Presence of Mind: Helping Others

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Visual: Presence of Mind: Helping Others. Greg Miller, games industry host and Internet personality, shares why it's important to speak openly about mental health.

Greg Miller: Hey, everybody. Greg here to tell you about a cool video I want you to watch. Let me tell you why. If you ever watched a fellow gamer or other friends struggle with intense emotions or mental health issues, have you ever wondered how to help them? I know I faced a situation myself and I wasn't sure what to do. Thanks to the resources and insights like those featured in this video. Now I get it. Yes, I should reach out even if it's a bit awkward. And the information included here will give you some great tips on how to make it a little less awkward. Now, when I see a friend who isn't doing so well, I know what to do. It's so important to me, Greg Miller, to talk openly about mental health within our community and what I've learned, and what you'll learn in this video can help us do that each and every day.

Visual: Questions answered in this video

Narrator: This video focuses on how you might help others who may be experiencing intense emotions or mental health issues. It will help answer the following questions. How could I learn to talk openly with my friends about mental health? What's the best way to support someone who may be struggling with a mental health issue? What resources are available to me and the people I care for? Why is it important to talk more openly about mental health? Emily has a story that shows the impact of one person starting a conversation.

Visual: Emily's story

Emily: Hi. My name is Emily, and I'm going to share my story. At a really young age, I endured a lot of emotional abuse at home. This completely changed my life, my personality, the way that I acted, the way that I felt, and it led to a lot of dark feelings, a lot of self isolation. And I was really

disconnected from the world around me. The joy and creativity and carefree nature that I had as a kid just felt stolen from me. It wasn't until somebody at school pulled me aside and said, hey, are you okay? That I realized for the very first time all at once that no, I was not okay. It was that one question that really propelled me to seek help, to seek resources, to talk with my school counselor and start my journey on mental health and mental well-being. And it all started with a simple question, one that I'm very grateful to that individual to this day for asking me. That is my story. And thank you for listening.

Narrator: What's the best way to support a friend who's experiencing a mental health issue? We gamers spend a lot of time in the gaming environment. You might notice subtle changes in mood and behavior that suggests a fellow gamer is not okay. When we offer our support with kindness and compassion, we send a powerful message that they are not alone. This can make it easier for someone who is not okay to ask for help, or to accept help when we offer it. Let's take a look at a simple and effective process we can use when we think someone might need help. The engagement process has 3 steps: notice, engage, and support.

Visual: Step 1: Notice

Narrator: The first step is to notice, which means becoming aware of a change in someone. Here are some examples you might notice when someone isn't feeling OK emotionally. Engaging less with others. Difficulty focusing on favorite activities such as gaming. Mood swings such as going from chill to really sad when nothing obvious has changed. Tears or crying. Let's listen as V-Tuber Vienna describes how her friend noticed when something hurtful happened and what our friend did next.

Visual: Vienna's story

Vienna: Hi, I'm Vienna. I'm a streamer and a V-Tuber for Cloud9, and today I'm going to talk about mental health. One of the biggest things streamers struggle with when it comes to mental health is dealing with hate comments. People can be really awful. And if you're not having a great day or you're going through a lot reading just the worst things people can think of to say about you can just ruin, you know, all your progress. And my story is kind of about that. I was having a rough day one day, and I just posted something funny that happened to me on my personal account, which I

didn't think anyone would seem except my friends, andd I looked an hour later, and I had just hundreds of people that were just making fun of me and saying like, the worst things possible. And then I was just like, what do I do? Like, I don't even I don't want to talk to anyone. I just sat in my bed and I was like, really upset about it. And one of my friends that reached out to me said, hey, I saw what happened and if you do want to talk about that, that's okay. But, you know, if you want to do anything, if you want to talk, if you want to watch anime whenever I'm here and you don't have to answer, but I just want you to know I'm here. And that meant the world to me. Because this is the kind of friend to if we don't talk for weeks, I know that our friendship would continue exactly where I left off. You know, they would always be there for you. And I think that if you know someone that's struggling or going through a lot or, you know, has trouble responding to people, just letting them know that you're there for them could make a world of the difference. So that's my story. Thanks so much.

Visual: Step 2: Engage

Narrator: Step 2 tells us what to do when we notice someone is not okay. We engage. Here are some examples of how you might start a conversation. Hey, something seems off for you. Okay. You seem kind of down. Would you like to talk? Tell me what's going on. I'm happy to listen. No matter how we start the conversation, our role is to listen patiently, compassionately, and without judgment. Next, Don shares a story about a time when he noticed a friend was really struggling and how he decided to engage and be there for his friend.

Visual: Don's story

Don: Hi, my name is Don and I am the Vice President of Partnerships at Cloud nine. I wanted to share a story from my undergraduate time in college, when I walked into one of my roommates rooms and saw that he was just weeping on the floor, on his knees, with his hands and his face. He was crying, super upset. My initial urge and got was to kind of close the door and give him some privacy. But there was something inside me that wanted to. And that kind of pushed me and pulled me to go and be near him. And so instead of closing the door, kind of minding my own business, I went and I sat down next to him. I put my arm around him. And I just sat there with him. Eventually I started crying myself. I didn't know what we were crying about. But we sat there together for quite a while. We just wept

together, which was really cool. I found out later that it was because he had broken up with his girlfriend that he'd been in a relationship with all through high school. And he was super, super upset, but, but if I would have listened to the urge to give him privacy, give him space to, quote unquote, be more respectful, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to connect with him. And I don't think he would have had the opportunity to have someone come alongside him. And really just heal with him. And be there for him. So even if you feel really uncomfortable or awkward about moving into someone else's pain, if you feel like it should be private and that you should give them their privacy. It's often better to just reach into it as much as you can. I mean, even if you don't know what to say, just being there with them and giving them the space to speak when they can and when they can find their words is really great. So I hope that you not just reach out to friends more often, but that you come alongside them and let them know that you're there.

Narrator: As Don said in his video, it can be awkward to start the conversation when you see someone isn't okay. Everyone has a right to privacy, but it's okay to reach out when it looks like someone might need help. Here are a couple more ways you might start the conversation. You've been really quiet lately. Is everything okay? Seems like you're having a tough time, and I'm worried about you. What's going on? Here are some tips for encouraging someone to open up. Be relaxed and use a thoughtful tone. Listen patiently, compassionately, and without judgment. Avoid labeling or trying to diagnose them. Understand that you aren't there to fix the problem. Accept that the individual may not be ready to talk. Talking to someone about their emotions can be tough. Some things we think might help. Really don't help. In fact, they might make the other person feel like we're not taking their problem seriously. Here are some examples of statements to avoid. Hang in there. It will pass. You have no reason to be depressed. Everyone gets depressed sometimes. It could be worse. I know exactly how you feel.

Visual: Step 3: Support

Narrator: Step 3 is to provide support. Sometimes all a person needs is for us to be present and listen without judgment. This is what Emily's and Vienna's friends did for them, and what Don did for his roommate. Other times, listening is not enough. In these situations, support means connecting the person to resources that can help.

Visual: Wrapping it up. Thanks for taking the time to take care of yourself!

Greg Miller: Good stuff right? I'm so committed to promoting an environment in the gaming community where we can talk openly about mental health, and I use the knowledge I gained from this video often. I've learned how to get better at noticing when someone is struggling, and I continue to gain confidence in starting those awkward conversations they as they suck. Everybody knows they suck, but we do it because it's what you should do. And finally, it's great to know where to find resources that help me and help others. If you're as committed as I am to the mental health of our great gaming community, you can start practicing what you've learned right now, today. If there's someone you've been concerned about, engage with them. If not, just start looking around and noticing what's going on with the people you care about. Thanks and take care.

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