

**MORE GOOD DAYS** *together*

**BIPOC Mental Health Toolkit**

In commemoration of Bebe Moore Campbell National  
Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

# WHAT'S INSIDE

Mental Health America's 2026 BIPOC Mental Health Toolkit provides free, practical resources for individuals and organizations looking to improve mental health in communities of color, including:

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- The Legacy of Bebe Moore Campbell

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- Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month



## We're Here to Help

If you have questions about how you're allowed to use this toolkit, please visit [mhanational.org/terms-use](https://mhanational.org/terms-use).

If you have questions about the content of this toolkit, please email Danielle Fritze at [dfritze@mhanational.org](mailto:dfritze@mhanational.org).

# KEY MESSAGES

**Mental Health America is sharing the following key messages to support communications for the 2026 Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month in July. Please feel free to use or adapt these messages when you are engaging in conversations online, speaking at community events, or sharing resources with your network.**

## BACKGROUND ON BEBE MOORE CAMPBELL NATIONAL MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

- July is Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month — a time to focus on the unique strengths and challenges that Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) face when it comes to mental health.
- Bebe Moore Campbell was a journalist, teacher, author, and dedicated mental health advocate for the Black community and other underrepresented groups. National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month was established and named in honor of her work.
- Culture, ethnicity, and race all play a role in the way that each person experiences the world. These factors, among others, have a big impact on mental health, especially for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), and can shape the types of support someone may want or need.
- Talking about mental health in communities of color means uplifting cultural strengths, honoring healing traditions, and recognizing how resilience is shaped by lived experiences.

## 2026 MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA THEME: MORE GOOD DAYS, TOGETHER

- Mental Health America is on a mission to help people have more good days by meeting them where they are, supporting them as whole people, and understanding that “good” is defined by their unique experience and goals. The path may look different for everyone, but we all deserve more good days, together.

# KEY MESSAGES FOR 2026 BEBE MOORE CAMPBELL NATIONAL MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

## *Defining good days:*

*Explore what a “good day” looks like, both for yourself and for your community.*

- “Good” doesn’t have to mean happy or productive. It can mean calm, neutral, comfortable, manageable, or something else. It can change over time. It’s different for everyone, and only you can define what a good day looks like to you.
- When the world feels overwhelming, and your community is facing fear, grief, exhaustion, and uncertainty, taking time to notice and honor moments of good can be an important way to care for yourself and support your well-being.
- If having good days feels hard, remember that you are not alone and help is available. You don’t have to wait for a crisis to check in with yourself or reach out for support. Check on your mental health with a free, quick, anonymous test at [mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org).

## *Finding good:*

*Explore ways to strengthen your mental health through practices that reflect your values, culture, and needs.*

- You don’t need to search far for tools to support your mental health — many are already rooted in culture, community, and traditions.
- Finding ways to move that you enjoy, connecting with your community, making music, cooking, journaling, spending time in prayer, or other activities that bring peace or spark joy are all forms of mental health care.
- Many factors that affect our well-being are beyond our control, and our mental health is shaped by our surroundings, our culture, and how we are treated. Even when we can’t change everything, noticing what we can influence is important for our well-being.

## *Caring for your community:*

*Explore ways to support your own mental health and the mental health of those around you through community connection.*

- Trusted spaces and trusted people matter. Whether it's checking in with a neighbor, sharing a meal, or leaning on a faith group, community can play an important role in supporting mental health. For many people, this kind of care and connection is deeply rooted in cultural values and traditions that remind us we do not have to navigate difficult times alone.
- You don't have to be a therapist to support someone. Check in with friends, colleagues, and loved ones to see how they're feeling, and offer support and encouragement. When things feel overwhelming, isolating, or heavy, connection can be a lifeline.
- Connection is protection, and you don't have to carry the weight of "not-so-good" days alone. Even small moments of connection — whether in person or virtual — can reduce stress, anxiety, and stigma, and remind us we're not the only ones feeling what we're feeling.

## *Finding the right path for you:*

*Explore specific tips, tools, and resources to support mental health during BIPOC Mental Health Month.*

- Mental health is deeply personal, and what works for one person may not work for another. It is important to explore which practices, treatments, or other supports best fit your unique needs and circumstances.
- Your mind and body need time to rest and reset. Taking care of yourself isn't selfish; it's how you keep going.
- For more tips, tools, and resources, explore MHA's BIPOC Mental Health Toolkit at [mhanational.org/july](https://mhanational.org/july) and visit the BIPOC Mental Health Resource Center at [mhanational.org/bipoc](https://mhanational.org/bipoc).

# SOCIAL MEDIA SAMPLES

We've created sample text to make it easy for you to turn awareness into action for BIPOC mental health throughout the month. All messages are under the 280-character limit for X.

## LINKS:

[mhanational.org/july](https://mhanational.org/july)  
[mhanational.org/bipoc](https://mhanational.org/bipoc)  
[mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org)

## HASHTAGS:

#BIPOCMentalHealthMonth  
#BIPOCMentalHealth

## GENERAL

Trusted spaces and trusted people matter. Whether it's saying hi to a neighbor, sharing a meal with friends, or leaning on your faith group, community plays a big role in supporting mental health in BIPOC communities. Learn more at [mhanational.org/bipoc](https://mhanational.org/bipoc) 🧡

You don't have to be a therapist to support someone who's struggling. This #BIPOCMentalHealthMonth, check in with your people to see how they're feeling. Learn more about supporting BIPOC mental health at [mhanational.org/bipoc](https://mhanational.org/bipoc)

Your mind and body need time to rest and reset, especially when your community is facing stress. Taking care of yourself isn't selfish; it's how you keep going. 🧡

Learn how you can support BIPOC mental health this #BIPOCMentalHealthMonth at [mhanational.org/bipoc](https://mhanational.org/bipoc)

When the world feels overwhelming, isolating, or heavy, connection can be a lifeline, especially in BIPOC communities. This #BIPOCMentalHealthMonth, we're uplifting MHA's BIPOC mental health resources in July and beyond. Learn more: [mhanational.org/bipoc](https://mhanational.org/bipoc) 🧡

## BEBE MOORE CAMPBELL

This July, we're joining MHA in honoring the memory of Bebe Moore Campbell, a mental health advocate who worked to shed light on the mental health needs of the Black community and other underrepresented communities.

Learn more: [mhanational.org/bebemooorecampbell](https://mhanational.org/bebemooorecampbell)

## MHA RESOURCES

July is Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. ❤️  
Learn more about #BIPOCMentalHealth at [mhanational.org/july](https://mhanational.org/july).

Explore Mental Health America's #BIPOCMentalHealth Toolkit to learn about mental health in BIPOC communities: [mhanational.org/july](https://mhanational.org/july).

Mental Health America's 2026 #BIPOCMentalHealth Toolkit is now available!  
Join us in celebrating Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month at [mhanational.org/july](https://mhanational.org/july).

Looking for #BIPOCMentalHealth resources?  
Check out Mental Health America's BIPOC Mental Health Resource Center at [mhanational.org/bipoc](https://mhanational.org/bipoc).

## SCREENING

If having good days feels hard, remember that you're not alone and help is available. Take a free #mentalhealth test at [mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org).

## CRISIS

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988 or chat [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org). You can also reach the Crisis Text Line by texting HELLO to 741741.

You don't have to wait for a crisis to check in on your mental health. A good place to start? Taking a free mental health test with Mental Health America at [mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org). For direct support, call/text 988. You can also text HELLO to 741741 to reach the Crisis Text Line.

**Post images can be accessed from [mhanational.org/july](https://mhanational.org/july)**

**DON'T FORGET TO FOLLOW AND TAG US!**

**Instagram/Facebook/Threads:** @mentalhealthamerica

**X (Twitter):** @MentalHealthAm

**LinkedIn:** /mentalhealthamerica

# *The legacy of* **BEBE MOORE CAMPBELL**



**Each July, we honor the legacy of author, advocate, and trailblazer Bebe Moore Campbell by recognizing Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month (also known as BIPOC Mental Health Month).**

Moore Campbell's ability to tell impactful stories highlighting themes of racism, mental health, and family left a lasting mark on this world and is a foundation for much of the work that continues in support of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) mental health.

Throughout her work, Moore Campbell did not shy away from the realities of what it meant to live as a Black person in America. Her book, "Your Blues Ain't Like Mine," was inspired by the murder of Emmett Till and was deemed as one of the most influential books of 1992 by the New York Times. Moore Campbell continued to write of real events that impacted Black and marginalized communities, such as her work in "Brothers and Sisters," which takes place in Los Angeles following the Rodney King riots. By highlighting these issues, Moore Campbell brought themes of environmental impact, race, and community connections to the forefront of American literature.

Her early books drew attention to the harsh realities of racism and the way that this continued trauma can show up in everyday life. Her later books continued with similar themes and included strong ties to mental health, as well as the importance of community bonds, leaning on family and friends, and finding support during an individual's treatment and recovery journey. Additionally, through her advocacy efforts, Moore Campbell continued to engage with community members, connect individuals to support networks, and create spaces that were truly inclusive for those within them.

Moore Campbell passed away on Nov. 27, 2006, but through her powerful storytelling, advocacy, and strong community roots, fellow advocates continued her fight. Mental Health America honors her unforgettable legacy each July by releasing an outreach toolkit and campaign that gives individuals throughout the country the tools they need to educate themselves and others. Her legacy lives on, providing a powerful foundation for marginalized communities to thrive and be known.

# EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO TURN AWARENESS INTO ACTION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

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[store.mhanational.org](https://store.mhanational.org)

100% of proceeds support  
Mental Health America



# RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

## DO YOU NEED HELP RIGHT AWAY?

**988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** provides free, 24/7, and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Call or text 988 to be connected with a trained crisis counselor. Whether you're facing mental health struggles, emotional distress, alcohol or drug use concerns, or just need someone to talk to, 988 Lifeline counselors are available to support you. [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)

**Crisis Text Line** provides free, 24/7, confidential, text-based mental health support and crisis intervention for people experiencing stress, anxiety, loneliness, bullying, substance use, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, and more. Text "HOME" to 741-741 to be connected with a crisis counselor. [crisistextline.org](https://crisistextline.org)

**211 Helpline** can connect you with information about local resources and services in your community. It is free and available 24/7. If you need assistance finding food, paying housing bills, accessing free childcare, or other essential services, dial 211 to speak to someone who can help. 211 is run by the United Way. [211.org](https://211.org)

**Call BlackLine** is a free, 24/7 hotline that provides peer support and crisis counseling geared toward Black, Black LGBTQI, Brown, Native, and Muslim communities, and that offers an avenue to report mistreatment. Call or text 1-800-604-5841 to reach one of their listeners. [callblackline.com](https://callblackline.com)

**Disaster Distress Helpline** is a national hotline dedicated to providing year-round disaster crisis counseling. This toll-free, multilingual crisis support service is available 24/7 to all residents in the U.S. and its territories experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters. [samhsa.gov/find-help/helplines/disaster-distress-helpline](https://samhsa.gov/find-help/helplines/disaster-distress-helpline)

**Naseeha Mental Health** is a mental health helpline that answers calls from around the world from Muslims and non-Muslims. Call 1-866-627-3342 for 24/7 help. [naseeha.org](https://naseeha.org)

**National Domestic Violence Hotline** provides free, 24/7, and confidential support to survivors of domestic violence so they can live their lives free of abuse. If you're experiencing domestic violence, looking for resources or information, or are questioning unhealthy aspects of your relationship, call 1-800-799-SAFE (1-800-799-7233) or text "START" to 88788. [thehotline.org](https://thehotline.org)

**National Sexual Assault Hotline** provides free, 24/7 confidential support from trained specialists, connections to local and long-term recovery resources, and information about laws and reporting options in your state. Call 1-800-656-HOPE (4673), text HOPE to 64673, or chat online at [rainn.org/help-and-healing/hotline](https://rainn.org/help-and-healing/hotline).

**StrongHearts Native Helpline** is a free, 24/7, confidential, anonymous, and culturally appropriate domestic and sexual violence helpline for Native Americans and Alaska Natives. Call or text 1-844-7NATIVE (1-844-762-8483) or chat with an advocate online at [strongheartshelpline.org](https://strongheartshelpline.org).

**Teen Line** provides free and anonymous support, resources, and hope to youth through a hotline of professionally trained teen counselors, and works to destigmatize and normalize mental health through outreach programs. Call 1-800-852-8336 or Text "TEEN" to 839863. [didiirsch.org/teenline](https://didiirsch.org/teenline)

**Veterans Crisis Line** connects veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Open 24/7 – dial 988 then press 1, or text 838255. [veteranscrisisline.net](https://veteranscrisisline.net)

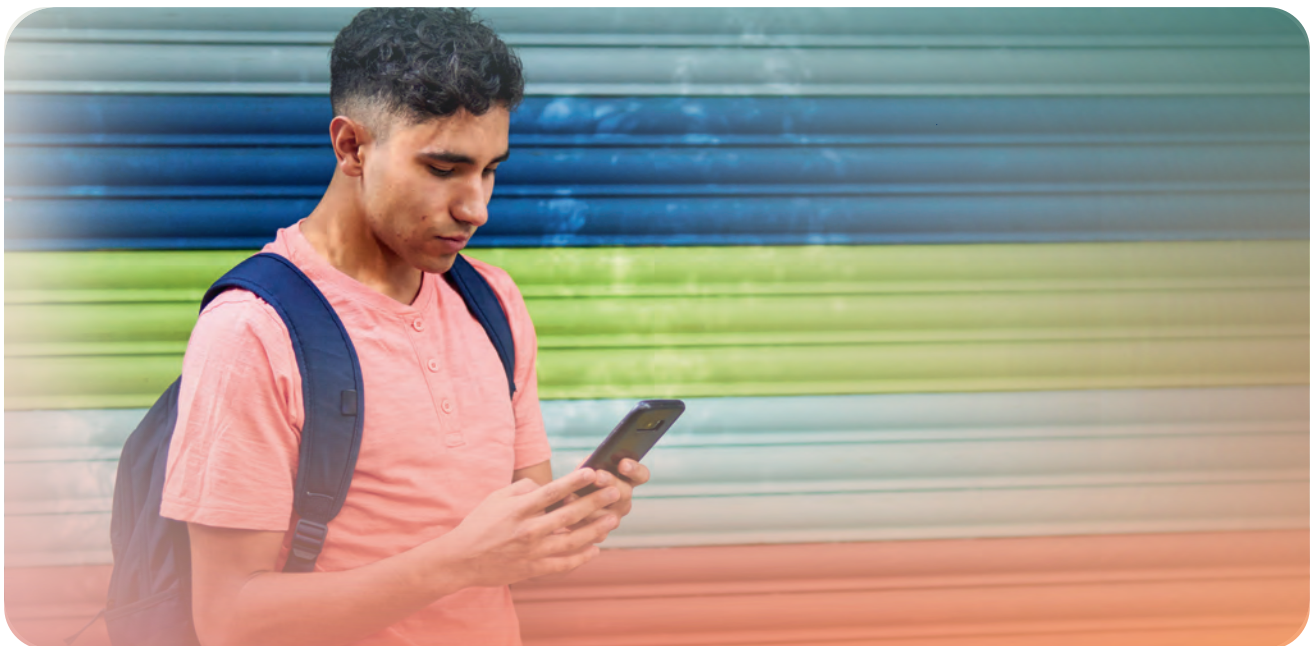
## DO YOU NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO, BUT ARE NOT EXPERIENCING A CRISIS?

**Findtreatment.gov** is a free, confidential, and anonymous resource for people looking to find mental health and/or substance use treatment in the United States and its territories. [findtreatment.gov](https://findtreatment.gov)

**Recovery Dharma Online (RDO)** is an independent Recovery Dharma community that works together to host safe, inclusive, and reliable Buddhist-inspired recovery meetings. [recoverydharma.online](https://recoverydharma.online)

**SAMHSA's National Helpline** is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders. They can be reached by calling 1-800-662-HELP(4357) or texting your zip code to 435748 (HELP4U).

**Warmlines** are peer-run phone lines for people who need support but are not in crisis. Warmlines are staffed by people with lived experience of mental health challenges, and are free to call, confidential, and focused on prevention. To find a warmline in your state, visit [warmline.org](https://warmline.org).



# ARE YOU LOOKING TO CONNECT WITH ORGANIZATIONS OR PROVIDERS THAT UNDERSTAND YOUR CULTURE?

**Inclusive Therapists** works to make the process of finding a therapist simpler and safer, centering the needs of BIPOC and LGBTQIA2S+ intersections (QTBIPOC). Their mission prioritizes the voices and expressions of neurodivergent and disabled communities of color. [inclusivetherapists.com](https://inclusivetherapists.com)

## COMMUNITIES OF AFRICAN AND BLACK DESCENT

**AAKOMA Project** builds the consciousness of youth of color and their caregivers on the recognition and importance of mental health, empowers youth and their families to seek help and manage mental health, and influences systems and services to receive and address the needs of youth of color and their families. Learn more at [aakomaproject.org](https://aakomaproject.org).

**Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective (BEAM)** is a national training, movement-building, and grantmaking institution that is dedicated to the healing, wellness, and liberation of Black and marginalized communities. [beam.community](https://beam.community)

**Therapy for Black Girls** is an online space dedicated to encouraging the mental wellness of Black women and girls. [therapyforblackgirls.com](https://therapyforblackgirls.com)

## COMMUNITIES OF ARAB DESCENT

**Arab America Mental Health Association (AAMHA)** is a youth-based advocacy organization that helps to dismantle stigma around mental health within the Arab community and provides people with resources that guide them to help, including a directory of Arab therapists. [arabmentalhealth.org](https://arabmentalhealth.org)

## COMMUNITIES OF ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER DESCENT

**Asian Mental Health Collective** aspires to make mental health services easily available, approachable, and accessible to Asian communities worldwide. [asianmhc.org](https://asianmhc.org)

**South Asian Therapists** is the largest South Asian mental health therapist and counseling community in the world, with a directory of hundreds of South Asian therapists, including Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Afghani, and Nepali heritage. [southasiantherapists.org](https://southasiantherapists.org)

**Yellow Chair Collective (YCC)** provides culturally relevant therapy for Asian Americans. YCC doesn't simply view therapy as addressing the problem you're facing or the symptom you're experiencing. YCC takes into account who you are as a person first and what is truly important to you. [yellowchaircollective.com](https://yellowchaircollective.com)

## COMMUNITIES OF INDIGENOUS AMERICAN DESCENT

**WeRNative** is a comprehensive health resource for Native youth, by Native youth, providing content and stories about the topics that matter most to them. They strive to promote holistic health and positive growth in local communities and the nation at large. [wrn.npaihb.org](https://wrn.npaihb.org)

## COMMUNITIES OF LATINE AND HISPANIC DESCENT

**Latinx Therapy** is a national directory for Latinx Therapists in private practice. Latinx Therapy works to destigmatize mental health in the Latinx community by providing a bilingual podcast, a national directory, and culturally grounded workshops and services. [latinxtherapy.com](https://latinxtherapy.com)

**Latinx Therapists Action Network** is a national network and online platform centering the healing of Latinx migrant people. They offer a directory of culturally grounded, Latinx mental health practitioners who offer therapy or other mental health services on a sliding scale. [ltan.org](https://ltan.org)

## ARE YOU AN IMMIGRANT LOOKING FOR SUPPORT?

**Informed Immigrant** is a digital hub and offline network offering the most up-to-date and accessible information and guidance for the immigrant community. [informedimmigrant.com](https://informedimmigrant.com)

**USAHello** is a national online information and learning platform for immigrants that provides easy-to-understand resources designed for real-life situations, including mental health, in a variety of languages. [usahello.org](https://usahello.org)

## ARE YOU LOOKING FOR RESOURCES OFFERED BY MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA?

**MHA Affiliate Network:** Mental Health America affiliates provide public education, information and referral, support groups, rehabilitation services, and socialization and housing services to those confronting mental health problems and their loved ones. Many affiliates also provide family advocate services to parents of children with serious emotional disturbances, mentorship or peer support for adults recovering from mental health conditions, and professional education to those working in the mental health field. They serve as local leaders in supporting and developing consumer-run initiatives and primary prevention programs, including those in schools. To find the MHA affiliate nearest you, search at [mhanational.org/affiliates](https://mhanational.org/affiliates).

**MHA screening:** Online screening at [mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org) is one of the quickest and easiest ways to determine if you're experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition. MHA's free, anonymous, and clinically-validated screenings help people explore their mental health and connect with personalized information and resources.

**MHA's BIPOC Mental Health Resource Center** is a collection of articles, videos, and blog posts that provide information on mental health in BIPOC communities while elevating the voices of lived experience. Learn more at [mhanational.org/bipoc](https://mhanational.org/bipoc).

[mhanational.org](https://mhanational.org)

Contact us  
[info@mhanational.org](mailto:info@mhanational.org)

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**MHA**  
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# CHECKING IN WITH OUR COMMUNITIES: CONVERSATION STARTERS

**When things feel overwhelming, isolating, or heavy, connection can be a lifeline. Whether it's a close friend, a neighbor, a coworker, or a client, we care about the people in our communities and want to make sure they're doing okay. Looking out for our communities can often start with a conversation. But how do you start it?**

You don't have to be a therapist to support someone. This resource is designed to help you check in with people in your community — both in person and by phone or text.

## Checking with someone you haven't seen in a while

- You were on my mind, and I wanted to reach out.
- I've been thinking about you, and I want to check in.
- Hi, it's been a minute. I wanted to make sure you're doing okay.
- Long time no see! What's been going on?
- I haven't seen you in a while! How have you been?
- How are you? How's the family doing?

## Checking in with someone going through a hard time

- How are you doing?
- How are you holding up since \_\_\_\_\_?
- Hey, I'm just checking in. Please text/call me back when you get this.
- Hey, I heard about \_\_\_\_\_. Do you want to talk about it?
- Hey, I know there's been a lot going on. I just want to make sure you're good.

## Checking in with a group of friends, teammates, or others

- Hey! How is everyone doing?
- Hey, is everyone doing alright?
- Hi everyone! Did you all see \_\_\_\_\_? What are your thoughts about it?
- Hey, is anyone else feeling [sad/mad/exhausted] by \_\_\_\_\_?
- Did anybody else hear about \_\_\_\_\_? How are you dealing with it?

Taking a moment to check in on the people we care about is an act of community care. It matters — not just to you, but also to the people around you. In a world that can be chaotic, caring for each other gives everyone the strength to keep going.

# CHECKING IN WITH YOUNG PEOPLE: QUICK CONVERSATION STARTERS FOR TRUSTED ADULTS

Young people thrive when they have a safe place to laugh, be proud of who they are, and feel like they belong. Teachers, coaches, mentors, and faith leaders play an important role in building these trusted spaces. Because they see young people in moments when they are comfortable being themselves, they may be the first to notice when something is off.

If you're someone young people trust, you don't need to have all the answers. A simple check-in can be just what a young person needs to feel seen, supported, and less alone.

## Signs something might be going on

Young people may be struggling if they are:

- More quiet, irritated, or emotional than usual
- Constantly tired, shut down, or mentally checked out
- Pulling away from people or activities
- Joking about giving up or disappearing
- Bringing up problems like money, safety concerns, or conflict at home/in the community
- Saying "I'm fine" while clearly stressed
- Laughing things off when they seem overwhelmed
- Struggling to focus, participate, or keep up during classes or activities
- Acting like they always have to be tough or strong

It may also be a good idea to check in if you know something has happened to them or in their circle recently.

## Ways to check in

Young people are more likely to open up when they don't feel embarrassed, singled out, or pressured in front of others.

Create moments to talk that feel natural:

- "Hey, can you help me put this stuff away?"
- "Walk with me for a second."
- "Got a minute before you head out?"

Make sure you're checking in during calm moments. If there is discipline to address, try to do it separately.

Some good times to check in might include:

- After practice or class
- While walking together
- While helping clean up or setting up an activity

Once you have a private moment, try opening with:

- "You've seemed a little off lately. I wanted to see if you're okay."
- "I've noticed you've had a lot on your mind."
- "You don't have to tell me everything, but I wanted to check in to see how you're doing."

Small moments of care and conversation can make it easier for young people to feel safe being themselves, to ask for help, and to find something good about their day to hold onto.

## Ways to respond

If they open up, focus on listening, not fixing.

### Instead of saying:

- "Just stay positive."
- "You'll be fine."
- "Other people have it worse."
- "You have to be strong for your family."
- "You're overreacting."

### Try:

- "That sounds really hard."
- "You've been carrying a lot."
- "I'm glad you told me."
- "Anybody would have a hard time dealing with that."

Not everyone will be ready or willing to talk. A young person may say:

- "I'm just tired."
- "I'm fine."
- "It's whatever."
- "I just need to get through this week/month/year."

If this is the case, let them know they can reach out whenever they are ready.

## If they need more support

Stay calm and keep listening without judgment. When they're done talking, you can say:

- "You don't have to figure this out alone."
- "I'm really glad you told me."
- "I want to help you get more support with this."
- "Let's figure out next steps together."
- "Who are the people we can lean on right now?"

Depending on your role and relationship, you may need to help connect them with a school counselor, social worker, or trusted caregiver.

**Remember:** It's always important to take comments about self-harm, suicide, or wanting to disappear seriously. If a young person talks about self-harm, suicide, or feeling unsafe, get immediate support. This may mean calling or texting 988, or following local mandated reporting policies/professional protocols.

*Scan to read  
the full article*



# HOW TO RESPOND WHEN SOMEONE OPENS UP

Use this pocket-sized guide to bridge the gap between a casual "How are you?" and a mental health resource. Have it printed on 3.5" x 2" business cards or take a screenshot and save it on your phone. These responses may be especially helpful for people like barbers and bartenders, who people tend to open up to about their struggles.

Get the [print-ready business card file](#).

**When someone opens up to you, you don't need the perfect words. Let them know they're heard, and they're not alone.**

**Here are some quick responses to try:**

"That's a lot hitting you at once."

"No wonder you've been stressed."

"You joke about it, but that sounds really hard."

"That kind of stress catches up with people."

"I'm glad you said something."

**If they seem worn down by everything going on in their life or community:**

"I've seen people share stuff from this site before. It's actually pretty helpful."

[mhanational.org](https://mhanational.org)

**If they've been talking about how their struggles have been affecting their mind and body:**

"Have you tried an online check-in to help you make sense of what's been going on?"

[mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org)

**If they sound distressed or hopeless:**

"If things ever start feeling too heavy, you can call or text 988 24/7."

# HOW TO FIND SAFETY IN A WORLD THAT FEELS UNSAFE

**Imagine you're just going about your day, and something in the world happens, and you feel like you've been knocked down. It could be reading a news headline or about a new policy that threatens your safety, rights, or freedom. So, how do you find safety in a world that feels unsafe?**

Even with everything happening in the world, it is still possible to find safety. It involves leaning into your feelings and seeking comfort in people and places that see and accept you as you are. Safety also means acknowledging that while you may not control what happens in the world, there are many things you can control in your own life.

## **What if it's not safe to express my feelings?**

When you are used to experiencing racism, discrimination, sexism, or prejudice of any kind, you might stop reacting and start to expect it all the time. You might start burying your real feelings and replacing them with feelings of anxiety and numbing.

In the moment, avoiding, numbing, burying your feelings, or withdrawing can protect you from situations that feel unsafe. But over time, all of that avoidance can take a toll on your well-being and contribute to mental health conditions like depression, anxiety, or complex PTSD.

The first step to finding safety is identifying and understanding what you are really feeling. When you are out of the environment that caused you harm or in a space where you can be yourself, this is where it is safe to begin to explore your feelings.

## **How do I know what I'm really feeling?**

Sometimes it's easy to identify when you're feeling angry, tired, sad, or scared. But other times, you aren't sure or don't know what exactly you're feeling, especially if you've been dealing with situations that keep you numb. Knowing what you're feeling can help you figure out what you need, and fulfilling those needs brings you closer to feeling safe.

So how do you know what you're really feeling? While you know when you feel big feelings like anger, it's important to understand what's underneath that anger. Tools like the feelings wheel can help you see a variety of emotions that you may be feeling. It might be more than just anger. It could be jealousy, resentment, betrayal, disrespect, or something else. The same thing goes for sadness and other emotions.

Once you know what you're really feeling, take the time to explore and unpack it — MHA's What's Underneath worksheet is a helpful tool for this. Think about what caused this feeling and what will help you feel better.

When you can name what lies beneath your feelings, you give yourself the power to better address them and find the safety you seek.

## How do I actually find safety?

When you know what you are feeling, you can find safety in processing, addressing, and moving through those emotions to give yourself what you need in that moment. You can also find safety by surrounding yourself with people and spaces that make you feel safe and supported. And, by focusing on what you can control, to remind you of your autonomy and your strength.

## Giving yourself what you need

After you work to unpack and understand your feelings, the next step is to give yourself what you need. Your feelings communicate an unmet need. Think about what your feelings are trying to tell you.

For example,

- I need space to feel, cry, grieve, or scream
- I need to rest, recover, recharge, or take a break
- I need connection and support from others
- I need to understand, get more information, or do research
- I need to listen to how others feel and learn more
- I need to speak up and take action for myself and/or others

Honoring your feelings and needs is a way to prioritize your own safety and well-being. You are saying that no matter what is going on in the world, you are holding space for yourself.

*Scan to read  
the full article*



## Finding trusted people and spaces

You can find safety by leaning in to people and places that naturally make you feel comfortable, heard, and seen. These are spaces where you don't feel like you have to code-switch, mask, or hide parts of yourself.

Here are some ideas of what a safe person or space can feel like:

- You've trusted them in the past
- They've shown up for you in the past
- They are open to hearing you and actively listen to you
- They are caring and compassionate
- They don't judge or criticize you
- They are honest
- They have similar experiences to your own and/or share their own experiences
- They have kept your conversations or secrets confidential
- They make you feel seen, heard, and validated

## Focusing on what you can control

Thinking about what you can control reminds you of your power. You always have the power to make positive changes in your life and your perspective — no matter what is happening in the world. Small wins matter.

Here are some actions you can take that are within your control:

- Taking care of yourself by drinking water, eating healthy, and moving your body
- Using healthy coping strategies like journaling, meditating, or exercising
- Spending time with the people you connect with and love
- Limiting screen time and blocking, muting, or unfollowing harmful social media accounts
- Joining and supporting advocacy groups for causes that you support

# PROTECTING YOUR ENERGY

Even when you can't control everything, there are small steps you can take to help protect yourself from the things that wear you down.

## What can help right now

**Reduce the noise:** Step away from scrolling, alerts, or conversations when they start to overwhelm you.

**Ground yourself in the moment:** Try: "I'm here. I made it through today."

**Check in with your body:** Drop your shoulders. Unclench your jaw. Take one slow breath.

**Find quick comfort:** Listen to music, watch your favorite show, step outside, take a moment to pray, find a quick laugh, or move your body.

**Text or call someone who gets you:** Even "today is a lot" can be enough to start a conversation.

**Shrink the moment:** Focus on the next hour, the next meal, or the next thing, just not everything at once.

**Take a guilt-free break:** You do not have to earn rest.

**Go where you feel safe and respected:** It might be a café, a barbershop, a salon, a place of worship, or a friend's house — anywhere that connection, culture, and conversation come naturally.

**If you're in crisis or need immediate help:**  
Call or text 988 for 24/7 confidential support.

## What can help over time

**Name the pattern:** What keeps coming up at work, at home, in your community, or in how you're treated?

**Be clear about what's not yours to carry alone:** Some pressure comes from systems, expectations, bias, or how others treat you, not you or your actions.

**Adjust what you can (even a little):** This might mean saying no, asking for support, changing your routine or schedule, or doing things differently than you have been.

**Protect your energy:** Limit your time around people or in spaces that drain your energy.

**Connect to what grounds you in who you are:** Lean into your culture, faith, creativity, sense of humor, language, food, movement, or traditions — whatever helps you feel most like yourself.

**Build something that steadies you:** Make a playlist, walk a favorite route, take time to journal, or find another small routine or practice that helps you recharge that you can return to on hard days.

**Let support in before you're burned out:** You don't have to wait until things get "bad enough" to ask for help.

**Acknowledge small wins:** Continuing to show up and getting through the day counts as success.

# WORKSHEET: PROTECTING YOUR ENERGY

## You're not alone

A lot of people are feeling worn down right now, and for real reasons. You might be feeling overwhelmed by:

- Constant bad news, social media, or group chats
- Money stress or pressure to keep it all together
- Concern for your safety or your family's safety
- Being treated unfairly or feeling unseen and unheard
- Feeling like you always have to be strong or push through
- Taking care of everyone else with little time for yourself
- Feeling pressure to work harder or prove yourself in spaces where you don't fully feel accepted
- Decisions outside your control that affect your life

All of these factors can take a toll over time, so it's important to be intentional about where you put your time, attention, and care. This doesn't mean tuning out the hard stuff. It means finding ways to care for yourself even when life feels overwhelming, so you can show up for your people and what matters to you.

### What's wearing you down?

Some things that wear us down are personal. Others come from the world around us. Some come from having to deal with more than one person should have to.

**What situations, expectations, or systems are making life harder right now?**

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**What is your body trying to tell you? Do you have fatigue, headaches, or muscle tightness?**

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**Are there places or people that leave you feeling drained, judged, ignored, or like you have to hide parts of yourself? What are they?**

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**What feels outside your control, and what support do you need around it?**

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### **What helps you, even a little?**

Relief, comfort, connection, and even brief moments of peace are meaningful and can help you get through the day.

**What helps you feel even a little better?**

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**When was the last moment that felt even a little easier?**

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**Who helps you feel  
less alone?**

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**What makes  
you laugh?**

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**What's one thing you  
made it through today?**

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# TRUSTED SPACES PACK

The Trusted Spaces Pack was created to help bring small moments of care and connection into trusted, everyday spaces throughout Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month (also referred to as BIPOC Mental Health Month) this July.

**We invite you to use these 31 Good Day Tips and Quotes at your places of business or community gathering spaces. Think chalkboards, checkout counters, salon mirrors, church signs, daily special menus, waiting rooms, bulletin boards, or anywhere members of your community will see them. Switch them up as often as you like.**

- "You are your best thing." – Toni Morrison
- You don't have to handle everything alone.
- "Hold on to what is good, even if it's a handful of earth." – Hopi Prayer
- Take a break from something that's wearing you down.
- Not everything needs your attention right now.
- "Nothing can dim the light which shines from within." – Maya Angelou
- Spend time where you can be yourself.
- You don't have to do everything today.
- Forgive yourself for small mistakes.
- "If you light a lamp for somebody, it will also brighten your path." – Buddha
- Keep some energy for yourself.
- Go where you feel respected.
- Give yourself a minute before responding.
- "We were scared, but our fear was not as strong as our courage." – Malala Yousafzai
- A good day can just mean getting through.
- If you love someone, let them know.
- You don't have to push through everything.
- Check in with someone who gets you.
- "I have a day. If I know how to make the most of it, I have a treasure." – Gabriela Mistral
- Let this moment be what it is.
- Save your energy for the people who matter.
- You don't have to earn rest.
- "Okay" is enough sometimes.
- Step away from the noise for a bit.
- Small conversations count.
- "Don't ever think that just because you do things differently, you're wrong." – Gail Tsukiyama
- Take today as it comes.
- One step is enough for now.
- Stay close to people who get it.
- You can care and still take a step back.
- "Let come what comes, let go what goes. See what remains." – Ramana Maharshi



Print these 4x6 postcards and put them into bags with purchases, or leave them on counters for your clients or customers to take. These can also be used at health fairs, community centers, or places of worship.

Get the [print-ready postcard file](#).



Front



Back

Use these printable stickers on water bottles, takeout bags, brochures, or in other visible spaces so people can scan the QR code and connect with MHA's BIPOC mental health resources.

Get the [print-ready bipoc resources sticker file](#).

Get the [print-ready screening sticker file](#).



Share these tear-away flyers in places where people naturally gather and connect. Hang them on bulletin boards, in waiting areas, break rooms, community centers, faith spaces, or local businesses so people can easily take a tab and access mental health information, support, and resources.

Get the [print-ready flyer files](#).



## WE'VE GOT MORE!

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