



Self Help Tips

Source: helpguide.org

TIP 1: Find ways to stay engaged

- Seek out face-to-face connection
- Ways to feel connected and engaged
- Get out into the world
- Volunteer your time
- Join a depression support group
- Take care of a pet
- Learn a new skill
- Create opportunities to laugh

TIP 2: Adopt healthy habits

- Move your body
- Eat to support your mood
- Support quality sleep
- Spend time in sunlight
- Join a depression support group
- Take care of a pet
- Learn a new skill.
- Create opportunities to laugh

TIP 3: Know when to seek professional help

Stigma Impacts Older Adults With Mental Illness

Mental health concerns are becoming more prevalent in older people, yet the stigma of mental illness often prevents them from seeking help. Baby boomers are aging and this population group is exploding—it's estimated that by 2030, one in five U.S. residents will be over 65—so this issue is important to address.

Life events that can trigger mental health challenges include the loss of loved ones, family moving away, drop in socio-economic status with retirement, chronic pain, reduced mobility, or moving to a care facility.

The CDC estimates that 20% of people age 55 years or older experience some type of mental health concern. The most common conditions include anxiety, severe cognitive impairment, and mood disorders (such as depression or bipolar disorder). Mental health issues are often implicated as a factor in cases of suicide.

According to Cynthia Sweet, Case Manager, Erie County Senior Services, depression and anxiety are the leading concerns in the older adult population in Erie County. "Women seem to have a slightly easier time talking about depression," Sweet said. "Men have traditionally been conditioned to keep feelings to themselves and often have a difficult time talking about this topic. In the clients I see, more than half are on some type of medication for depression."

Sweet feels many older people do not seek help because of the negative stigma connected with seeking help.

New mental health diagnoses as well as management of ongoing issues are two distinct challenges for older people and their loved ones, according to Ann Monroe, master trainer for the Reframing Aging Initiative National Project and originating president of the

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Health Foundation of Western and Central New York, “10,000 people turn 65 every day – yet society is not prepared to provide proper care,” Monroe said. “As people age, their medications and treatment may need to be tweaked. Geriatric psychiatry is rare but the needs are overwhelming. Geriatric care in general offers lower pay and is not perceived as challenging work.”

Monroe also said that depression is often misdiagnosed or written off as dementia. Therefore, there is a high percentage of untreated depression among older adults.

In addition to the stigma of mental illness, older adults often suffer negative effects of stereotypes and exclusion.

“One of the things we see is a high rate of depression as older people are excluded from social circles,” Monroe said. “Experience is disregarded in favor of youth and there is a lack of respect and recognition that older people can contribute. Social isolation has a significant impact on older people.”

According to Sweet, anxiety can be just as debilitating as depression and is not addressed as often. “When combined with impairments in hearing, vision and mobility, life can become highly stressful,” Sweet said. “Anxiety is not as well diagnosed or treated with medication because there has not been as much training and awareness devoted to it. And anxiety and depression very often exist together,” she said.

Sweet also cites the acute shortage of appropriate providers a significant problem.

“People who have been treated for conditions such as mood disorders and schizophrenia and work with professionals on

a regular basis can function very well independently,” Sweet said. “Unfortunately, this is often not the case since there are few care providers in the area and those in rural areas often have major problems getting to a provider.”

Erie County Senior Services has been screening for mental health issues on general assessment, but recently added in-depth screening and a goal-oriented method to help clients with setting goals to begin doing things that used to bring them pleasure. Other community agencies also provide services to help older adults.

Jewish Family Services provides mental health services with individual counseling, Catholic Charities has Project Hope, which helps adults at risk of being homeless, and the Erie

County Department of Mental Health has the SPOA program, which is a single point of entry for adults needing mental health services.

The Supportive Housing Programs can provide housing for adults who have difficulty living on their own. The SHP providers include Transitional Services, Inc., Living Opportunities of DePaul, Lake Shore Behavioral Health, Spectrum

Human Services, Horizon Human Services, Southern Tier Environments for Living, Housing Options Made Easy, Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers, Cazenovia Recovery Systems, Restoration Society, and WNY Veteran’s Housing Coalition.

Join the Conversation educates members of our community about the stigma experienced by people of all ages, encouraging them to find their voice and get the help they need to recover.

20%

of people age 55 years or older experience some type of mental health concern.

Source: CDC

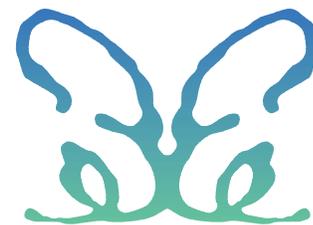
How to Help an Older Adult with Depression

- Listen with love and compassion
- Invite your loved one out
- Schedule regular social activities
- Plan and prepare healthy meals
- Encourage the person to follow through with treatment
- Make sure all medications are taken as instructed
- Watch for suicide warning signs
- Seek immediate professional help if you suspect that your loved one is thinking about suicide

Source: helpguide.org



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBER



ENDEAVOR
HEALTH SERVICES
Your Wellness, Our Mission

Spotlight: A Q&A with Telesco Creative Group

We recently spoke with Mike Telesco, President of Telesco Creative Group, about his company's involvement with the Anti-Stigma Coalition.

Q: Why did you get involved with the Anti-Stigma Coalition?

We were asked by Michelle Brown (former Executive Director of Compeer) to help a group of organizations pull together an anti-stigma campaign around mental illness. She thought we could give some advice. Without knowing what I was walking into, I was amazed by the people and organizations at the table and their passion and knowledge around the topics. They were smart, kind and looking for some help, and we jumped in with both feet. It has been one of the most fulfilling groups I have ever been a part of.

Q: What has been your company's role in Join the Conversation?

We have helped create and execute the campaign itself—from the name and look, to the website, social media, TV,

billboards, events, brochures and all other elements. We are the creative arm of the Coalition. We also create presentation materials that people need. My team is unbelievable – every single person has been part of this campaign in one form or another.

Q: What has been the response to the campaign?

The response has been amazing. We get excited every day when we see the new pledge numbers or visitors to the website. We are also excited by the one-on-one things people tell us about how much they love to see a campaign like this because "nobody ever talks about mental illness publicly." People have opened up to us individually in our personal lives when they see we are connected to the campaign. And, that's what this is all about—creating a conversation.

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ERIE COUNTY ANTI-STIGMA COALITION

Does your organization, church, temple, or community group want to combine forces with our organization? Do you individually want to engage with us to stop the stigma of mental illness? Please consider becoming a member of our Coalition by completing our membership form at letstalkstigma.org/support/pledge.

It is going to take a massive community effort to move the needle on stigma, please become a part of the solution. Questions? Please contact Max Donatelli, Chairperson, at maxjoydonatelli@gmail.com.

ERIE COUNTY
ANTI-STIGMA
COALITION

Join the Conversation

Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition Founding Members: BryLin Behavioral Health System • Children's Mental Health Coalition of Western New York, Inc. • Community Partners of Western New York • Compeer • Crisis Services of Erie County • Erie County Department of Mental Health • Erie County Office for People with Disabilities • Fellows Action Network • Fuerst Consulting Corporation • Jewish Family Service of Buffalo & Erie County • Thxe Mental Health Advocates of WNY • Millennium Collaborative Care Patrick P. Lee Foundation Preventionfocus, Inc. • Telesco Creative Group • The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation



Youth Mental Health First Aid



Patient Life Tour of the Richardson Olmsted Campus



Adult Mental Health First Aid



Restoration Society, Inc. Community Day



Patient Life Tour of the Richardson Olmsted Campus



Check Out the Local Events in Your Community

To see a full list of events for the month of May, please visit, LetsTalkStigma.org



Thank you to members who attended the Membership Celebration on May 14, at WNED. A highlight of the event, hosted by Claudine Ewing of WGRZ News, was a panel discussion with campaign spokespersons talking about their mental health challenges.

Join the Conversation is making great strides as more people engage on social media and take the pledge to end stigma. We need your help our goal of 3,500 pledge takers by the end of the year. Please share our message on social media and encourage friends, family and co-workers to take the pledge to end stigma.

Coalition Receives State Award

New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) honored the Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition and its Join the Conversation Campaign with an inaugural Community Care Award. The Coalition received the award for furthering the OMH mission and making a positive contribution to the mental health system in Erie County and Western New York.

OMH Commissioner Dr. Ann Sullivan, said, "OMH is fortunate to have many great partners across the State who are helping us raise awareness of mental health issues and fight against the stigma surrounding mental illness and treatment. The Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition is doing excellent work educating the public, providing valuable information about resources in the community and sharing stories about people's successes on the road to recovery. Its work is increasing access to mental health care and addressing the challenges stigma creates for individuals seeking help."

OMH noted that the website, letstalkstigma.org and social media platforms have been very successful in educating the public about mental health and encouraging people to take the pledge to end the stigma of mental illness.

Max Donatelli, Chair of the Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition & Family Advocate, said, "Our Coalition has been passionate about finding creative ways to extend our reach over the past two years through ongoing social media, tv commercials and appearances, monthly newsletters, recruiting new organizational members and recruiting individual members by having us take the pledge to help stop stigma, and initiating numerous community presentations. On behalf of this amazing collaborative team composed of government reps, voluntary agencies, funders, marketing and PR reps, and volunteers, I am thankful for this special recognition."

The award was presented during May, which is Mental Health Awareness Month.