



# Facilitating Supportive Conversations



- Students have ongoing relationship with you
- You are in a direct position to observe students and be aware of their behavior
- You serve as informal help-givers for advice and support

- **Validate** concerns and paraphrase/repeat to verify accuracy
  - "What I'm hearing you say is..."
- **Appreciate** their courage to share
  - Use open-ended questions to encourage sharing
  - Avoid arguing, interrupting, lecturing, offering false reassurances, fixing, challenging/confronting
  - Offer hope and encouragement
- **Refer** multiple resource areas such as The Study, Campus Ministry, Residence Life, etc.
  - Resist problem-solving until student is ready
  - For more resources, visit the **Mental Health Task Force website** by scanning the QR code above

- This likely will not be a one-time conversation
- Continuing to check in with the student demonstrates your care and concern and makes it more likely the student will get connected and stay connected to resources



- Use a relaxed but attentive posture
- Convey a sense of welcome, acceptance, and respect - including comfortable eye contact, speak reassuringly, open body posture
- Be yourself; students will respond well to your authenticity

- "What has gotten in the way of you getting help?"
- "What would keep you from talking to a counselor about these things?"
- "Could it be worth taking this step even though it is difficult?"

## Counseling vs. Comfort

Student with evidence of dangers to self or others

### Examples:

- Aggressive, disruptive, or bizarre behavior
- Suicidal thoughts or behavior
- Evidence of plan to harm others
- Homicidal thoughts or behaviors
- Significant disconnection from reality

### What to do:

- If immediate safety of student/others is in danger contact Public Safety: 410-617-5911
- For mental health emergencies, contact the CC: 410-617-2273 (M-F; 8:30 AM - 5PM) or 410-617-5530 (After 5PM and weekends)
- Contact the Dean of Students (410-617-2621) if additional consultation is needed
- Consult with your supervisor/department chair, and/or the Dean of Undergrad Studies (410-617-5547)
- If after hours, contact Public Safety to be connected to campus resources
- Fill out the Care Team Referral form after emergent needs are addressed

Student with intense & chronic, uncomfortable emotions

### Examples:

- Frequent crying
- Difficulty concentrating
- Panic attacks
- Behavioral outbursts
- Social isolations
- Non-lethal self-harm (e.g., cutting)
- Recent traumatic experience

### What to do:

- Green response plus...
- Refer to Counseling Center and provide support in scheduling appointment if student is willing
  - Call 410-617-2273 or walk student to counseling center (HU 150)
  - Consult with CC counselor, who can recommend a crisis appointment or help student schedule appointment
  - After 5pm and weekends: call 410-617-5530
- Refer to other campus support as appropriate
- Fill out Care Team Referral Form
- Inform/consult with supervisor/department chair

Student with uncomfortable emotions

### Examples:

- Sadness/crying
- Stress/anxiety
- Social withdrawal
- Family difficulties
- Academic concerns
- Adjustment concerns

### What to do:

- Validate, Appreciate, Refer
- Facilitate connection with peers
  - Resident Assistants, Evergreens, Student Clubs, Group Fitness
- Facilitate support from Loyola professionals
  - Student Life, Campus Ministry, DSS, Career Center, Student Engagement
- Stay connected - check in with the student occasionally