

# Telephone Support

## Guidelines for Admin & Volunteers

### Top things you can do to help

#### **Express concern and say you can help**

Letting someone know you're worried and there to talk is a good way to open up a conversation – it shows you care about the person, have time for them and that they do not have to avoid things with you.

#### **Reassure them**

The first time someone mentions their worries is a big step. It's good to recognise this and reassure them. Let them know you're there to listen when they need to talk.

#### **Offer your time to listen**

Listening is an important skill. Ask open questions that start with "how", "what", "where" or "when". This can help people open up. Be A Good Neighbour Admin recommends watching "Shush Listening tips – Samaritans" on YouTube.

#### **Act as you usually do together**

Do what you usually do – behaving differently can make someone feel more isolated. Do not be afraid to offer kind words and a space to talk, whether by phone, messaging or in person.

#### **Be patient**

You will not always know the full story. There may be reasons why they have found it difficult to ask for help. Just being there can be helpful for someone who may want to open up later.

## **If they do not want support**

Gently explore their reasons for not wanting to get support. If they are unsure whether to get help, just talking and listening without judgement could help work out what's getting in the way.

## **Do not force it**

Do not force someone to talk to you or get help, and do not go to a doctor on their behalf. This may lead to them feeling uncomfortable, with less power and less able to speak for themselves.

## **Look after yourself**

It can be upsetting to hear someone you care about in distress. Be kind to yourself and take some time to relax or do something you enjoy. You will have access to a trained Counsellor should you request personal help.

## **Offer practical help**

Little acts of kindness – you can report back to the Be A Good Neighbour Admin Team who will then be able to action any requests you may have.

# **Be A Good Neighbour**

