



Health and Hazards

Today I ~~am~~ mentally and emotionally healthy. I practice good nutritional choices, take medication, see a therapist and sing in a chorus that brings me a great deal of joy. I also volunteer for community service-facilitating two support groups.

I had an unhelpful experience years ago when a psychiatrist asked me: (when I was very ill. Clinically depressed) "What's the matter honey, you lost your man or your job", I called a therapist friend who advocated for me in that situation. It made all the difference. I will never forget that comment. ~~unhelpful~~



I want people to know that sometimes “support” means nothing more than “being there.” Just listen. Don’t give me **your** opinion or **your** experience. Don’t judge me. Maybe repeat back to me what you’ve heard. And give me a hug!



WHAT REALLY HELPS

- Honestly conveying one's REAL feelings and thoughts with another person. Social interaction is paramount to recovery, wellness, and especially for those suffering from suicidal ideations. Isolation is usually what happens to most people in a depressive state. As a result we need to develop a method to help them reach out to caring people.

I personally know that talking about our pain, it reduces the intensity, even though the problems still exist.



EFFECTIVE ALLY TO THOSE
WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE:

PLEASE REALIZE THAT I HAVE
EXPERIENCED TRAUMA IN MY LIFE.
I MIGHT HESITATE IN GOING FORWARD SOMETIMES
UNTIL I FEEL SAFE.

YOU CAN BE AN EFFECTIVE ALLY
BY BEING PATIENT AND NOT HOLD
PRE-CONCEIVED STEREOTYPES ABOUT PEOPLE
WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES.

YOU CAN BE AN EFFECTIVE ALLY
BY HAVING AN OPEN MIND
AND THINK RESPECTFULLY ABOUT
A COMPLEX SUBJECT.

Effective ally to those
with lived experience:

Please realize that I have
experienced trauma in my life.
I might hesitate in going forward sometimes
until I feel safe.

You can be an effective ally
by being patient and not have
pre-conceived stereotypes about people
with mental disabilities.

You can be an effective ally
by having an open mind
and think respectfully about
a complex subject.

ALAN
COCHRAN



COPING w/ SUICIDE

MY FRIEND GARY COMMITTED SUICIDE
HE WASN'T ALWAYS MY FRIEND I ^{HAVE} INTO ADMIT
THAT WHEN I FIRST MET HIM I DID NOT
LIKE HIM AT ALL. BUT AFTER A FEW ARGUMENTS
WE STARTED TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER
WE CAME FROM VERY DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS
I MYSELF BEING AFRICAN AMERICAN WAS
OFFENDED BY THE ~~SS~~ SS LIGHTNING BOLT
TATOO ON HIS ARMS. BUT OVER THE
COURSE OF 18 MONTHS ^{WE} SHARED DIFFERENT
MUSIC AND FOOD TALKED ABOUT OUR FAMILIES
AND OUR HOPES AND DREAMS AS WELL AS
OUR FEARS. THANKS TO A LOT TALKING
TO DOCTORS AND FRIEND I LEARNED NOT TO
BLAME MYSELF I WISH I COULD HAVE
PREVENTED HIS CHOICE TO END HIS LIFE.