

FACILITATOR GUIDE



At-Risk Mental Health for Students

 **Kognito**

Overall Program Outcomes

Through this session, participants will build on the knowledge gained through completion of the interactive learning experience to:



Learn to **recognize signs of distress** in yourself and your peers.



Learn **how to talk with a friend** you are worried about.



Identify and access resources to assist and support someone who needs help.



Explore self-care strategies and positive coping techniques.

Facilitation Tips and Best Practices

As a facilitator you are responsible for learning this content, delivering this content, guiding dialogue, keeping track of time, and working to ensure that each participants' voice is heard.

Please find below a few tips that might help as you prepare and facilitate this program.

- 01 Be prepared** - The more you know the curriculum and can facilitate it without having to read directly from the facilitator's guide, the better. If you are buried in this guide and constantly searching for every word to say, this program will not be as successful as it could be.
- 02 It's not your job to know everything** – You are being asked to guide not to know all the answers. If you get asked a question that you don't know the answer to, be okay saying, “Ya know – I'm not sure, but I'm happy to try to find out for you. Let me reach out to someone tomorrow and I'll get back to you.” And, if that happens, don't take that moment personally – it's happened to every facilitator. Keep going and trust that you are well prepared with the content you've been provided.
- 03 Think through the entire day of the program** - If at all possible, you shouldn't be running from across campus to facilitate moments before the program starts. Give yourself time to be in the space you'll be facilitating and mentally prepare before you begin the program.
- 04 Be observant during the program** – Listen to what is being said and what is not being said. Listen to who is saying certain things and who is being quiet.

- 05 This experience is not about you** – You are there to guide the group through this content. Yes, the content applies to you because you are a human – but you are the facilitator, not the star of the show. Approach this task humbly and ready to serve.
 - 06 Get ready to learn** – If you are very prepared to facilitate, you will be able to allow yourself to learn along the way. That will be less possible if you are not prepared and are “winging in” throughout the program. Yet another reason to spend adequate time digesting and actually practicing facilitating this content.
 - 07 Be okay with silence** – This one may be tough for some of you – but learning to be ok with silence is especially important. When you ask a question and don’t get an answer immediately, your instinct may be to fill the silence – don’t. Let it just sit for a minute and trust that an answer will come.
 - 08 Have Fun!**
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Communication Tips for Facilitators

How you communicate is just as important as what you communicate. It can also make a huge difference in gaining buy-in from participants.

Below are some communication tips that might be helpful while facilitating this curriculum.

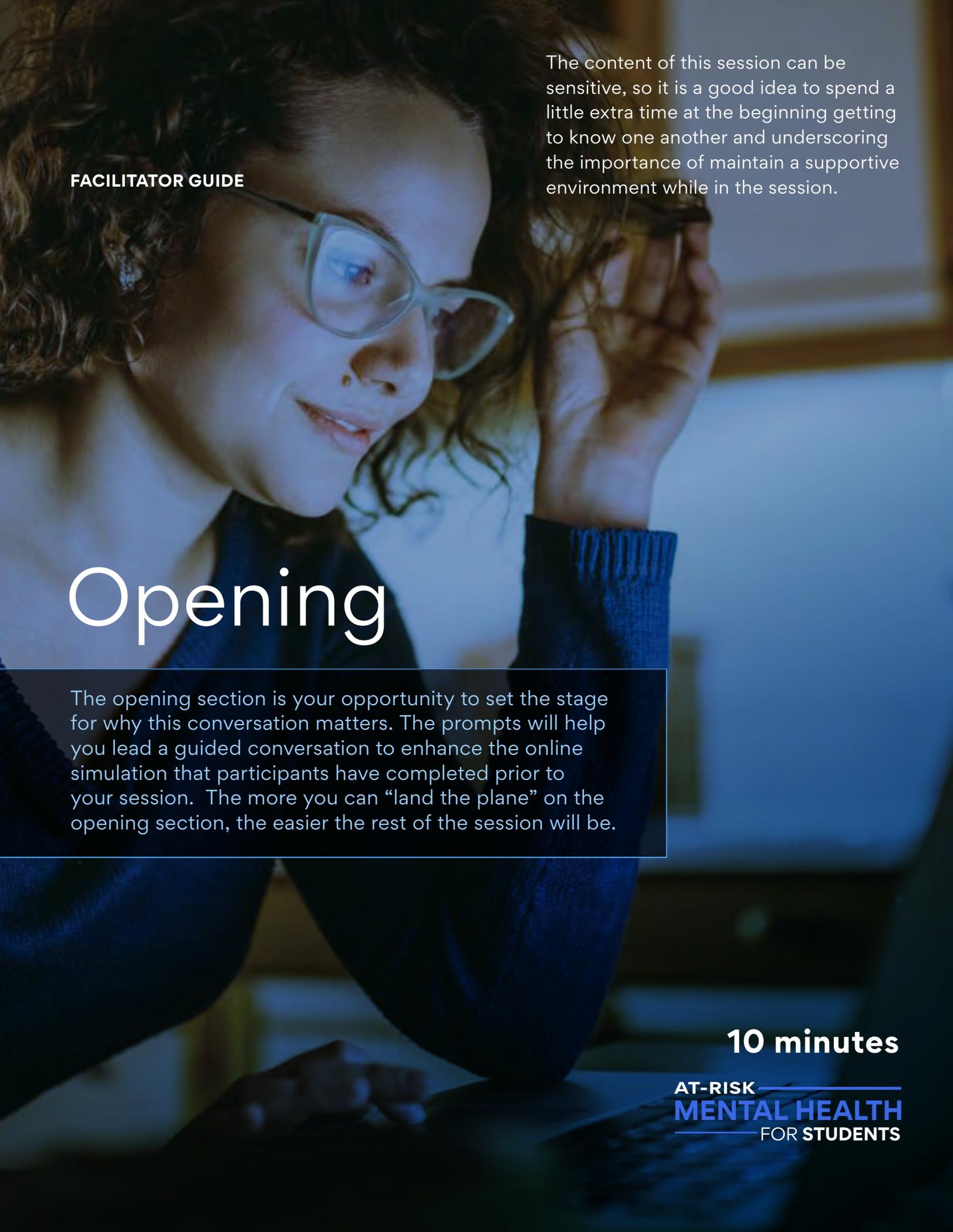
- 01 Active listening** – Truly model what you are teaching. Look at people when they speak, be interested in what they are saying, make them feel important. (Again, this won’t be possible if you are constantly buried in this facilitation guide.)
- 02 Remember your body language** – Watch your facial expressions as people are sharing back. Your face is going to say a lot about what you are thinking so be careful of what your face does. Don’t cross your arms, don’t check your cell phone, put your smartwatch on mute, etc.
- 03 Reframe** – When you ask a question of the group and you don’t get the exact answer you are looking for, take a portion of what was said and reframe the response to provide a better or more complete answer to the group. *(This is an advanced facilitation skill and if you master it, this can be used outside of this experience.)*
- 04 Summarize what has been said** – Remember that not everyone will be able to hear answers as they are provided. Summarize what has been said for the entire room. This also ensures that correct answers are heard more than once by the group.
- 05 Include the non-engagers** – You know the individuals who are going to raise their hands or are going to offer up answers willingly. Take a chance and call on participants that might not be the first to answer. But please don’t call on a “non-engager” more than once. It could cause them to feel uncomfortable and not be able to focus on the message you are trying to share.

Curriculum Key

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
Time	<p>This is the general amount of time you have for each portion of the discussion. Some sections might take more, some might take less, but this will give you a general idea as you are mapping out your session.</p> <p>You will see times listed like this: 15 min (35/90). That means that the section itself should take 15 minutes and, when you have finished that section you have facilitated 35 minutes of the 90 minutes total for the program.</p> <p>Facilitation tip: <i>Once you know what time your program is going to be held, go back through this facilitation packet and create a time-roadmap making note of what time each section should begin and end.</i></p> <p>Pro tip: <i>As you are doing that, remember that if the program is slated to begin at 7pm ET you are not really going to begin at 7pm. Give yourself some flexibility in your time-roadmap</i></p>
PowerPoint slide #	<p>This identifies the PowerPoint slides that will be used during each section. It will be listed like this (PPT 1-3).</p> <p>Facilitation tip: <i>After you are comfortable with the curriculum go back through the curriculum and make a mark or add a sticker at the point in your facilitation that you need to advance the slide.</i></p> <p>Pro tip: <i>Then, practice facilitating the entire program while advancing slides. A remote clicker will help you be able to move freely around the room.</i></p>

Curriculum Key Continued

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<i>Facilitator notes or Facilitation Instructions</i>	This section is to provide context for the section you are facilitating and will always be in <i>italics</i> . Think of them like your information stops along the way. Please pay special attention to each of these sections as they can be rich with helpful information.
Facilitator talking points	These are the talking points that need to be conveyed for each section. But the facilitator talking points are not to be used as a script that you read verbatim but instead should be used to frame the message you share.
Text that is in BOLD	If a section is in bold then those statements can be read as they are printed in this guide.
Text that is in BLUE	<p>If words are in BLUE FONT, that signifies that that text can be found on the PPT slides.</p> <p>Facilitation tip: <i>Once you have become very familiar with the curriculum it's often helpful to underline or highlight the main points in each section. That way, as you are facilitating you can glance down at your notes and you will see those key words standing out on your page.</i></p> <p>Pro tip: <i>Please deliver each section in your own way or in your own words – make the curriculum yours but please do not add content. Throughout this discussion guide you will see sections noted as “optional” which can be included based on your time and/or session goals.</i></p>

A woman with curly hair and glasses is looking at a laptop screen. She is wearing a dark blue sweater. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a desk and a window.

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The content of this session can be sensitive, so it is a good idea to spend a little extra time at the beginning getting to know one another and underscoring the importance of maintain a supportive environment while in the session.

Opening

The opening section is your opportunity to set the stage for why this conversation matters. The prompts will help you lead a guided conversation to enhance the online simulation that participants have completed prior to your session. The more you can “land the plane” on the opening section, the easier the rest of the session will be.

10 minutes

AT-RISK
MENTAL HEALTH
FOR STUDENTS

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<p>Facilitator talking points</p> <p>PPT slide ##</p>	<p>Welcome everyone. [Tonight/today] we are going to spend some time talking about emotional and mental health.</p> <p>As we open our time together, I would like to start with a few shared expectations and ground rules to be sure we have a mutual understanding of how we can get the most out of our time together.</p> <p>NOTE: Insert audience specific reference here – Team motto, fraternity values, floor ground rules, etc.</p> <p>Shared Expectations & Ground Rules</p> <p>What do we need to do to make our time together successful? <i>For example, no cell phones, participate, 1 person speaks at a time, speak from personal experience, use appropriate language and tone, etc.</i></p> <p>Sometimes these discussions can be emotionally activating. If you need to take a break, that is ok. It is important that we all check in with ourselves and take care of ourselves both while we are here and after.</p>
<p>Facilitator notes</p>	<p>Our time today is intended to allow us to explore ways to support ourselves or others; however, if you would like to discuss a personal mental health matter, please let me know.</p> <p><i>Pause here and look in the Resources section for support information.</i></p>

Overview

This section is intended to set a foundation and explore the concept of stress, including eustress (“good stress”) and distress (“negative stress”).

10 minutes

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<p>Facilitator talking points</p> <p>PPT slide ##</p>	<p>Stress impacts every one of us as humans. It can often be used to describe a negative situation, but stress is not always a bad thing. It is simply your body's way of responding to changes that create demands.</p> <p>Eustress, or good stress, has the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Motivates, focuses energy.• Is short-term.• Is perceived as within our coping abilities.• Feels exciting.• Improves performance. <p>Ask participants: What are some examples of things that you have experienced that caused good stress?</p> <p>Typical responses may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moving.• Taking a vacation.• Starting a new semester.• Being elected to a leadership role.• ATH: Before a big game.• FSL: Recruitment• RES LIFE: Beginning of the year move in.• ACADEMIC: Presenting. <p>Distress, or negative stress, has the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Causes anxiety or concern.• Can be short- or long-term.• Is perceived as outside of our coping abilities.• Feels unpleasant.• Decreases performance.• Can lead to mental and physical problems. <p>Ask participants: What are some examples of experiences that you have had that caused negative stress?</p>

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A friend in distress

This section is intended to review and reinforce the signs of distress in a person.

20 minutes

AT-RISK
MENTAL HEALTH
FOR STUDENTS

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<p>Facilitator talking points</p> <p>PPT slide ##</p>	<p>It is important to remember that stress is a normal part of life, which can be full of problems and pressures. However, when a person can't relieve the stress and pressure they are experiencing and feel like it's more than the normal stress and pressure that goes with living life and being a student, there are many things you can do to help yourself or a friend to improve your frame of mind.</p> <p>It may be tough to tell when you're experiencing good or bad stress, but there are important ways that your body lets you know that you're struggling with too much stress.</p> <p>Ask participants: Think about a time that you have felt stress. What did you notice about yourself?</p> <p><i>Be prepared to prompt to ask about "physical" and "emotional" signs. Typical responses may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inability to concentrate or complete tasks• Get sick more often with colds• Body aches• Other illnesses like autoimmune diseases flare up• Headaches• Irritability• Trouble falling sleeping or staying awake• Changes in appetite• More angry or anxious than usual <p>It is important to be aware of your own self and try to monitor the stress you are experiencing, but at times it can be challenging to see our own warning signs.</p> <p>When our friends feel overwhelmed, sad, or anxious, we are usually the first ones to notice and the first ones they come to when they need to talk.</p>

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<p><i>Facilitator notes continued</i></p>	<p>SCENARIO #1</p> <p>Rama is the child of immigrants and the first in his family to pursue higher education. Other than special events like his birthday, he often stays at home and works instead of going out.</p> <p>Rama’s father died a few months ago from a heart attack, which left his mother alone to take care of his two younger sisters. Right after the funeral, Rama mentioned to Jesse he wanted to do even better in school in his father’s memory. In the months since then, Rama has rarely spent time with people outside of projects for class.</p> <p>Recently, Maya encouraged Rama to come to their friend’s party. Rama said he’d try but didn’t end up going. When Maya checked in with him, Rama said he got a C minus on a recent test and felt too upset to leave the house.</p> <p>Ask participants: What signs of distress do you think Rama might be showing?</p> <p><i>Responses should include “Has been sad/depressed for a long time” and “Seems overly anxious and/or stressed”.</i></p> <p>SCENARIO #2</p> <p>Travis has been having a difficult time at school. His sister raises a child alone, which is a big cost for the family. So Travis has to work thirty hours a week to help pay for school. He mentioned to Jesse that juggling everything has been a lot to balance, and sometimes he’s felt overwhelmed by it all.</p> <p>Travis has little time to do anything other than attend classes, work, and babysit his sister’s child. When he does have time off, he usually goes home with one or two six-packs of beer and finishes them himself.</p> <p>A few days ago, Travis got upset about a group project and kicked a chair. When Rama, Maya, and Jesse checked in with him about it a few days later, he shrugged and said he didn’t want to talk about it.</p>

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<p><i>Facilitator notes continued</i></p>	<p>Ask participants: What signs of distress do you think Travis might be showing?</p> <p><i>Responses should include “Seems overly anxious and/or stressed,” “has been sad/depressed for a long time,” and “Uses alcohol or other drugs excessively.”</i></p> <p>SCENARIO #3</p> <p>Jesse knows she can make an impact. She’s involved in many on-campus groups, from criminal justice reform to homeless outreach. And of course, any time a friend is having a tough time, she wants to be there.</p> <p>But Jesse isn’t always the best at knowing when to put herself first and others second. More than once she’s chosen not to eat when she had a paper due. And she slept through a couple of her early morning classes because she was supporting a friend who went through a bad breakup.</p> <p>Recently, Jesse showed up at the very end of her friend Rama’s birthday dinner because she got caught up making signs for a rally. She was very upset at herself and kept apologizing to Rama for days afterward, even after he said it wasn’t a big deal.</p> <p>Ask participants: What signs of distress do you think Jesse might be showing?</p> <p><i>Responses should include “Seems overly anxious and/or stressed” and “Has issues around food and eating.”</i></p>

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<i>Facilitator notes continued</i>	<p>SCENARIO #4</p> <p>Maya’s experiences in school have also been a little intense lately. Maya came out as queer to her friends earlier this year and started seeing someone. After a few months they had a bad breakup and Maya took it pretty hard.</p> <p>A couple months after the breakup, Travis got a text from Maya asking for his help getting home from a party. When he got there, he found Maya high and disoriented. Maya saw Travis a few days later and thanked him for helping her get home. She mentioned she was embarrassed she hadn’t gotten over the breakup yet.</p> <p>Ask participants: What signs of distress do you think Maya might be showing?</p> <p><i>Responses should include “Uses alcohol or drugs excessively” and “Seems overly anxious and/or stressed.”</i></p> <p>When we are concerned about a friend, talking with them is a powerful step. Let’s explore some tips to having these conversations.</p>

Conversation skills

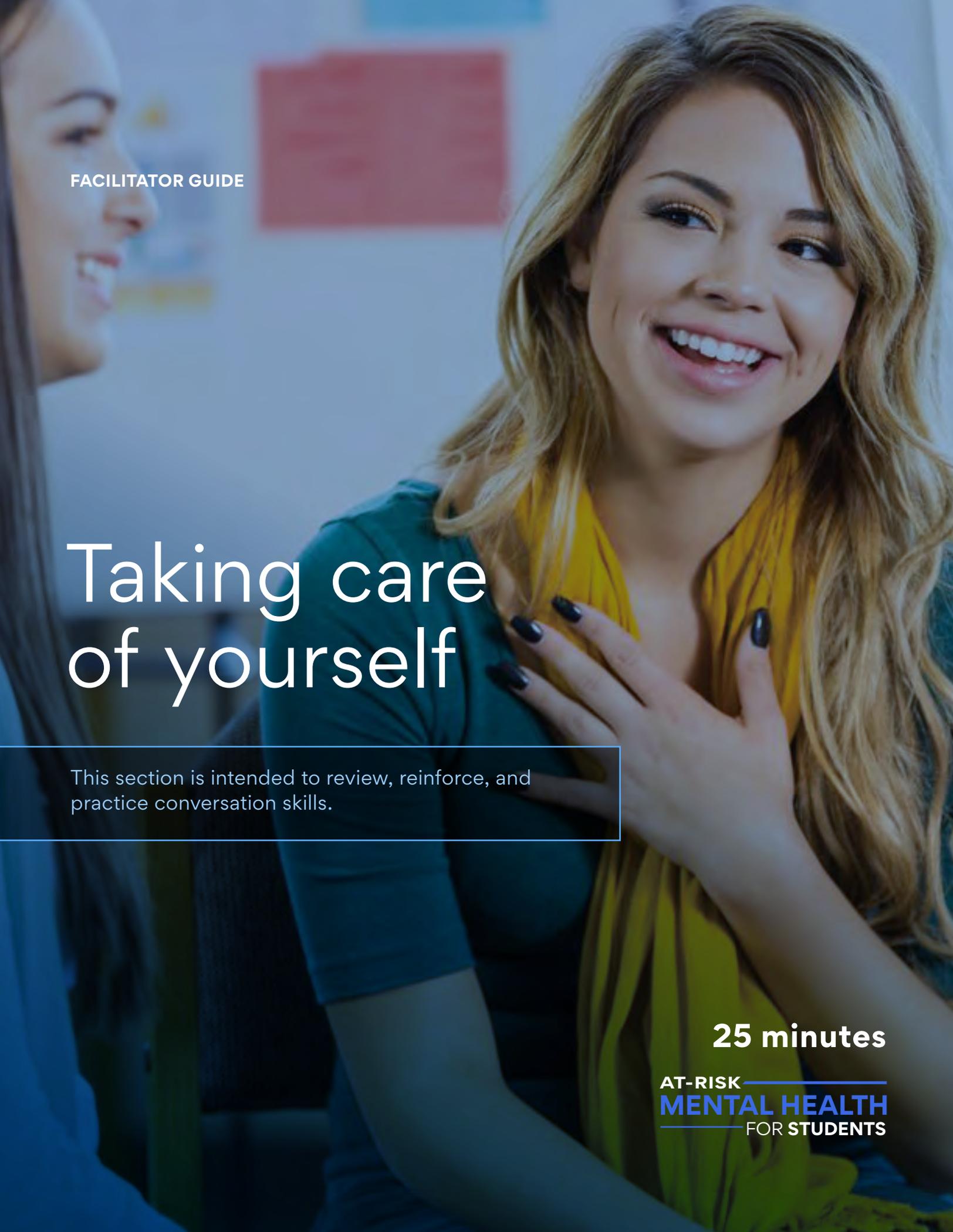
This section is intended to review, reinforce, and practice conversation skills, as well as identify resources to support.

15 minutes

AT-RISK
MENTAL HEALTH
FOR STUDENTS

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<p>Facilitator talking points</p> <p>PPT slide ##</p>	<p>It can be difficult to know what to say to someone who is experiencing distress and you may not always feel comfortable having the conversation.</p> <p>Whether you check-in with your friends in person, over text, video/ phone call, DM, etc, the most challenging part of talking with a friend is often bringing it up. Although there are no magic words, being comforting and supportive may help someone feel more at ease and less defensive.</p> <p>Some key tips to beginning the conversation are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stick with neutral statements/questions. Avoid negative labels at all costs. They can make the other person feel bad and are unlikely to help you reach out to them in an effective way. • Speak from your own perspective. Beginning your sentence with “I feel like,” “I think,” or “It seems like” can soften a sentence a lot and when you speak from your own perspective, it lets them know how the situation looks from the outside. • Avoid judgement. Starting with “I think” or “I feel” doesn’t help if you’re also judging your friend. It’s better to empathize than to judge. Remember a judgement is only your opinion and it can not only make the other person feel badly, but it is easy for them to deny the behavior. • Focus on specific, observable behaviors. Share what you’ve observed and why it concerns you. For example: “I’ve noticed you’ve been missing class a lot lately and you aren’t answering your phone or text messages like you used to. I’m worried about you.” • Avoid giving advice unless they ask for it. No one wants advice about something sensitive. It makes the other person feel like you don’t trust them to solve their own problems. Rather than beginning with “You should...” or “You shouldn’t...” begin with “Have you thought about....” Or “What would be like to...” <p>Ask participants: Think about a time that you have had a conversation with a friend about a concern that you had for them or that they had for you. What was helpful for you to say to them or hear from them?</p>

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<p><i>Facilitator notes</i></p>	<p><i>Allow participants the opportunity to share 3-4 examples as time allows. After each example, ask “What was helpful about that?” to expand on the example. Be sure to thank each participant for sharing.</i></p>
<p>Facilitator talking points PPT slide ##</p>	<p>STARTING THE TALK It is important to practice empathy for yourself and others – remember that not everyone will feel like talking all the time and we must respect that; however, using statements like “You matter to me”, “Your feelings are valid”, or “I care, even if I don’t understand” will remind your friend that you are concerned, you are there to support them, and you care for them.</p> <p>Conversations like this are best face-to-face, but any conversation is better than none at all. When you have a conversation like this, it should be private. Reassure your friend that you will not share the conversation with anyone – that it is up to them to decide who they tell or talk with about their situation.</p> <p>GETTING HELP You may find that the situation is more than your friend can handle on their own. Fortunately, there are resources on campus where students can find help such as access to professional counselors. These services can help them talk about challenges like stress, sadness, relationship issues, drug and alcohol abuse, and eating issues. Campus mental health services are confidential and available to students for free or at a highly reduced cost. Your campus may offer the option to access professional counselors online or over the phone. Check the resources section for your school specific options.</p>
<p><i>Facilitator notes</i></p>	<p><i>Ask participants: What resources are available to assist you or a friend on campus?</i></p> <p>Keep in mind that you are not a professional – if your friend does not agree to get help or you do not feel equipped to have the conversation, there are still things you can do. Consider calling the counseling center office for advice or talking to a faculty or staff member, coach or advisor, an RA, or a student leader. And if you ever think a friend is in immediate danger of harming themselves or someone else, you should call 911, campus security, or a crisis hotline.</p> <p>These resources are also there for you in case you ever realize that you’d like support yourself. Check out the resources section in your menu for a list of supportive places in your school and community.</p>

A photograph of two young women with long hair, smiling and talking. The woman on the right is wearing a yellow top and a green cardigan, with her hands clasped over her chest. The woman on the left is partially visible, wearing a blue top. The background is a classroom with a whiteboard and colorful sticky notes.

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Taking care of yourself

This section is intended to review, reinforce, and practice conversation skills.

25 minutes

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HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<p>Facilitator talking points PPT slide ##</p> <p>Facilitator notes</p>	<p>When overwhelmed, spiritual self-care can be helpful for some people, allowing them to notice how every part of their body feels and keep them grounded. Consider the difference between what you are currently doing to take care of your spiritual self, and what you'd like to be doing.</p> <p>Ask participants: What are some things that you would like to begin doing to invest in your spiritual self and support a healthy mindset?</p> <p>Lastly, let's talk about your social self. Social self-care is investing in the creation and maintaining of your close relationships. These are the people in your life who will be there to support you when you need it.</p> <p>Ask participants: What are some things that you currently do to invest in your social self and support a healthy mindset?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make time to see friends. • Schedule regular dates with your partner. • Call, check on, or see your relatives. • Stay in contact with faraway friends. • Make time to reply to personal messages. • Allow others to do things for you. • Expand your social circle. • Ask for help when you need it. • Share a fear, hope, or secret with someone you trust. <p><i>Allow participants to add to the list as appropriate; however, keep in mind that these things should support a healthy mindset. If it is unclear whether the response does so, ask the participant to tell you more about how this activity meets the intended outcome. Note that the spiritual self is equivalent to religion.</i></p>

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<p>Facilitator talking points</p> <p>PPT slide ##</p>	<p>It's important to think about the people in our lives who are there to help support us - the last person we laughed with, and the last person we cried with, and reach out, even just to say hi.</p> <p>Consider the difference between what you are currently doing to take care of your social self, and what you'd like to be doing.</p> <p>Ask participants: What are some things that you would like to begin doing to invest in your social self and support a healthy mindset?</p> <p>There are a lot of aspects of self-care to keep in mind, but the most important thing to remember is that the best self-care routine for you is one you can maintain. No matter how small the changes you make are, they'll still matter. Try out a few different exercises or practices, see what you can fit into your schedule, and what makes you feel best right now. Keep in mind that this is a dynamic process - some exercises might be more helpful at different times in your life than others.</p>

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Closing

REITERATE RESOURCES AVAILABLE

10 minutes

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FOR STUDENTS

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
<p>Facilitator talking points PPT slide ##</p> <p><i>Facilitator notes</i></p>	<p>We are all in this together – and we all need one another! Today we talked about how to know when you or a friend needs help, how to talk to a friend you’re worried about, where you and/or your friend can go for help if the situation seems too big to handle on your own, and how to utilize appropriate self-care and positive coping techniques.</p> <p>THE RESOURCES we talked about are here to assist you if you need help or event before. Stress impacts every one of us as humans. We all face distress sometimes, so making sure that we’re there for our friends and ourselves sets us all up for success.</p>