

# DMH MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH NEWSLETTER

May 2019

Week Four

## What is *Stigma*? Why is it a *Problem*?

**S**tigma is when someone views a person in a negative way just because they have a mental health condition. Some people describe stigma as a feeling of shame or judgement from someone else. Stigma can even come from an internal place, confusing feeling bad with being bad.

Navigating life with a mental health condition can be tough, and the isolation, blame and secrecy that is often a result of stigma can create huge challenges to reaching out, receiving support and living well.

Stigma causes people to feel ashamed for something that is out of their control. Worst of all, stigma prevents people from seeking the help they need. For a group of people who already carry such a heavy burden, stigma is an unacceptable addition to their pain.

## What Helps Versus What Hurts

### TALKING TO SOMEONE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH DISORORER



"I may not be able to understand exactly how you feel. but I care about you and want to help."

"You might not believe it now, but the way you're feeling will change."

"You are not alone in this. I'm here for you. We will get through this together."

"Talk to me, I'm listening."



"We all go through times like this."

"Just snap out of it. Look on the bright side."

"You'll be fine, stop worrying. Shouldn't you be better by now."

"Here's my advice."

## How Can We Help To Eliminate Stigma?

- 1. Talk** Openly About Mental Health \*
- 2. Educate** Yourself and Others \*
- 3. Be Conscious** of Language \*
- 4. Encourage Equality** Between Physical and Mental Illness \*
- 5. Show Compassion** for Those with Mental Illness \*
- 6. Choose Empowerment** Over Shame \*
- 7. Be Honest** About Treatment \*
- 8. Let the Media Know** When They're Being Stigmatizing \*
- 9. Don't Harbor** Self-Stigma

