WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Q1. If a friend with a mental illness starts sleeping much of the day...
   A1. You can encourage him to get out of the house - take him to a movie or out for coffee.

Q2. If a friend with a mental illness repeatedly does not want to go out...
   A2. You can go to her home and be supportive by hanging out with her, talking, and by just being a friend.

Q3. If a friend with a mental illness is not attending class or work regularly...
   A3. You can call or visit him and be understanding, empathetic, and encouraging.

Q4. If a friend with a mental illness is very anxious...
   A4. You can be reassuring and avoid belittling or patronizing these concerns.

Q5. If a friend with a mental illness cuts off communication with you...
   A5. You can be persistent by continuing to call and visit her - to let her know that you are there for her.

Q6. If a friend confides in you about his mental illness.
   A6. You can be non-judgmental, treat him as you always have and continue to be a support for him. You can find out information about mental health problems by going to www.whatadifference.org.

Q7. If you hear others talking about people with mental illnesses...
   A7. You can educate them that people with mental illness deserve respect and dignity.

SUPPORT

HOW TO HELP

If somebody told you he had diabetes, how would you react? If you’re like most people, you’d express sympathy and concern, offer your support and reassurance, and feel confident that your friend’s condition would improve with treatment. Now, if that same friend told you he had a mental illness, what would you do?

Too many people respond negatively when confronted with a friend’s mental illness, and this only fuels the stigma surrounding the diagnosis. The reality is, mental illness is no different from physical illness.

You can help just by being there and offering your reassurance, companionship, emotional strength, and acceptance. You can make a difference just by understanding and helping your friend through the course of his or her mental illness and beyond.