

# Honest, Open, Proud

To Erase the Stigma of  
Mental Health Challenges

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# Honest, Open, Proud – High School

- Small group program for youth (8<sup>th</sup>-college) who have faced mental health challenges and the daily decisions about what to say and to whom.
- 5 one-hour lessons with additional booster (or 7 forty-five min sessions)
- Based on the international, evidence-based adult program of the same name.
- Framework for key conversations

# Our Goal

“...to consider what the costs and benefits are of disclosing (talking about) one’s experiences with mental health challenges to some people. We also seek to discuss strategies for disclosing most effectively should you decide to do so.”

WISE and Patrick Corrigan, PhD  
(Wisconsin Initiative for Stigma Elimination)

# Internalized Shame/Self Stigma

Public Stigma



↓ self esteem  
**I am not good**



↓ sense of efficacy  
**I am not able**



**So, why try?**

avoidance, anger and apathy



# Reversing Self and Public Stigma

**Inclusion and Self-Directed Support**



# The Development Process:

- CBP research- youth, parent & educator attitudes about youth disclosure (Published in the Journal of Public Mental Health)
- Collaborative design process- youth drove program design decisions
- Pilot with four groups- urban, rural and suburban
- Revision of the HOP-HS program workbook and facilitator manual
- Pat Corrigan conducting randomized control trial in urban, suburban and rural high schools

# Dissemination

- Master trainers are training HOP High School program facilitators across the state. 200 trained to date.
- Partnered with Nicolas Rüschi for randomized control trial in a treatment setting in Germany. Showed greater outcomes than with adults



# Lesson 1

## The Story I Tell Myself



# Helpful and hurtful self beliefs

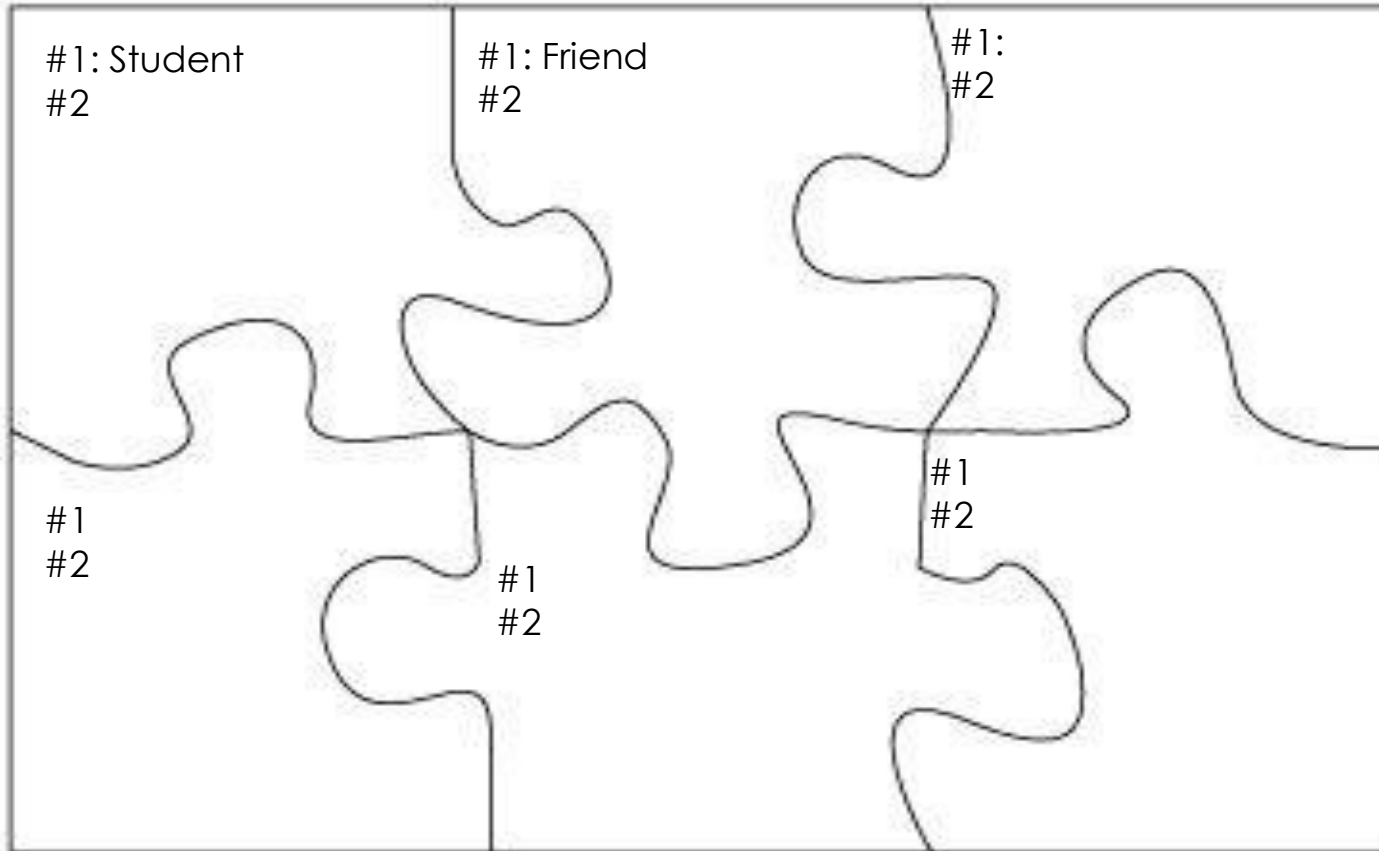


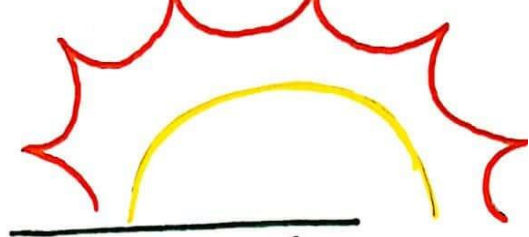


What are some helpful beliefs that Maggie and Darryl hold about themselves?

What were some hurtful self beliefs you heard from Maggie and Darryl?

# Your Self Talk Puzzle





5. Create a new, true statement that **COUNTERS** your hurtful belief

4. Collect evidence that shows the statement to be false

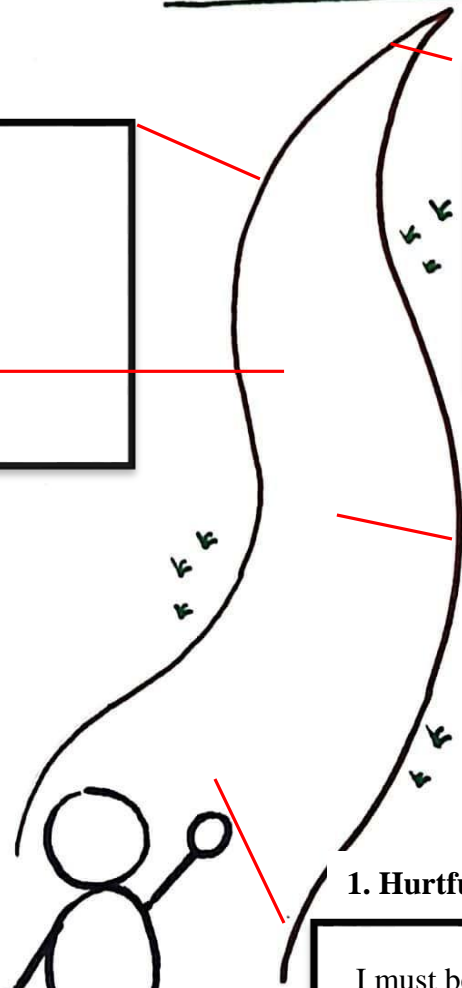
3. Who is the trusted person you will ask to see if they believe it is

2. Turn into a true-false statement

1. Hurtful Belief

I must be

because





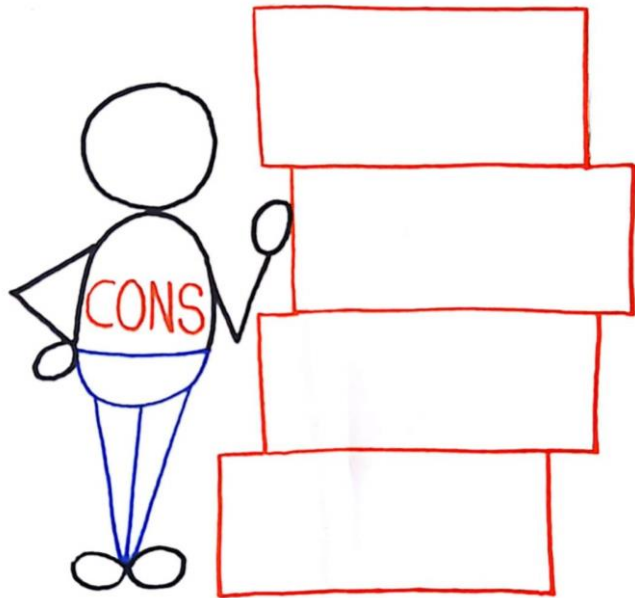


# Lesson 2

## Disclosure Choices

# There are Pros and Cons of Disclosing

What are some you can think of?



# Five Points to Remember about Disclosure Decisions

1. Don't dismiss any pro or con no matter how "silly" it may seem.
2. Your decision depends on the setting.
3. You decision can be yes, no, or decide later.



4. Know your reason or goal for disclosing.

5. Prepare yourself for expected and unexpected reactions.





# My Pros and Cons of Disclosing Mental Health Challenges and Recovery

1. **Pick a setting where you might face a decision about disclosing.**
2. **What would your REASON/ GOAL be for disclosing in that setting?**
3. **What are the pros and cons?**
4. **Given these pros and cons, have you decided to:**
  - Disclose your mental illness?
  - Not to disclose your mental illness?
  - Or put off your decision?
5. **What do you expect to happen after disclosing?**

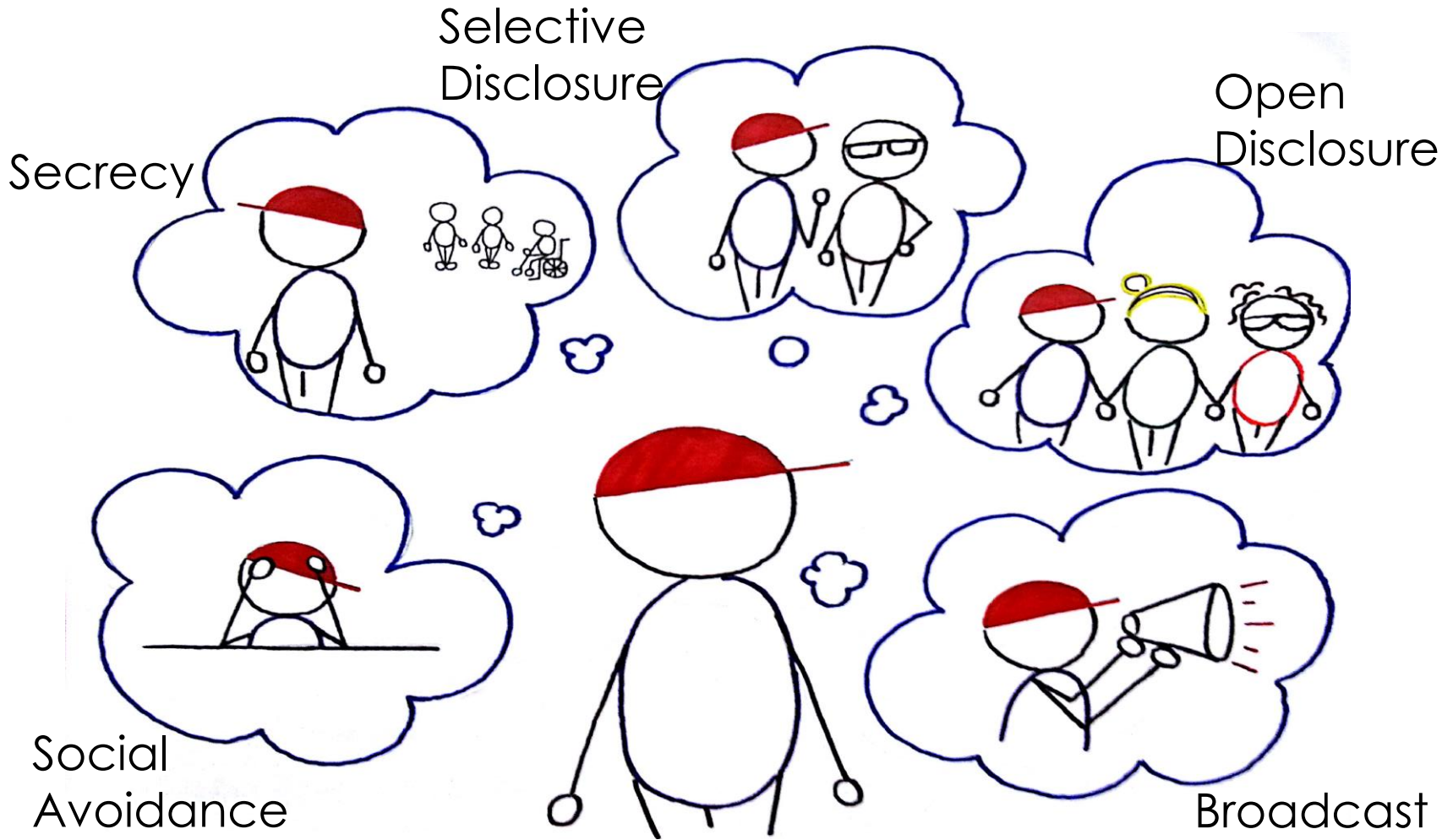
# Social Media: Setting for Disclosure?



What social media do you use most?

Pros and Cons for you to use it as a means of disclosure?

# Choices and Settings for Disclosure





# **Lesson 3**

## **Disclosure Decisions**

# Jamaal – 15 years old

Jamaal is new at his school this year. He is very shy and so far has had a difficult time making friends; however, he recently made the varsity basketball team, which has him feeling a little better. A senior on the team has been welcoming to Jamal.

Jamaal was diagnosed with ADHD and dyslexia in grade school. He feels embarrassed about spending time in the special classroom as a result of his ADHD and dyslexia.

In addition, he has been feeling more and more anxious since he was in seventh grade. Jamaal's mom has pushed back against the school social worker's suggestion that a doctor might be able to offer insights that would be helpful. She does not want her son to have more labels that may cause others to think less of him.

Jamaal often struggles to get out of bed, and by the end of most school days, he feels tired out by his anxious thoughts. It's improved slightly since basketball season started.

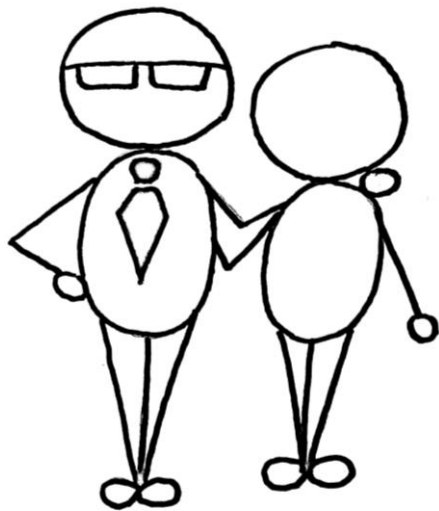
# Adriana- 14 years old

Adriana does well in school, but doesn't get great grades and isn't in any activities. She keeps to herself and follows the rules. Adriana's mom has always been very involved in their church. Her mom and dad are divorced.

When Adriana was eight years old, she began to be sexually abused by the 15-year old boy who lived next door, the son of a family friend from church, and it continued for two years. Adriana began to engage in self-harm to cope with what she had experienced. She didn't tell anyone at first, but when she was 12, her mother noticed scars on her body, and Adriana broke down and told her everything.

Adriana's parents took her to a therapist to get help for the self-harm, as well as to help her recover from the abuse she experienced. She continues to go to counseling for ongoing support, but still experiences some flashbacks and panic attacks. While Adriana has begun a process of recovery, she still struggles with feelings of worthlessness and shame. She is still withdrawn from people, yet as she grows stronger she finds herself wondering what it would be like to have a circle of friends at school.

# Who might you disclose to?



## Functional Relationships

### Function

Learn at school

Improve your mental health

Play a sport

Live with others

### Relationship

Teacher

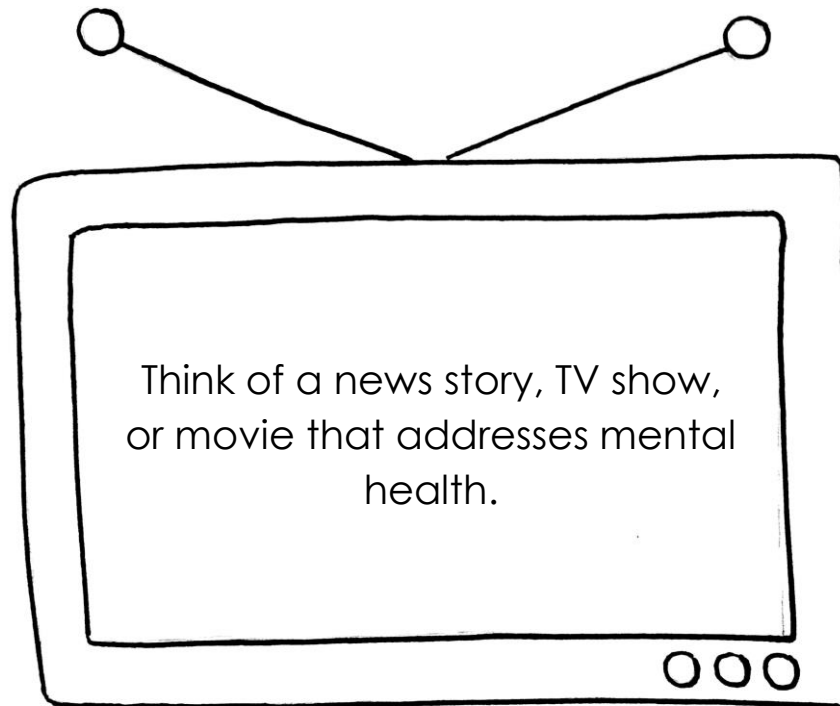
School social worker, therapist, or psychiatrist

Coach

Family members

What **characteristics** would you look for in a person to find someone who could offer support?

# Testing a Person for Disclosure





# Respond to Reactions Activity

## **Helpful**

Understanding

Caring

Support

Sincere interest

Assistance

## **Hurtful**

Disrespect

Denial

Punishment

Fear/Avoidance

Blame

Who seems like a good person for you to disclose to?

If you disclosed to them, and they unexpectedly gave you a hurtful reaction, what would an effective response be to them?



Teacher

Grandparent

Older sibling

One of your best friends

Employer

Classmate

# Tip! - Share two things:

1. What you had hoped would happen-  
your reason for disclosure
2. What you saw in that person that led you  
to believe that they would be able to  
respond in a helpful manner.

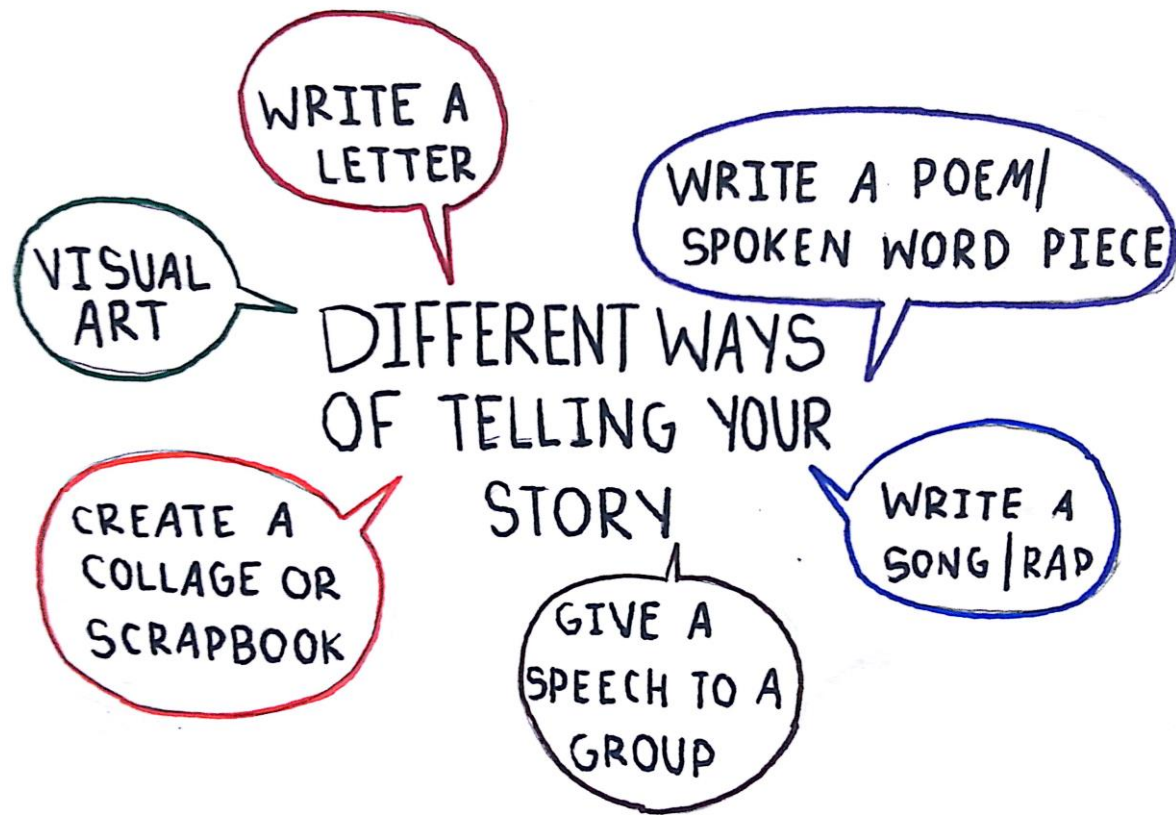
# Preparing for Lesson Four

- Opportunity to share some of your story if you choose
- Use the story guide in the “Notes Pages”
- Be sure to include some of your strengths and accomplishments as you develop your story – 50%
- You will be given approximately 5 minutes to share
- This is for you to practice – the group will give no critical feedback
- Story examples can be found at [Rogersinhealth.org](http://Rogersinhealth.org)
- No one has to participate, but all are welcome



# Lesson 4

## Telling your Story to Others



# Video Stories

- Grenesha - <http://rogersinhealth.org/resources/grenesha-finds-recovery>
- Riley - <http://rogersinhealth.org/resources/tino-family>
- Val - <http://rogersinhealth.org/resources/val-reflects-her-intense-adhd-prek-through-college>
- Rosa - <http://rogersinhealth.org/resources/rosa>
- Charles - <http://rogersinhealth.org/resources/charles>

# Guide for Telling Our Story

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I deal/live with \_\_\_\_\_.

Here are a few things about me and my childhood.

My mental health challenges started when I was about \_\_\_\_\_ years old.

Along the way, I have experienced some unhelpful responses to my mental health challenges.

**50%**

Despite my challenges and sometimes because of them, I have many strengths and have some achievements that I am proud of.

You probably do not want to communicate EVERYTHING on the guide when you share your story.

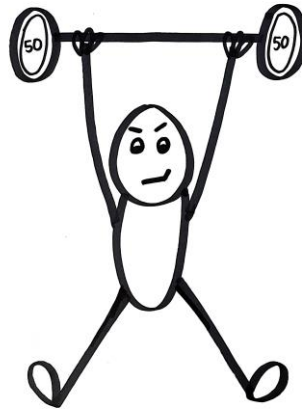
Remember your REASON/GOAL for disclosing.





# Lesson 5

## Moving Forward



# List sources of support you know of and learn about today:

Peer:

Adult:

# Safe Person Decal



# The Safe Person Decal Seven Promises

*By displaying this decal for youth and adults to see, I promise to:*

1. Acknowledge that reaching out for support is a strength.
2. Listen and react non-judgmentally.
3. Respond in a calm and reassuring manner.
4. Reflect back the feelings, strengths, and ideas I hear when listening.
5. Ask how I can be helpful and respond as I am able.
6. Do what I can to connect to other supports if asked.
7. Maintain confidentiality and communicate if exceptions exist.

*To learn how to put the promises into action, go to [safeperson.org](https://safeperson.org).*

## Reflecting on what you've learned:

- Helpful and hurtful self-talk (*Lesson 1*)
- What the pros and cons of disclosing are (*Lesson 2*)
- What disclosure choices might work for you in different settings (*Lesson 2*)
- How to choose who you might disclose to (*Lesson 3*)
- What you can do to respond to negative reactions to your disclosure (*Lesson 3*)
- How to share your story (*Lesson 4*)
- What organizations might offer you support (*Lesson 5*)

**Given all of this, what are three things that stand out for you as important when it comes to disclosure in your future?**

# Anecdotal from Pilots

- I haven't talked because adults haven't asked
- I didn't want to burden parents/adults
- I focus on lessening my friends' pain, since I cannot alter my own
- Sexual orientation disclosure is separate from disclosing my mental health challenges

# Reactions from students in research

1. “Finally someone was looking at us as being normal, not just as kids with problems.”
2. “Life and school are way too busy for us to be able to listen and share. HOP created an open space for this.”
3. “I didn’t feel ashamed about sharing what I’ve been through. It was a good experience for sharing what I’ve accomplished in getting through my problems.”
4. “I know all kinds of kids have mental disorders like mine, but I didn’t really think about it until I heard their stories.”
5. “HOP helped me tell my story in a way that helps me more than hurts me.”
6. “I feel like I’m learning more at school because I finally got my story out.”
7. “Taught me that while I shouldn’t always care about what others think about me I should always care about what I think of me.”
8. “Since HOP, I’m now starting to do more school activities.”



# Research Trial Outcomes

- Increased
  - Self-efficacy around disclosure
  - Help-seeking
  - Empowerment
- Decreased
  - Self-stigma
  - Depression (females in particular)



THANKS  
for the work you do!

To request resources and/or facilitator  
training,  
email: [WISE@wisewisconsin.org](mailto:WISE@wisewisconsin.org)