



PLEDGE to END STIGMA NOW!

I realize that mental health issues are treatable and manageable.

- I will refrain from blame, shame, secrecy, social exclusion, stereotypes, or discrimination.
- I know that words matter. I will change my communicating about mental health issues to reduce stigmatizing and inaccurate cultural narratives. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) gives us the following guideline: "Put People First".
 - "The homeless man" becomes "A **veteran** experiencing homelessness"
 - "The mentally ill" becomes "**Individuals** experiencing a mental health issues.
 - "She's schizophrenic" becomes "She's experiencing a mental health issue."
 - "This population" becomes "the individuals we serve, or members of Step Up."
 - "Our" members" becomes "Residents, citizens, neighbors."
- I will educate individuals using stigmatizing language.
- I will help change the way mental health issues are viewed.
- I will make a difference!