



Creating Supportive Spaces Handout

Supportive spaces are environments where individuals feel safe, respected, and empowered to express themselves without fear of judgment or repercussions. These spaces play a vital role in promoting overall well-being but can be challenging to create due to diverse needs and external pressures.

This talk offers research-backed, practical strategies to cultivate supportive spaces that build resilience, encourage open dialogue, and foster a culture of inclusion.

Tips to Support Someone in Extreme Distress:

- Being there
 - Stay calm and gain trust through understanding, empathy and active listening.
 - Acknowledge their feelings and offer reassurance.
- Ask, Persuade, Respond
 - Encourage open questions (e.g., "How are you feeling?").
 - Explore Plans: Gently ask about their thoughts and intentions.
 - Check-in and gather information to understand the situation.
- Keep Them Safe
 - Stay With Them: Do not leave them alone during distress.
 - Contact support services and seek help.
 - Ensure Safety and call emergency services in case of immediate danger.
- Follow Up
 - Stay in touch after the crisis and reassure them of your continued care.
 - Allow time for recovery and healing.
 - Provide space for them to share updates.

Strategies to Support Yourself in Stressful Situations:

- Prioritise Mental and Physical Wellbeing
 - Use positive affirmations to counter negative thoughts.
 - Stay active, maintain a healthy diet and aim for 8 hours of sleep daily.



- Practice deep breathing to stay calm under pressure.
- Set Boundaries and Seek Support
 - Communicate your limits and reach out to mental health professionals for guidance.
 - Spend quality time with loved ones and take regular breaks to recharge.
- Engage in Reflective and Creative Practices
 - Be kind to yourself and focus on growth.
 - Reflect through journaling or writing and use creative outlets to release stress.
- Cultivate Gratitude and Purpose
 - Practise gratitude to focus on positives and volunteers for causes to find purpose.
 - Include yoga or meditation to reflect and reset.
- Adopt Practical Stress-Relief Strategies
 - Go for walks or stretch during breaks.
 - Balance tasks with healthy boundaries and regularly check in with your emotions.
 - Celebrate small achievements daily.

Here are a few more resources that may help:

- What is my Personal Style of Coping with Stress?
 - <https://member.1to1help.net/assessment/what-is-my-personal-style-of-coping-with-stress/61>
- How Resilient are You?
 - <https://member.1to1help.net/assessment/how-resilient-are-you/69>
- Multi-dimensional Wellness Profiler
 - <https://member.1to1help.net/assessment/mdwp/65>

Emotional Wellness Service is a free, professional and confidential service open to all employees. Online counselling is available 24/7. To fix appointments for counselling, place your request on the website or call 1800-258-8121 or 1800-258-8999. To access services, register on www.1to1help.net