-668-6810 or text WELLNESS to 686868
 - ▶ For Adults call 1-866-585-0445 or text WELLNESS to 741741
- ▶ [Hope for Wellness Help Line](#) for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples: Call 1-855-242-3310 (toll-free) or connect to the online [Hope for Wellness chat](#)
- ▶ [Kids Help Phone](#) available 24/7: Call 1-800-668-6868 (toll-free) or text CONNECT to 686868. For Canadians aged 5 to 29 who want confidential and anonymous care from trained responders
- ▶ [Veterans Transition Network](#): +1-844-CDN-VETS (236-8387)
- ▶ [Canada Health](#): Canadian resources for substance abuse, smoking, pregnancy/postpartum, youth health, mental health, wellbeing and more

Internal resources

- ▶ EYHR Helpline: 1 866 857 EYHR (3947) or <mailto:eycanhr.general@ca.ey.com>
- ▶ Take Time Off: [Canada HR Connection - Time off](#)
- ▶ [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#)
- ▶ [EY/Ethics hotline](#): +1 877 393 8442
- ▶ [Professional Networks](#)
- ▶ IT Service Desk - Canada 1 877 461 HELP (4357)
- ▶ EY Travel assistance:
 - ▶ Reservation Centre: 1 877 398 7283
 - ▶ ManuAssist for medical travel assistance: 1 800 265 9977
 - ▶ International SOS for latest health, safety, and travel advice worldwide:
 - ▶ Tel#: 215 942 8226 internationalsos.com (Membership number: 11BCPA000130)

Note: Talent consultants should be informed of any concerns about the wellbeing of someone at EY to provide guidance.

Important: Any threat of harm to oneself or others should be taken seriously. Contact LifeWorks (EFAP) at +1-844-880-9142 or a member of the Talent Team to help ensure the person is safe. Contact 911 if there is immediate danger to anyone's safety.



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