

## Advisor Strategies: Explore + Validate + Support

### 1. Invite them to have a conversation

- Ask the student if they'd like to/need to talk – to you or someone else.

### 2. Express your concerns non-judgmentally and genuinely

- Tell them, non-judgmentally, what you notice and are concerned about them.
- If you have a relationship with them, ask what has changed since you last spoke.
- Ask open-ended questions that invite students to speak about themselves and their concerns about seeking help.
  - “Tell me more about your concern about...”
  - “I would like to know more about how you...”

### 3. Explore information and roadblocks to motivation

- Ask about their knowledge or experience about counseling.
- Ask what it is like for them to hear the suggestion about talking to a counselor.
  - Reframe mental health as physical health.
    - (They'd go to the doctor with a broken arm.)

### 4. Acknowledge the roadblocks with validation

- Empathize both the content and the emotion.
- Validate with compassion, and avoid judgment or criticism.
  - It makes sense to feel and think like that... (stigmas of mental health)
    - “It makes sense why you would not want help because...”
  - It is difficult to take the first step to ask for help.

### 5. Reframe with normalization

- Normalize it as a common human experience.
  - You are not alone: “College/Graduate school is really difficult...”
- If you have a relationship with the student, share your own story or experience.
  - Keep it short and simple to normalize their experience.

### 6. Highlight their strengths

- Highlight their strengths after validating their vulnerable part.
- Share what it is like for you to hear their stories, letting them know they have an impact on you.
  - “You are so courageous...”

### 7. Support with introducing appropriate resources

- Summarize their challenges and strengths.
- Ask what they need.
- Ask if the student has heard about the resources on campus.
  - If not: explain the services and how they can access the service.
    - “In case you or a friend need it...”
- Talk about mental health positively.
  - E.g., it is collaborative work between you and the counselor.