When getting help isn’t straightforward

You may want support but have nowhere private to talk, nobody to come with you, or difficulty explaining what you need. These are real difficulties. Here are a few words you can borrow, if they help.

When privacy is difficult

> “I’d like to talk, but I don’t have somewhere private. Could we discuss another way or time?”

Ask the service what arrangements are possible. Headphones alone won’t keep your side of a conversation private.

When nobody can come with you

> “Does this appointment require someone to come with me? I don’t have anyone available. What options can we discuss?”

If you’ve been asked to bring someone for medical or safety reasons and nobody is available, let the service know beforehand. You can talk through what might be possible.

When another way of communicating would help

> “I find it easier to explain things in writing. Is there a safe way to send a short note?”

You can also ask about an interpreter, more time or a quieter setting. If you send a note, you could ask, “When might I hear back?”

When a suggestion doesn’t fit

> “I’ve tried that, but I’m still finding this difficult. Could we think about another option?”

If cost, travel, caring responsibilities or technology make something hard to manage, it’s okay to say so. You can ask whether there’s another way that would work better for you.

Talking with someone you trust or a qualified mental health professional can be very helpful. If nobody is available, you can tell the service that too. Anxiety can make it harder to get in touch, even when you know what you want to say.

If someone makes you feel unsafe, you can seek independent professional or specialist support. Choose a safe way to get in touch; you don’t have to speak to that person first.

If you need help urgently, please don’t wait for a message back. Contact a local urgent care or crisis service. If you’re in immediate danger, have a medical emergency or feel unable to keep yourself safe, call your local emergency services or go to the nearest emergency department now. You deserve care and support when things feel this difficult.

General information, not a substitute for professional care.

Sources: US HHS; CAMH, Canada; Healthdirect, CCI and 1800RESPECT, Australia. Checked 4 November 2026.

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