



WALKING AND TALKING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Dear Walker,

Thank you for joining our walk today and taking part in **Time to Talk Day**. Mental health problems affect one in four of us, yet many people are still afraid to talk about it. We all have mental health so speaking openly about how we feel benefits us all.

After my wife died, I was really struggling as I had no real social life and was treated for depression. To help with this, I joined my local Ramblers group for a walk. Along the way, I spoke to a few people and really enjoyed it.

Walking with the Ramblers group regularly now, I have a strong group of friends who I not only walk with but socialise with and go on holidays together. I know that if I need help, they are just a phone call away. I have regained my confidence and feel much less isolated.

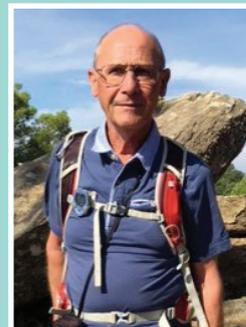
This week, the Ramblers has teamed up with Time to Change - a campaign run by charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness to end mental health stigma - to encourage the nation to get walking and talking on and around **Time to Talk Day (7th February 2019)**.

Time to Talk Day is all about bringing together the right ingredients to have a conversation about mental health. Walking is a great way to have a conversation and I've been able to speak with my fellow walkers about what I'm going through.

If you're a regular walker with us, it will make a big difference if you are welcoming to new walkers, just like I was welcomed on my first walk. If this is your first walk with us, introduce yourself and have a chat with someone new.

Together, we can all benefit from walking and talking together, bringing our community closer to nature and to each other.

Find an array of group walks and walking routes, more information on the benefits of being outdoors and how you can join the Ramblers to keep walking with us on our website: www.ramblers.org.uk



Happy Time to Talk Day!

Best wishes,

John

Member of Andover Ramblers



HOW CAN I START A CONVERSATION ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

1. START SMALL

Ask 'how are you?' and if you suspect someone may be struggling with their mental health ask again to show that you're really listening.

2. FIND A GOOD TIME AND PLACE

Sometimes it's easier to talk side by side rather than face to face, that's what makes going for a walk a great way to have a conversation.

3. GENTLY ASK QUESTIONS

Asking questions can be an important way of learning about a mental health problem. Just remember not to get too personal, especially if the discussion is making someone feel uncomfortable.

4. BE OPEN

Being open and honest with others can help to build trust. You could speak about how you're feeling to get talking about mental health.

5. TREAT THEM THE SAME

When someone is diagnosed with a mental health problem, they're still the same person as they were before. If you want to support them, keep it simple and behave as you would normally.

