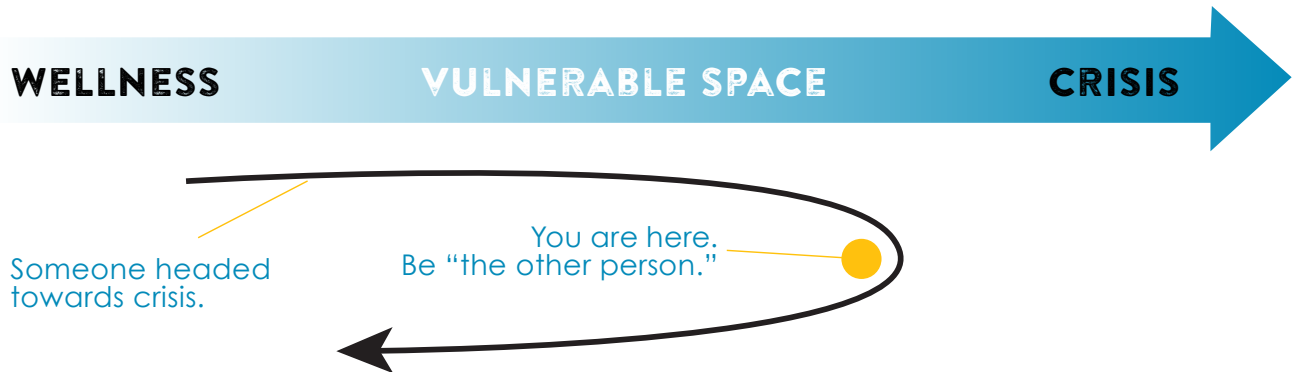


CHANGING OUR MENTAL & EMOTIONAL TRAJECTORY

COMET suggests five questions and statements to help you start a conversation with someone who might be dealing with a mental health issue. The questions are written to feel natural and to give you an entry point into the "trajectory" of the situation. It's about starting a conversation, just like any you might have with someone on a regular basis.



Conversational Gravity Assist Be "the other person"



We all live in a vulnerable space at one time or another – and for one reason or another. Returning to a place of wellness can be difficult. Some people progress into a crisis situation. COMET aims to change the trajectory of someone in that vulnerable space headed towards crisis back towards a place of wellness. A critical factor in changing someone's trajectory is often another person who says or does something that offers support, care, or treatment and causes a positive change.

To show the power of "the other person," COMET uses a concept called Gravity Assist. Think of the launch of the Mars Rover. Space engineers did not launch the Rover directly to Mars. They knew it would not have enough energy to get there by itself. Instead, they launched it towards the moon. The moon's gravity pulled in the Rover and then pushed it towards Mars. Just by being there, the moon changed the Rover's trajectory so that it successfully reached its destination. Similarly, you can provide that "conversational gravity assist" by being the other person who helps someone avoid crisis and head back towards wellness.

BE THE OTHER PERSON

1. You don't seem to be yourself lately.
2. How are you? No, really. How are you?
3. I've noticed you haven't...(been at coffee, at the football games, at the club). **Or**
I've noticed that you seem (stressed, sad, distracted) lately.
4. How are things at home/work/school/with your friends?
5. Can we get coffee sometime soon and talk?
Can I call you sometime?

OPTIONAL

6. Self-disclosure
7. Now what?" How do I help more or exit?

BE THE OTHER PERSON

1. NOT YOURSELF

- You don't seem to be yourself lately.
- You haven't seemed like yourself for the past several weeks.
- You seem a little off. Have you been feeling like yourself lately?

2. HOW ARE YOU

- How are you feeling?
- How are you? No, really. How are you?
- Tell me what's going on.

3. OBSERVATION OF MOOD OR BEHAVIOR

- I've noticed you haven't been coming to the club meetings lately.
- I've noticed you haven't been to bowling for the past couple of months.
- You seem a little down/a little sad the past few times I've seen you.
- It seems like life has been busy for you recently.
- I've noticed you see quieter lately.
- You look like you've had a rough day.

4. FAMILY OR SOCIAL LIFE

- How are things at home? Work? School? With your family? With your friends?
- How is (someone) doing with the (situation) that you told me about recently?
- I heard about (situation). How is that going for you?
- What have you been doing in your free time?
- How is (activity/hobby) going these days?

5. INVITATION TO ENGAGE

- Really, what's up?
- Can we talk more about this?
- Can we get coffee sometime soon and talk about this?
- Can I call you sometime?
- How long has this been going on? (*Feeling/mood changes that have been around for more than two weeks can signal a serious problem.*)
- What's happened to you?
- What are you looking forward to?

BE THE OTHER PERSON

6. SELF-DISCLOSURE

- You know, this happened to me a few years ago. I hear you. For me it was...
- I had a similar situation once/I'm going through something similar.



You don't need to be the fix. You don't need to do something you are not trained to do or are not comfortable doing. Maybe you've said all you can. Maybe you want to talk more with this person. Maybe you want to move the person on to someone else who can give specific help.

7. NOW WHAT: HOW DO I HELP MORE OR EXIT? ENGAGING WITH THIS PERSON A LITTLE LONGER OR ENDING THE CONVERSATION SUPPORTIVELY:

Validation of importance

- I'm glad you're talking with me about this.
- Thanks for sharing this.

Engage a little more

- Have you shared this with anyone else/your doctor?
- How can I help you? (In this situation or to get through this rough patch.)
- Is there something we can do together now?
- Can I stop by and see you next week?
- What do you think the best thing for you to do next is? (Empower)
- Want to go to dinner tonight?
- Can I pray for you? (In certain contexts/situations)

Exit strategies

- Stop the conversation because it is enough.
- Make a hand off or referral:
 - Have you shared this with anyone else/your doctor?
 - Can I share your phone number with someone who helped me?
 - I know this great (person, thing).
 - One of my friends/I went to (so and so place). I think you should check it out.
 - Would it be OK if I gave you a phone number for someone who helped me?
- Check back in later:
 - Can I stop by and see you next week?
 - If you ever want to get coffee, let me know.
 - Let's get together (name a specific date and time)
- Conclude with care:
 - Know I'm here if you need anything.
 - Can I pray for you? (In certain contexts/situations)
 - If you ever want to hang out, I'm here.