

# **Skills for Being There:**

## **Learning How To Help When Others Need Us**

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- What makes a good helper?
- How to know someone might need help
  - Ethics and Confidentiality
    - 6 Step Helping Skill
      - Practice
- Limits, Boundaries and Strategies
  - Self-Care
  - Resources



1. I understand the ethics of helping someone.
2. There are boundaries I would set when helping someone.
3. I know the people or resources I can go to for help.



# Qualities of a good listener/helper?

What are the qualities you look for in someone you trust?

What do you think are the qualities that make a good listener/helper?

- ✓ Trust worthy
- ✓ Good Listener
- ✓ Comforting
- ✓ Dependable
- ✓ Respectful
- ✓ Safe
- ✓ Honest
- ✓ Willing to Help
- ✓ Compassionate
- ✓ Non Judgmental
- ✓ Inner-Strength
- ✓ Healthy Boundaries



# Mental Health and Mental Illness

## Mental Health:

Mental health is a state of **well-being** in which every individual realizes their potential, can **cope with the normal stresses of life**, can work productively, can do well and fully enjoy life

## Mental Illness:

A significant change in thinking, mood or behavior accompanied with distress and impaired functioning over an extended period of time



# Okay or Not Okay?

- How can you tell the difference between regular changes in mood or behaviour or if it is an indicator of a larger issue?



# Observation

- Observing how a person looks is often a key to identifying what a person is feeling
- Identifying what a person is feeling is often a first step to helping



**What can you do if the signs say something different than what your friend tells you?**



# Signs to Cause Concern

- Feeling sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks
- Severe or extreme mood swings
- Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities
- Sudden overwhelming fear, sometimes for no reason
- Changes to normal eating or sleeping habits
- Intensified risk taking
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol
- Drastic changes in personality or behavior
- Extreme difficulty concentrating, focusing, or staying still
- **Any major change from what was once typical**





# What are Ethics?

Ground rules or a set of guidelines that help guide the behavior and practices of a group of professionals or people

- **Confidentiality**
  - what is revealed and what is not
- **Responsible Behavior**
  - what we do, or suggest to do
- **Rights and Decisions**
  - the right to make their own decisions

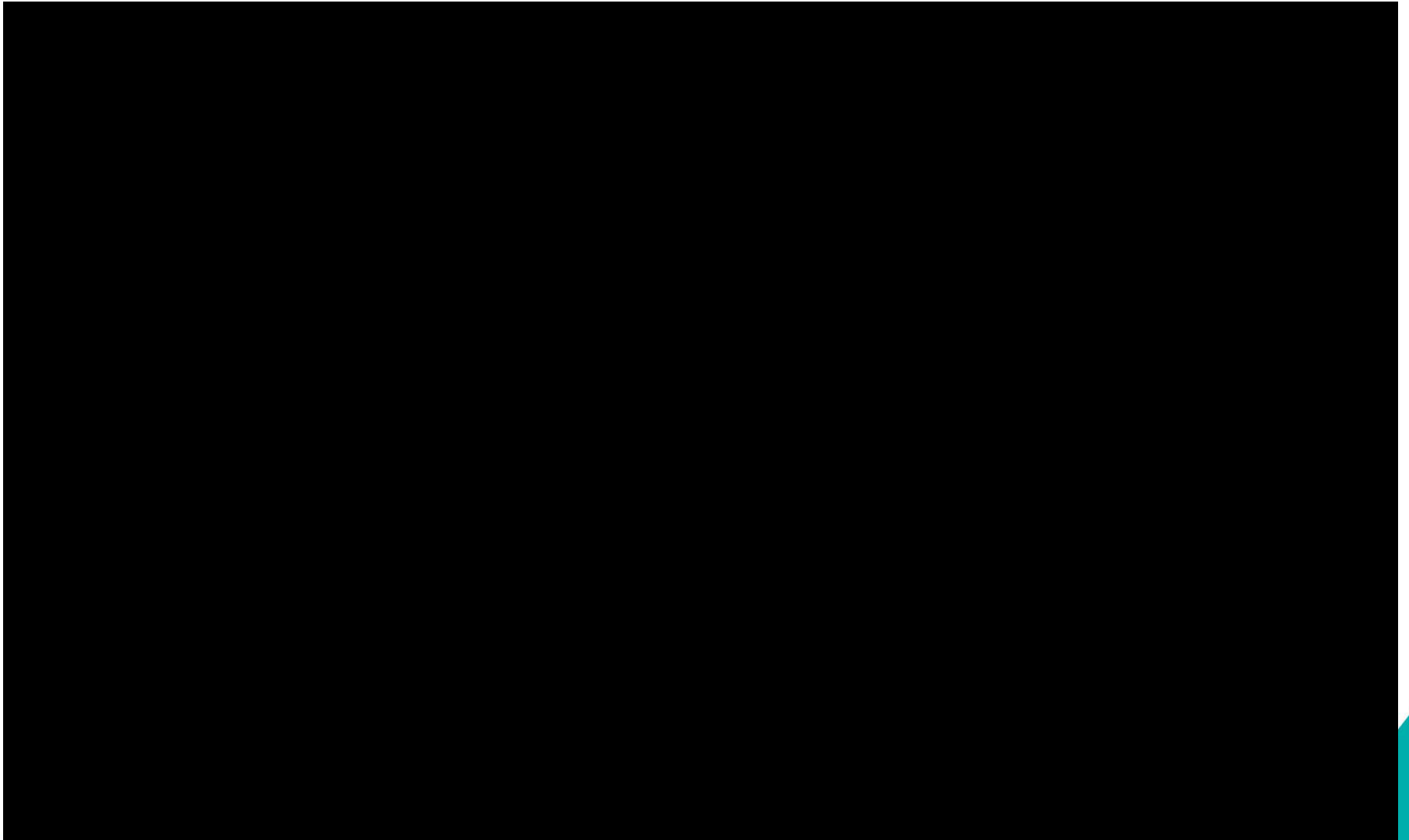


# When You Should Break Confidentiality

- You feel threatened or are threatened
- The person you are helping thinks they cannot keep themselves safe
- The person you are helping is placing others in danger from their behaviours
- Abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, verbal)
- Drugs and/or alcohol addiction
- When someone may be breaking a law
- Situations you feel uncomfortable dealing with
- Situations you are not the expert in



# Skills for Being There: Empathy



# Conflict Tornado

- What are some conflicts or issues you or people you know are facing at work, school, home, or in the community?

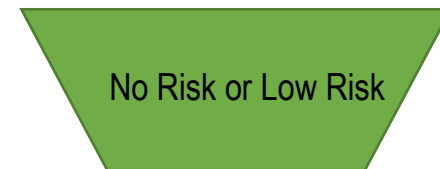
High Risk: These are things that feel like they are out of control, some may even be out of our control and so they feel like they are slipping out.



Medium Risk: These are things that can feel a bit more controlled but still feel like we might need help or other answers. These start to feel like high risk when we don't prioritize them.



No to Low Risk: These will differ from person to person and could be day to day functions that might just feel like stress.



# Who Can Help?

- Who are some of the people or resources that can help with problems you or others are facing a problem?
  - Friends
  - Family
  - Colleagues
  - Partners
  - Pets
  - Religious groups
  - Community Groups
  - Doctor
  - Employee/Family Assistance
  - Counsellor/Therapist
  - Peer Support Worker
  - Distress Centre
  - 911
  - Crisis Centre/Urgent Care
  - Emergency Room



# Using The Skills

- These skills can help you guide someone through an issue or problem that needs to be resolved:

## Goals

- To help others work through problems
- To help prevent future problems
- To support friends, family, colleagues



# The Helping Skills



1. Check-in

2. Listen-up



3. Gather ideas & weigh the options

4. Accept their choices



5. Show support

6. Follow Up



# Check-In

- ✓ Stick to the facts
- ✓ Don't judge or make assumptions
- ✓ Just say what you have observed
- ✓ Plan what you want to say
- ✓ Time and place



**What do you observe?**  
**Why do you think they need your help?**





# Listen-Up

- If they have a problem and would like your help the next step is identifying what it is and to show you care:

Ask...

- ✓ What happened?
- ✓ How are you feeling?
- ✓ What do you think is bothering you?
- ✓ Are you worried about something? Could you tell me what that is?



# Gather Ideas and Weigh the Options

## **Brainstorm with them!**

- Try to avoid telling them what to do
- Allow them to come up with ideas to help them solve their problem

## **Some solutions are healthier and safer than others**

- Help them weigh the pros and cons
- Discuss alternative perspectives of each solution
- Try to help them decide on a positive solution



# Accept Their Choices

**What would be the difference between:**

- a positive choice?
- a negative/reactive choice?
- an unhealthy choice?
- a dangerous choice?

The goal is to help them make positive choices while respecting their right to make other choices, it is only when it is a dangerous choice that we might need to do more to intervene



# Show Support

- Show you are sincere in your concern

## Say...

- Let me know if you need me
- Let me know what happens



# Follow Up

- Following up lets those we are helping know that we are there full circle and that we want to know the outcome of the solutions, conversations and decisions made together.

## Say...

- How did the conversation go?
  - How did the solution we chose work out?
- 
- Use specifics from your conversation to show that you remembered and care for the outcomes.

**Remember your self care!**



# Let's Practice!

- A colleague is not being responsible with completing their duties. They state they are busy with a lot of other things in their lives but you feel like there is more to it. When you express your concerns they state that they have been drinking a lot more as a way to cope.



# Let's Practice!

- You notice something is off with a friend. They appear tired, are not focused when you talk, and have been commenting on feeling like nothing will ever improve. You know they have been considering separating from their partner.



# Limits and Boundaries

**There are different limits:**

- Limits that we have as humans (boundaries)
- Limits that are discovered in the process of helping our friend (personal limits and access)

**Know your role!**

***Our goal as helpers is to help within the confines  
of our limits the best way we can.***





# Boundaries



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
Calgary  
Mental health for all

# Limits and Strategies

## Limit:

- Someone approaches you for help, but you are emotionally, mentally and physically exhausted yourself. You feel like you just don't have any energy to help.
- What would you do and why?

## Strategy:

- Discuss...



# Limits and Strategies

## Limit:

- You have expressed your hours of availability to colleagues, clients, and volunteers. A client begins calling and email after hours demanding your time immediately. You do not receive the messages until you start work the next day.
- How would you reinforce the boundary?

## Strategy:

- Discuss...



# Limits and Strategies

## Limit:

- A friend asks you what you know about Bipolar Disorder and to let them know if you think they have it.

## Strategy:

- Discuss...



# Limits and Strategies

## Limit:

- You have told your friend several times that you are unable to help them with their problem. You have guided them through alternative ways to deal with the situation, but they choose to do nothing to alter the situation. They continue to return to you to “vent”. You are drained from listening.

## Strategy:

- Discuss...



# Review

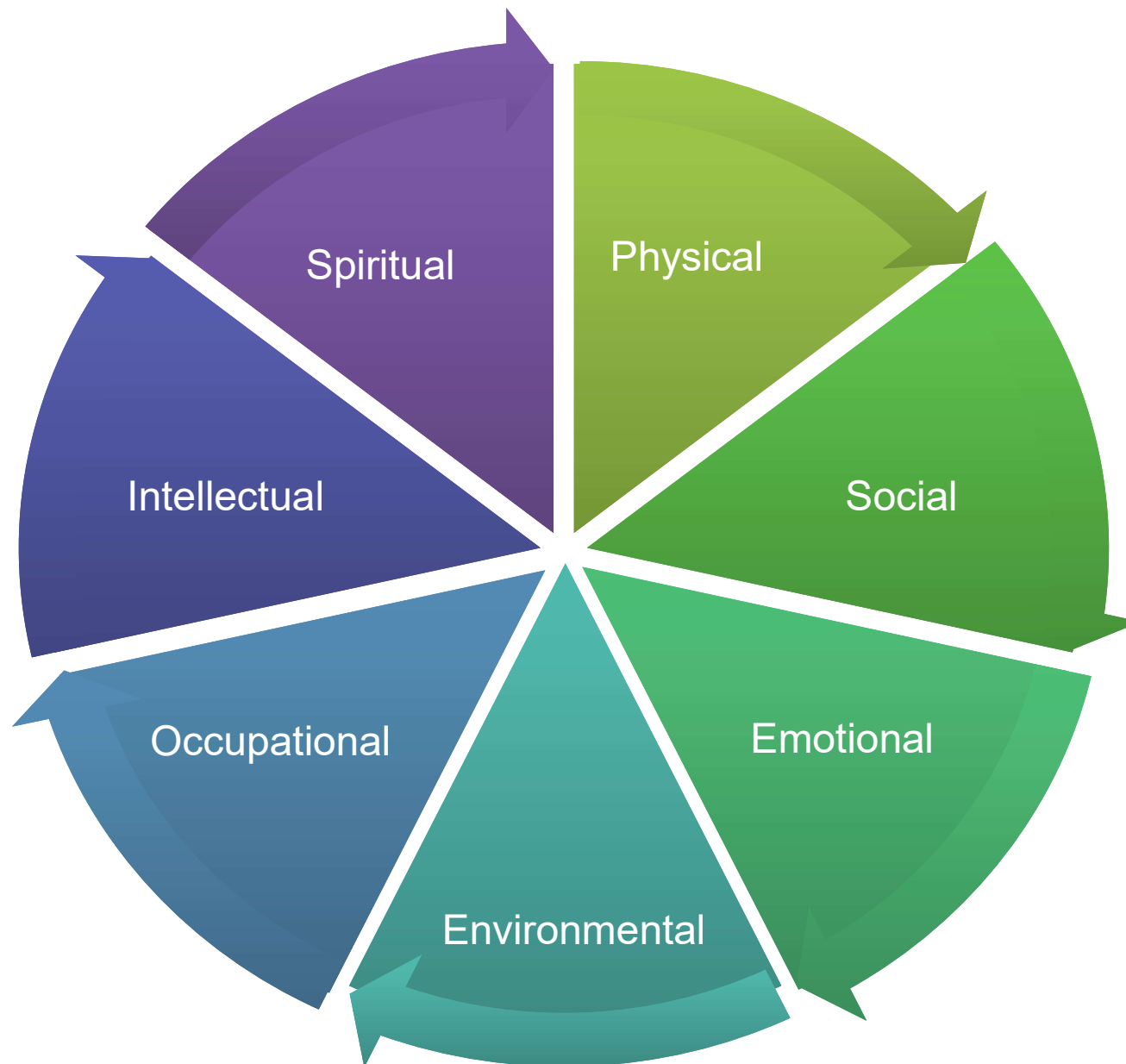
The Strategy: Provide a reason why you are setting a boundary and then suggest an alternative resource or set an alternative time where you can help.

“I would really like to help, but I am too distracted trying to get this project done. Could we talk after I am finished with it”?

“I am glad you decided to reach out and I am willing to help you, but I think it is important we have more supports involved as well”.



# Self-Care



# Where to Get Help

CMHA Calgary	403-297-1700
CMHA Calgary Peer Support	403-297-1402
Distress Centre	403-266-4357
Alberta 211	211
Health Link	811
The Alex	403-266-2622
Eastside Family Centre	403-299-9696
Calgary Counselling Centre	403-265-4980
AHS Addictions Helpline	1-866-332-2322
AHS Mental Health Helpline	1-877-303-2642

ConnecTeen	Talk: 403-264-8336
	Text: 587-333-2727
Kid's Help Phone	1-800-668-6868





# Where to Get Help

CMHA Calgary  
CMHA Recovery College  
Distress Centre  
Alberta 211  
Inform Alberta  
Community Connect YYC  
The Alex  
Calgary Counselling Centre  
AHS Addiction and Mental Health

[www.cmha.calgary.ab.ca](http://www.cmha.calgary.ab.ca)  
[www.recoverycollegecalgary.ca](http://www.recoverycollegecalgary.ca)  
[www.distresscentre.com](http://www.distresscentre.com)  
[www.ab.211.ca](http://www.ab.211.ca)  
[www.informalberta.ca](http://www.informalberta.ca)  
[www.communityconnectyyc.ca](http://www.communityconnectyyc.ca)  
[www.thealex.ca](http://www.thealex.ca)  
[www.calgarycounselling.com](http://www.calgarycounselling.com)  
[www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh)

ConneCTeen  
CMHA Calgary YouthSMART  
Kid's Help Phone

[www.calgaryconnecteen.com](http://www.calgaryconnecteen.com)  
[www.youthsmart.ca](http://www.youthsmart.ca)  
[www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)



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# CMHA – Calgary Internal Evaluation

