

Holding Space



Building comfort for
Meaningful conversations

Holding Space
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Illustrations by Pablo Stanley

No Comfort =
No truth in
the response

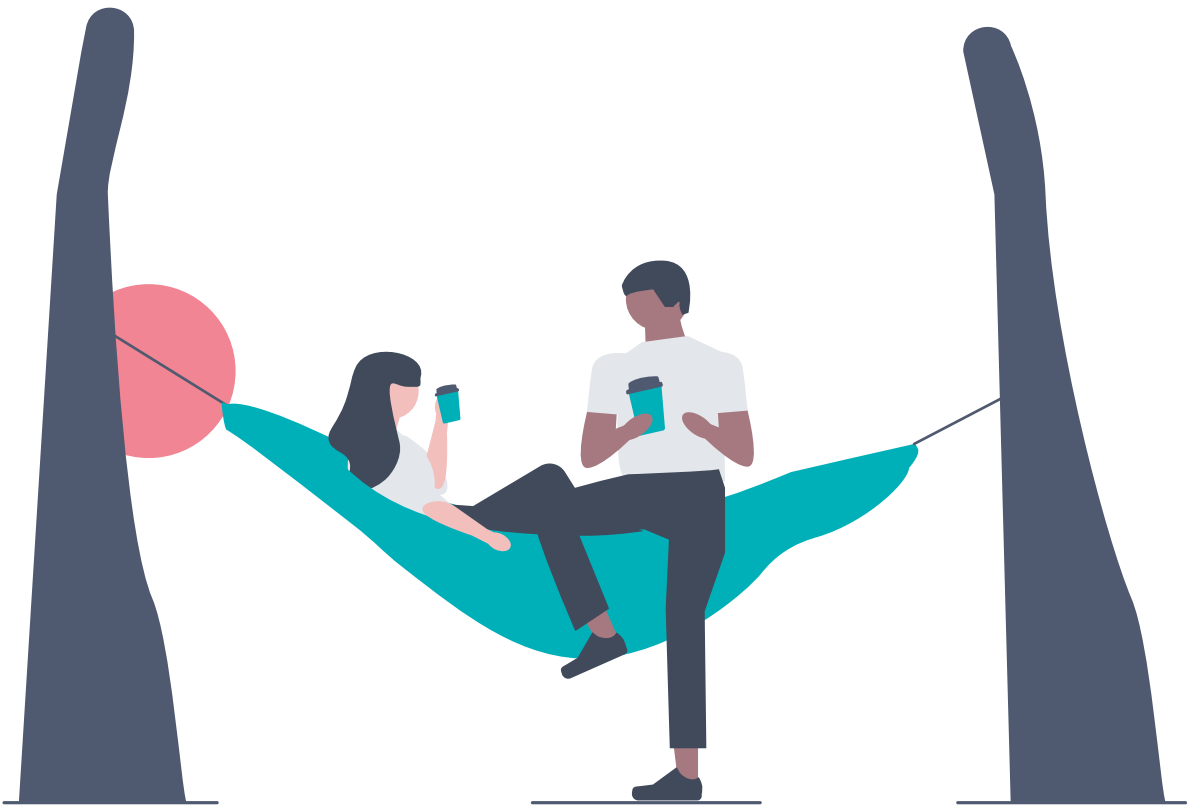




The signs are
always there...

If we consciously
look for them.

Communi- cation



Here are some tips to use when engaging in a meaningful discussion with loved ones.

These tips help bring comfort to what can sometimes be very challenging and daunting.

ONE

Reflex

Head nods

The nod that reassuringly goes up and down numerous times as someone speaks, that says "I am listening or seeking to understand".

This gives the person speaking an indicator that what is being said is being fully acknowledged whether it is understood or not.



TWO

Two ears One Mouth

USE THEM ACCORDINGLY

with every bit of information we receive, we can interpret and help with.

We can't with information that is suppressed and not shared.



Listening

With no intent to reply

- no criticism
- no comparisons
- no advice
- no answers



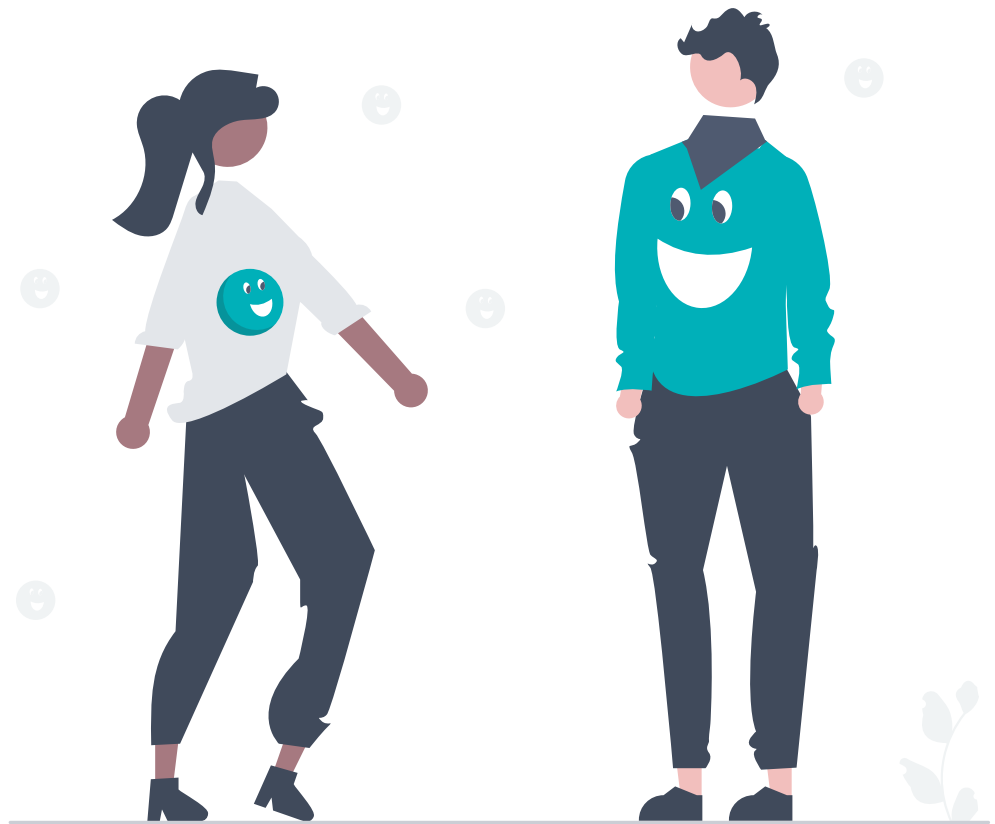
Let them talk to you to get the thoughts, feelings and emotions off their chest without being stopped in any way.

If you interpose, even with good intentions, that person may hear something that suppresses their feeling back down, again unwilling to share out of fear of judgment, even unintentional judgment.

THREE

Eye Contact

Can't spot the signs looking at the roof or at your feet.



Fact.

Tears indicate the reason for one's crying.

If the first tear comes from the right eye, it is tear from joy.

If the first tear comes from the left eye, it is tears of pain.

Avoiding eye contact because you feel uncomfortable is the prime way to show someone that you are more worried about how you feel than the person who is trying to share.

FOUR

Discipline & consistency

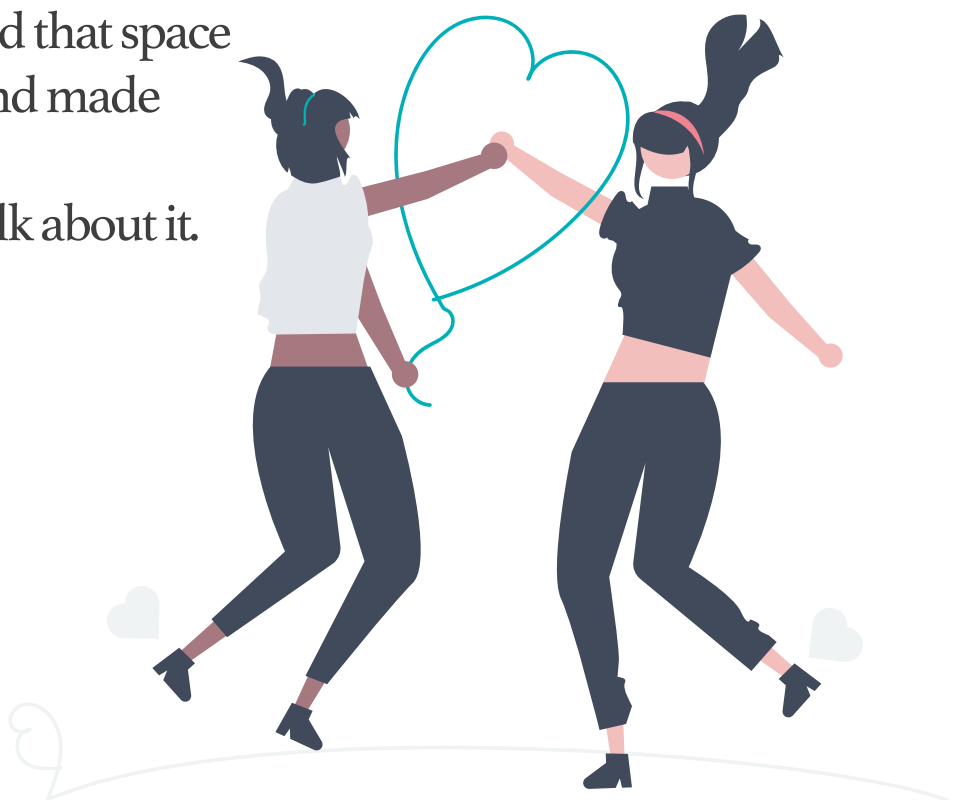
The discipline to show up for that person, not just for one conversation but every single day.

Not to ask one day, "RUOK?"

Then not show up for a month. It's the discipline to align our values with our behavior. So when that person in pain gets to a place where it's so dark and they can't see hope one inch in front of their eyes, a little spark says to them they need to have a conversation right now.

And because you have held that space for them so consistently and made them feel comfortable, they will come to you to talk about it.

Show up every day,
not just RUOKDAY?



If you don't
know how
your close
circle of
friends
are today...

Then today is a good day to ask...

