



PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH!

If you have, or believe you may have, a mental health problem, it can be helpful to talk about this issue with others. It can be scary to reach out for help, but it is often the first step to helping you heal, grow, and recover.

Having a good support system and engaging with trustworthy people are key elements to successfully talking about your own mental health

BUILD YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM:

Find someone—such as a parent, family member, teacher, faith leader, health care provider or other trusted individual, who:

- Gives good advice when you want and ask for it; assists you in taking action that will help
- Likes, respects, and trusts you and who you like, respect, and trust, too
- Allows you the space to change, grow, make decisions, and even make mistakes
- Listens to you and shares with you, both the good and bad times
- Respects your need for confidentiality so you can tell him or her anything
- Lets you freely express your feelings and emotions without judging, teasing, or criticizing
- Works with you to figure out what to do the next time a difficult situation comes up
- Has your best interests in mind

FIND A PEER GROUP:

Find a group of people with mental health problems similar to yours. Peer support relationships can positively affect individual recovery because:

- People who have common life experiences have a unique ability to help each other based on a shared history and a deep understanding that may go beyond what exists in other relationships
- People offer their experiences, strengths, and hopes to peers, which allows for natural evolution of personal growth, wellness promotion, and recovery
- Peers can be very supportive since they have “been there” and serve as living examples that individuals can and do recover from mental health problems
- Peers also serve as advocates and support others who may experience discrimination and prejudice

PARTICIPATE IN YOUR OWN TREATMENT DECISIONS:

It's also important for you to be educated, informed, and engaged about your own mental health.

Get involved in your treatment through shared decision making. Participate fully with your mental health provider and make informed treatment decisions together. Participating fully in shared decision making includes:

- Recognizing a decision needs to be made
- Identifying partners in the process as equals
- Stating options as equals
- Exploring understanding and expectations
- Identifying preferences
- Negotiating options
- Sharing decisions
- Arranging follow-up to evaluate decision-making outcomes