

# IT'S FINE TO NOT BE FINE

By the Wellbeing Ambassadors

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**A: “Hi, how are you?”**

**B: “ I’m fine. What about you?”**

**A: “Oh, I’m fine too.”**

## **What is wrong with this conversation?**

At first, most people will skim past this conversation and find that nothing is wrong with it. And to be perfectly honest, there doesn't necessarily need to be. But there are some slight problems that we could fix. For example, both person A and person B are giving the same response to how they are, the same stereotypical response we're taught to say from the moment we can speak. The classic "I'm fine" response. To most, these meaningless words are just a vital part of small talk, but sometimes it's important to note that the person you ask may be far from fine. In fact, social cues like this make things just that much harder to be able to tell what someone is really going through,

and having to respond in a certain way more often than not makes things worse.

**Now, let's try this conversation again:**

**A: "Hi, how are you?"**

**B: "Honestly, not too great. I've been feeling under the weather lately."**

**A: "Oh no, I'm really sorry to hear that. Do you wanna talk about it?"**

**B: "Yeah, I'd love that, thanks."**

This conversation is looking a whole lot better already. Person B makes the very brave choice of trusting Person A with how they really feel, which is honestly one of the hardest things about feeling upset. Being able to trust

someone to the extent that you can freely tell them what you're going through symbolises how close you are to the person, but also how aware you are of your own emotions. While talking about your emotions is easy to, well, talk about, it's really hard to implement, and even harder to come to terms with in your own head. Sometimes, it's important to just take a step back and think about what might have gotten you thinking about what you are. Sometimes, it's a matter of going to someone you trust, no matter their age or how close they are to you. The main thing is that they are someone whom you can trust and you are sure they won't judge, because at the end of the day, this is about you.

### **Both perspectives of this conversation:**

While you may be person B, it's also vital to remember that you could be Person A. If this happens, here's a variety of things you could do:

- **Let them talk** - sometimes all someone has got to do is let all their emotions out, and this might have been the hardest thing they have ever done. Saying something in that moment may disturb them and make them even more afraid to tell anyone the truth.
- **Encourage them to speak to someone they trust** - this doesn't have to be an adult, just someone they're comfortable talking with that might be able to do something about the situation.
- **Avoid relating their issues to your own** - often, people don't want to hear about someone else when they are upset. Correlating your issues

to theirs will just make them feel awkward and perhaps, less likely to share with you again.