



# January Education: Slash the Stigma

## Identify Potential Risk Factors

### Work and/or home environment

- Have you experienced great, or ongoing change at work or home?
- Do your coworkers or family members express high negativity?
- Is there any harassment or other forms of toxicity?
- Have you considered leaving work or your relationship?

### Genetics

- Maternal or paternal, has someone in your family been diagnosed with a mental illness?
- Have you had a past experience with mental illness?
- "It runs in the family," is never an excuse to avoid help.
- Trauma
- Have you had a childhood or recent event that has left you feeling scarred, lonely, or hurt?

### Medical conditions or medications

- Certain medical conditions have an increased risk for depression.
- Do you have cancer, a chronic disease, a recent heart attack, etc?
- Do you feel like you have limitations and anxiety about future?
- How are you coping with ongoing treatment?

### Are you taking any of these meds?

- Beta-blockers
- Corticosteroids
- Benzodiazepine hypnotics
- Parkinson's drugs
- Hormone alternating drugs
- Stimulants
- Anticonvulsants
- Proton pump inhibitors and H2 Blockers
- Statins and lipid-lowering drugs
- Anticholinergic drugs used to treat stomach cramps and other GI disorders

## Acknowledge Any Signs and Symptoms

### Anxiety

#### **Emotional:**

- Apprehension or dread
- Tense or jumpy
- Restlessness or irritability
- Negative anticipation and weary of signs of danger

#### **Physical:**

- Pounding or racing heart and shortness of breath
- Sweating, tremors, and twitches
- Headaches, fatigue, and insomnia
- Upset stomach, frequent urination or diarrhea

#### **Causes:**

- Genetics
- Environment

### Depression

#### **Emotional:**

- Hopelessness, worthlessness or guilt
- Irritability
- Persistent sad or "empty" mood
- Decreased interest in normal pleasures
- Persistent thoughts of death or suicide

#### **Physical:**

- Slower movement and decreased physical activity
- Slow or soft speech
- Difficulty sitting still and concentrating
- Insomnia and headaches
- Cramps and other digestive problems
- Appetite and/or weight changes

#### **Causes:**

- Trauma
- Genetics
- Life circumstances
- Brain changes
- Medical conditions
- Alcohol or drug abuse

### Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

#### **Re-experiencing:**

- Flashbacks
- Bad dreams
- Frightening thoughts

#### **Avoidance:**

- Staying away from places, events or objects
- Avoiding thoughts or feelings related to traumatic event

#### **Cognitive and mood:**

- Trouble remembering key features of traumatic event
- Negative thoughts about oneself or the world
- Distorted feelings like guilt or blame
- Loss of interest in enjoyable activities

#### **Arousal:**

- Easily startled
- Feeling tense
- Having difficulty sleeping
- Having angry outbursts

#### **Causes:**

- Exposure to trauma
- Accompanied by depression, substance abuse and other anxiety disorders

## Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

### *Obsessions - intrusive, irrational thoughts or impulses that causes anxiety:*

- Fear of germs or contamination
- Unwanted forbidden or taboo thoughts involving sex and religion
- Thoughts of harm or aggression towards others or self
- Having things symmetrical or in a perfect order
- Doubts about having done something right, like turning off the stove
- Fears of saying or shouting inappropriate things in public

### *Compulsions - repetitive behaviors to temporarily relieve anxiety about obsessions:*

- Excessive cleaning or hand-washing
- Ordering and arranging things a particular & precise way
- Repeatedly checking on things, such as repeatedly checking to see if the door is locked
- Repetitive counting
- Mental checks

### *Causes:*

- Genetics
- Brain structure and functioning
- Environment or trauma

## Bipolar Disorder (Manic-Depressive Illness)

### *Manic episode or Bipolar I:*

- Feelings of elation or extreme excitement
- Increased energy and/or activity
- Insomnia and feeling "wired"
- Talking fast and feeling as though thoughts are moving very fast
- Easily agitated or irritated
- Belief in excessive multi-tasking
- Risky behaviors

### *Depressive episode or Bipolar II:*

- Feelings of emptiness or hopelessness
- Decreased energy and/or activity
- Insomnia and/or excessive sleep
- Lack of enjoyment
- Difficulty concentrating and forgetfulness
- Irregular eating habits
- Thoughts of death or suicide

### *Causes:*

- Genetics
- Brain structure and function
- Stress

## Utilize Available Resources and Treatments

### *Start with seeking treatment:*

#### **NATIONAL**

#### **Suicide Prevention**

800-273-8255

#### **Eating Disorders Association**

800-931-2237

#### **Rape, Abuse & Incest Network**

800-656-4673

#### **Substance Abuse & Mental Health**

800-662-4257

#### **Gambling Hotline**

800-552-4700

#### **Anxiety Hotline**

888-826-9438

#### **ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline**

800-422-4453

#### **National Domestic Violence Hotline**

800-799-7233

#### **Adult/Elder Abuse**

800-222-8000

#### **"Connect" Crisis Text Line**

741741

#### **Hopeline Network**

800-784-2433

## LOCAL

#### **GA Crisis Hotline**

800-715-4225

#### **ACCGov Employee Assistance Program**

800-854-1446

#### **The Cottage Sexual Assault Center**

706-353-1912

#### **Athens Alcoholics Anonymous**

706-543-0436

#### **Nuci's Space**

706-227-1515

#### **Narcotics**

**Anonymous**

818-773-9999

#### **Athens Family Violence Clinic**

706-369-6272

#### **Project Safe**

706-543-3331

#### **United Way Northeast Georgia**

Dial: 2-1-1

Text:

898211888-826-9438

- Advantage Behavioral Health Systems
- Family Counseling Services
- Athens Area Commencement Center

### *Types of treatment options that might be part of a treatment plan:*

- Psychologists, counselors, clinicians, therapists, social workers, psychiatrists, mental health nurse practitioners, primary care physicians, family nurse practitioners, or certified peer specialists
- Psychotherapy and psychosocial treatments
- Medications
- Behavioral or lifestyle changes such as exercise, diet, and sleep maintenance
- Addressing social isolation
- Complementary or integrative health approaches - therapeutic methods in addition to or combined with standard medical procedures or treatment plans
- Settings:
  - Private practice
  - Community centers
  - Substance abuse treatment centers

### *Having the conversation with friends and family:*

- Support is not control
- The illness influences their behavior
- Learn as much as possible
- Show interest in treatment
- Encouragement and love
- Atmosphere of cooperation within family
- Listen
- Resume 'normal' functioning
- Don't push
- Express support out loud
- Have a safety or crisis plan
- Don't give up

### *Having the conversation with your general practitioner (GP):*

- Write down a list of questions beforehand
- Be open to discussion and learning about something you don't understand
- If you feel like the GP is not on your side, seek out another physician or ask for a referral to a counselor or therapist
- If you or someone you're with receives a prescription, ask about its function and side effects

Click the Links Below for Source Information

Links between medication & depression

Mental Health Topics

Mental Health Conditions

Talking to your GP about mental health

