



# TRADIES TOOLS TOTALK

**Spark a conversation with someone who might be doing it tough.**

Tradies work across a variety of industries – maybe you’re part of a crew on a large construction site, or an owner operator providing services to the general public. Whatever the worksite, tradies might be faced with challenges and pressures that can bottle up over time, including job uncertainty, financial pressures, intense physical demands, workplace injuries, workplace bullying and relationship breakdowns. These can have a significant impact on mental and emotional wellbeing.

Tradies are often faced with a ‘harden up’ attitude and fear of being judged as weak when it comes to opening up about mental health. It’s important to ask the question, “Are you OK?” if someone seems to be doing it tough. This will lay the foundation and give them permission to open up about life’s ups and downs.

## Notice something a little different about your mate? - It’s time to ask, “Are you OK?”

### WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

#### Do they seem:

- Confused or irrational
- Angry or irritable
- Constantly overthinking or excessively worried
- Concerned they’re a burden
- Concerned they’re trapped or in pain
- Lonely
- Lacking self-esteem
- Numb or switched off

### WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

#### Do they seem to be:

- Turning up late to work
- Experiencing mood swings
- Dismissive or defensive
- Withdrawing or becoming less social
- Losing interest in what they used to love
- Lacking in confidence
- Unable to concentrate
- Experiencing ongoing fatigue
- Behaving recklessly
- Changing their alcohol, drugs or medication consumption
- Taking less care with appearance and personal hygiene

### WHAT’S GOING ON IN THEIR LIFE?

#### Have they experienced:

- Relationship issues
- Financial difficulties
- Loss of work or long periods of unemployment
- Physical injuries or major health issues
- Additional work-related stresses including project time pressures, role overload or workplace bullying and harassment
- Extended periods away from family and friends



# 4 steps to a conversation



## 1. Ask R U OK?

- Are you in a good head space to support them?
- Can you give them as much time as needed?
- Tell them the changes you've noticed in their behaviour and help them to open up

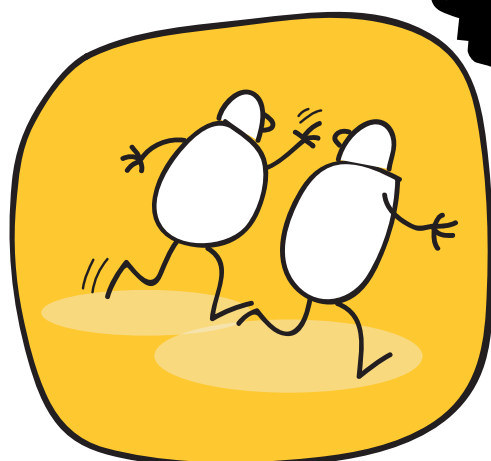


## 2. Listen

- Listen actively without judgment
- Allow them the opportunity to open up with minimal disruption
- Let them know you're asking because you're concerned about them
- If they get angry or upset, stay calm and don't take it personally
- It might take a couple of times of asking, "Are you OK?" before they feel comfortable opening up. You can also have a think about who else in their world might be appropriate to have a chat with them

You weren't on site yesterday... is everything OK?

That sounds pretty rough, have you been feeling like this for a while?



## 3. Encourage action

### If they are not OK:

- Encourage them to talk to a family member, friend or a trusted health professional
- Tackle it together and reach out for professional help or other support while sitting together

**Handy tip:** Anyone can call a crisis or support service for further advice on what to do next if someone is not OK.

Want to look into some help options together?

How'd you go speaking to the doc?



## 4. Check in

- Check in on your mate after a few days and see how they've been doing
- If they haven't done anything, keep encouraging them to seek help, and remind them you're there for a chat

# RUOK?

A conversation could change a life.

For additional resources [ruok.org.au/tradies](http://ruok.org.au/tradies)



## What if they say, "I'm fine"?

- Acknowledge they are not ready to talk
- Tell them you care about them and you're still concerned about changes in their behaviour
- Ask again. You could say, "it's just that you don't seem like yourself lately"
- Check in with them again shortly after if you're still concerned
- Reach out to someone else who is close to that person to see if they have noticed the changes you have or whether they have concerns. You can encourage them to also check in.

**It's important to remember that it can take time for someone to open up about their struggles. You may need to ask "Are you OK" a few times before they feel comfortable talking.**

## Your toolbox for support

**If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 000 to help manage the crisis.**

If someone you know is not OK, support is available from the following organisations: (remember, anyone can call these services for advice and support on what to do next, including you).

### **Lifeline (24/7)**

13 11 14  
lifeline.org.au

### **Beyond Blue (24/7)**

1300 224 636  
beyondblue.org.au

### **Suicide Call Back Service (24/7)**

1300 659 467  
Online chat available  
suicidecallbackservice.org.au

### **Mensline (24/7)**

1300 78 99 78  
Online chat available  
mensline.org.au

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