

# Make It

## Frequently Asked Questions

Below are some frequently asked questions you may receive while leading a conversation about mental illnesses. Remember...

- You don't have to be an expert. It's ok to say "I don't know."
- Let people know if you are uncomfortable answering a specific question.
- If someone needs more or more specific information, NAMI Minnesota is an excellent resource. You can find them online at [NAMIhelps.org](http://NAMIhelps.org).

### **I am concerned about someone I know who appears to be struggling with their mental health.**

#### **Should I say something?**

It depends who they are and how close you are to them. If it is someone you know very well, express concern, let them know you are open to talking about it. You might say you went to a presentation where they educated you about mental illnesses and that you learned a lot – including that it's nothing to be ashamed about and that treatment is very effective. Don't try to diagnose or give too much advice.

### **What do I say to someone who I fear is thinking of suicide?**

Asking doesn't plant the seed. It's ok to ask someone if they are thinking about suicide and if they have a plan. Refer them to the suicide hotline or the local county crisis team. That number is 1-800-273-8255. If someone is in serious danger of committing suicide in the very near future, call 9-1-1, and don't leave them.

### **I supervise someone who has a mental illness.**

#### **What should I or can I reveal to my team?**

You can't reveal anything. Treat this as you would any other health care condition.

### **Can you refer me to a psychiatrist, therapist, etc.?**

We never refer anyone to a specific person. Tell them to contact their insurance plan to see who is in their network. There is a fact sheet on the NAMI website that provides questions to ask when seeking a mental health provider.

### **Should someone disclose to their employer that they have a mental illness?**

There are no easy answers. You need to think about whether accommodations are needed, how people will react, if it will affect raises or promotions, have there been negative stories in the news lately and more. Talk with an advocacy organization such as NAMI or visit [ADA.gov](http://ADA.gov).

### **Someone I supervise has just been diagnosed with a mental illness. What are my legal obligations as an employer?**

Treat them like you would anyone else. Do they need accommodations? Are they asking for time off? Just because you have a mental illness doesn't mean you need to be treated any differently than an employee with some other health care condition.

### **How can I get involved in the Make It OK campaign?**

Visit the website and take the pledge. You can also give me your name and contact information and I'll pass it on.

### **I have a loved one with a mental illness who won't seek treatment. What can I do?**

Be patient. Continue to encourage them to seek help, let them know they don't have to feel this way. Don't get into arguments about it – that won't help. Attend a NAMI class or support group to learn more. Read the book "I'm Not Sick I Don't Need Help."

MENTAL ILLNESS IS AS COMMON AS BROWN EYES.

For more information and resources, visit [MakeItOK.org](http://MakeItOK.org)