



Entering new spaces can be daunting for a variety of reasons, particularly if you are meeting people with different social identity markers to you for the first time.

It's great interacting with people that are different to you and finding out about cultures that are new to you, but it can come with it's challenges. In these new spaces, you may experience feelings of isolation, confusion, embarrassment, or anger. You might witness or experience behaviour from peers that makes you feel bad.

By learning to embrace difference and develop an awareness of the unconscious bias' we all hold, we can improve the mental health of ourselves and those around us.

EXTRA SUPPORT

[The Mix](#)

Support for under 25s

Text 'THEMIX' to 85258

[Samaritans](#)

For urgent support

116 123

[Papyrus](#)

Support for under 35s experiencing thoughts of suicide

0800 068 4141

[Shout](#)

Text 'SHOUT' to 85258

[Beat Eating Disorders](#)

Student specific helpline 0808 801 0811

[Voice Collective](#)

Support children and young people who hear voices, see visions and other sensory experiences

[Switchboard LGBTQIA+](#)

0300 330 0630 - helpline

[Muslim Youth Helpline](#)

Faith and culturally sensitive mental health support

[Mermaids](#)

Support for transgender young people under 20

[OCD Action](#)

Support and advice for anyone affected by OCD



FURTHER READING, ADVICE AND SUPPORT

[Racism & mental health](#)

From [Mind](#)

[LGBTQ+ mental health support and advice](#)

From Mind

[BAATN Network](#)

The home of the largest community of Counsellors and Psychotherapists of Black, African, Asian and Caribbean Heritage in the UK

[Report a hate crime - True Vision](#)

(report-it.org.uk)

A platform to report any hate crimes you witness online without having to visit a police station.

[Equality Advisory Support Service discrimination helpline - Citizens Advice](#)

If you've experienced discrimination you can get help from the Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS) helpline.

Behind the Books

Mental health tips for university students created by a group of Sussex University students

[Stigma and discrimination | Mental Health Foundation](#)

[Zuri Therapy \(Racial-Wellness\) – BLAM UK CIC](#) free, virtual group therapy sessions for Black British people.

[Mental health A-Z](#)

Learn about signs, symptoms and how to access support if needed

Mind: Student advice

Tips and guidance for students to look after mental health

[Zero Suicide Alliance](#)

Free online training for students about having conversations with peers about suicide

[Meaningful Connections](#)

Q&A between a student and counsellor

[Tell me App](#)

A digital peer support App



TOP TIPS

TALK TO SOMEONE

Talking things through with someone can help you to get perspective, to take some time away from the things that are worrying you, and to get ideas for new things you can try to manage what's worrying you. Sometimes just saying it out loud can help you to process what you're feeling. Talking to someone can help to challenge your own beliefs and to recognize when behaviours are causing you to feel anxious or stressed.

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Dealing with day-to-day microaggressions has a large impact on wellbeing and mental health so mindfulness can help with this. Mindfulness is the practice of recognising and acknowledging thoughts and feelings, and learning to regulate them and quiet your mind. You don't have to be a pro to practice mindfulness – it can improve your mood from the first try. There are apps like [Headspace](#) that offer free trials to get you started.

SET BOUNDARIES

It's fine (and encouraged) to express if certain language or behavior makes you uncomfortable. It can be difficult to find the words to say this, so it's useful to prepare for these conversations. You can use this helpful [guide to 'Calling In'](#) to help you.



TOP TIPS

BE OPEN TO LISTENING

It can be hard hearing that you might have upset someone when it wasn't your intention. However, it's important to listen to what you're being told and not approach the situation with defensiveness. If you're not sure what to say, check out [The Guide to Allyship](#) which has a lot of helpful information including **how to apologise effectively**.

DO YOUR RESEARCH

It's great to be curious about different cultures around you but relying on the people from those cultures to answer all your questions can be exhausting for those people and means that they're putting in a lot of extra work. If you have a question, think about the emotional impact that might have on the person you're asking and ask yourself:

- Is it a very personal question?
- Is this the right environment to ask it?
- Am I seeking validation?
- Could I find out the answer through Google or elsewhere?

CONNECT TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE SIMILAR EXPERIENCES TO YOU

Celebrating difference is what makes educational settings such special places, but it's also important to surround yourself with people who understand how you experience the world. Joining campus societies, affinity/support groups and being active in causes that you're passionate about are good ways to meet people with similar experiences to you.