

Presence of Mind: When to Get Expert Help

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Visual: Presence of Mind: When to Get Expert Help. Kahlief Adams, award-winning podcast host and gaming industry personality, talks about when to get expert help.

Kahlief Adams: Hey, everybody, this is Kahlief Adams And I have, a pretty serious topic to talk to you all about today. In some of our earlier videos from the series, we talked about taking better care of your own mental health and helping others when they were needed. This video was more about kind of helping someone who may be having a more serious crisis or is needing more immediate help, even sometimes, you know, professional help. Every day mental health issues can be super challenging. I know I've been there and I've gone through it, but when they become overwhelming, sometimes they can lead to a person inflicting self-harm or, you know, putting themselves at risk for suicide. But it's really important to recognize when someone's situation has gotten that serious so that we can help them in the right way. In this video will add some skills and help you recognize when someone might be at risk. Take a look at the video. Hopefully share it with your friends and family and we'll see you right back in a minute.

Visual: Welcome to the third video in the Presence of Mind mental health series.

Narrator: This is the third video In the Presence of Mind Mental Health series. This video is about recognizing when someone might need immediate or expert help. Because this video discusses self-harm and suicide. It may contain triggers for some people. Here are 3 resources for immediate help if you need it.

Visual: The National Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-TALK (8255), Crisis Text Line Text "Home" to 741741, The Trevor Project 1-866-488-7386 or text "Start" to 678-678

Visual: Are you worried about anyone?

Narrator: Let's get started by doing a little thought experiment. Think for a moment about your friends and fellow gamers. Is anyone having a hard time dealing with intense emotions? Struggling with an ongoing mental health issue? Now, think: Is there anyone you're really worried about? Maybe someone is hurting themselves and you're worried they might do something even more serious. Have you had such worries about a friend or fellow gamer in the past? What a surprise you to know that for people aged 10 to 34, the second leading cause of death is suicide. That's a scary statistic, especially when you think it might affect someone you know. Here's another statistic that shows that the risk of suicide is real. Among high school students, more than 7% attempted suicide one or more times. As scary as those statistics might be. Our message in this video is a positive one. Prevention works. There are actions individuals can take and programs and services that really work. Resilience and recovery are possible. You can play an important role in helping someone in a crisis. Let's challenge a common myth about helping. Talking about suicide or asking someone if they feel suicidal will encourage suicide attempts. The fact is: Talking to a person who is at risk for suicide about what they're going through can help them cope. That's where you come in. Talk to the person. Listen patiently, compassionately, and without judgment. Share your concerns and offer support. Kala has a story about a time in his life when he was grieving, and his thoughts turned very dark when he decided to open up and express his feelings. It helped him to heal, and it led him to seek expert help.

Visual: Kala's story

Kala: Yo, my name is Kala, and, I grew up in a household full of alcohol abuse and drug abuse and pretty much everything else that you could possibly think of that's negative. I kind of went through that as a kid, and, I spent my pretty much whole life just, dealing with, you know, feelings of not being good enough or, or, just, like, self-worth issues, self-doubt, all that sort of stuff. And, it wasn't until last year, in the middle of Covid, I was in Los Angeles and my brother took his life in Canada. It was his funeral day and I was stuck with the choice of just continuing to isolate in my house in Los Angeles or, or just open up. And for the first time in my entire life, I opened up, I turned on my Twitch stream, and I cried, and I talked about all of my feelings and my issues and I wrote a song about my brother on my stream. And, it wasn't until that day that I realized how important it is to not

isolate and to actually open up, and. And then it's okay to talk about your feelings. And then shortly after that was the first time that I saw it. Professional help through therapy. So, after that moment, it completely revolutionized the way that I thought about mental health and the way that I thought about myself. So if there's anybody out there listening to this, it's okay to seek professional help. It's okay to be feeling awful. But you don't have to stay that way forever. And, I highly, highly encourage you to ask for help.

Visual: Noticing when things get more serious.

Narrator: In the previous video for this series, we introduced a 3-step process for helping others. We'll use that same model here. The 3 steps in the engagement process are to notice, engage, and support. Use these steps when it looks like someone you know might need immediate or expert support. The process begins with the noticing. If you saw the previous video, you already know the signs someone may need help: 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. We encourage an even deeper level of noticing. We want you to move beyond the obvious clues and notice what else might be going on.

Narrator: What kinds of clues should you watch for that might indicate someone is having a crisis, or actively thinking about suicide? Explore the signs that someone might need immediate help. Observing even just one of these signs should alert you to pay attention.

Visual: Suicide warning signs.

Visual: Talk. Feeling like a burden to others. Experiencing unbearable pain. Wanting to die. Having no reason to live. Feeling trapped.

Visual: Mood. Loss of interest. Depression. Rage. Anxiety. Humiliation. Irritability.

Visual: Behavior. Self-isolation. Acting recklessly. Misuse or abuse of alcohol and drugs. Withdrawing from activities. Self-harm such as cutting, punching walls, etc. Avoiding school or work. Sleeping too much or too little. Aggression.

Narrator: Now, let's listen to Kayla's story. She talks about the little things she noticed first about a friend, and how that led her to pay closer attention to what was going on.

Visual: Kayla's story

Kayla: Hi, my name is Kayla and I'm one of the partnerships manager here at nine. So to talk about a time when one of my closest friends had a really hard time with her mental health and I caught on, was a time when she had just come back from a year abroad. She had come back to California, and I started picking up on the little things, a little shifts and change in her behavior and whether it was small things like having a very hard time responding to work emails or friends texts or, in a timely manner or responding at all, or getting into little fights with, you know, our friends, best friends, sister, family that were very out of character for her, when I was, when I started first realizing that something was going on and only a few months later did she disclose that she was having a very hard time. I think readjusting to to American society and just coming back, she had to readjust to her depression and anxiety meds, noticing the small things in people, whether it's friends, family, or even strangers, is the most that we can do. And, you know, get ahead of it, get ahead of talking about it and getting rid of the stigma that comes along with talking about mental health is the best and the most human thing that we can do.

Narrator: So what about alcohol and drugs? Can they play a role in causing a crisis or making it worse sometimes when misused or abused? Yes. For some individuals, the misuse or abuse of alcohol or drugs can cause or intensify depression, aggression, reckless behavior, self-harm and suicidal thoughts. For others, finding themselves in a crisis may trigger them to self-medicate with alcohol or drugs. Either way, your role is to notice without making a judgment. If you're concerned about misuse or abuse, look up what other clues are telling you about whether the individual is experiencing a crisis.

Visual: Engage with kindness and compassion

Narrator: Once you've noticed that someone may be having a crisis, the next steps are to engage and support the individual. Remember Kayla's story about noticing her friend was struggling? She had a powerful

message that talking and engaging is the most human thing we can do. Starting these conversations can be tough. So let's look at some tips.

Visual: How do you start the conversation?

Narrator: In some situations, you might be able to ease into a conversation by asking a casual question such as, "Hey, you seem kind of down. Would you like to talk?" But if you're concerned that a person might be at risk for self-harm or suicide, you should definitely ask directly about suicide. Asking the question can help them talk about their feelings.

Visual: What's next?

Narrator: Once you get a conversation going, what's next? If you watched the previous video, you already know the answer to this one. Listen patiently, compassionately, without judgment. Use a relaxed and thoughtful tone and be willing to wait. Sometimes people who are struggling need a moment to think before they speak. Be ready to sit with some silence. It might feel uncomfortable. Your patience and compassion can be calming to a person whose thoughts and feelings are in turmoil. As you listen, remember that your role is not to solve the person's problem. You can help best when you just listen to understand. Also, it's not on you to diagnose any mental health conditions. If you have serious concerns about the individual's safety, your role is to ask how they are and ask yourself, am I worried this person is at risk for self-harm or suicide?

Visual: If you think someone is at risk, get help.

Narrator: Step 3 in the engagement process is to provide support. Often when a person is having thoughts about self-harm or suicide, a big fear is that if they accept help, things will get out of control. Others will take over, or they might be hospitalized without their consent. Here are 3 ways anyone can get immediate help without identifying themselves. The individuals who respond will listen with compassion and without judgment.

Visual: The National Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-TALK (8255), Crisis Text Line Text "Home" to 741741, The Trevor Project 1-866-488-7386 or text "Start" to 678-678

Visual: Wrapping it up. Happy gaming and take care!

Kahlief Adams: As we close out this 3-part video series, I hope you've gotten a lot out of it. We all have an opportunity to make a great gaming community even better by talking about and talking openly about mental health and looking out for one another and stepping up when someone is having a crisis. If you haven't seen the first 2 videos, I encourage you to check them out. Alanah Pearce will introduce you to the first one, Mental Health Matters. Greg Miller covers the second one, Helping Others. From all 3 of us, happy gaming and take care.

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