



TOP TIPS FOR WALKING AND TALKING

Mental health problems affect one in four of us, yet many people are still afraid to talk about it. We all have mental health so speaking openly about how we feel benefits us all.

The Ramblers has teamed up with Time to Change - a campaign run by charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness to end mental health stigma - to encourage the nation to get walking and talking, beginning with Time to Talk Day on 7th February 2019.

Spending time outdoors in green spaces can have a positive effect on mental health and help reduce stress. Walking in a group can also make us feel more connected to each other, reducing loneliness and isolation.

We want to bring together the right ingredients to have a conversation about mental health. Whether that's strolling through your local park with a friend or hiking up a hill with a new group, walking is a great way to have a conversation.

THE INGREDIENTS TO GET WALKING

- A pair of comfortable shoes or walking boots.
- An umbrella or waterproof in case it rains.
- A nice route, ideally on a handy map.
- Someone to walk with e.g. a friend, family member, neighbour or a local Ramblers group.
- Somewhere to stop and have a rest. A park bench, a cafe or pub.
- Water and a packed lunch, particularly if you're going for a long walk.





HOW CAN I START A CONVERSATION ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

1. START SMALL

Ask 'how are you?' and if you suspect someone may be struggling with their mental health ask again to show that you're really listening.

2. FIND A GOOD TIME AND PLACE

Sometimes it's easier to talk side by side rather than face to face, that's what makes going for a walk a great way to have a conversation.

3. GENTLY ASK QUESTIONS

Asking questions can be an important way of learning about a mental health problem. Just remember not to get too personal, especially if the discussion is making someone feel uncomfortable.

4. BE OPEN

Being open and honest with others can help to build trust. You could speak about how you're feeling to get talking about mental health.

5. TREAT THEM THE SAME

When someone is diagnosed with a mental health problem, they're still the same person as they were before. If you want to support them, keep it simple and behave as you would normally.

