Empowering Yourself against Stigma

Definition of Social Stigma: Shame associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person

Action Steps

**TALK OPENLY ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH WITH OTHERS**
Join a support group

**EDUCATE YOURSELF AND OTHERS ON MENTAL HEALTH**
Attend NAMI meetings (National Alliance on Mental Illness)
Ask your doctor questions – advocate for yourself

**BE CONSCIOUS OF YOUR LANGUAGE**
Set an example to no longer use “crazy”, “lunatic”, or “psycho” as descriptors of people

**ENCOURAGE EQUALITY IN HOW PEOPLE PERCEIVE PHYSICAL ILLNESS & MENTAL ILLNESS**

SHOW EMPATHY AND COMPASSION FOR THOSE WITH MENTAL HEALTH
Attempt to understand people through the lens of their life experiences

SEE THE PERSON, NOT THE ILLNESS
Use person-first language: You would not say “I am heart disease.” Acknowledge the person first, and change language towards: “I have bipolar disorder”