



BlueCross BlueShield  
of North Carolina

# Finding the right words can be hard.

How we talk about mental health matters.

Let's change the conversation.

## The words we choose can be powerful.

Simple phrases like "Work is driving me crazy," or "He's acting weird," may seem innocent, but for those facing behavioral health challenges, they're anything but. This type of language can be hurtful and cause them to feel alone or ashamed. It also reinforces stigmas that often stop those who need help to seek support for a mental health condition.

### DID YOU KNOW?

**8 of 10 workers with a mental health condition say shame and stigma stop them from seeking treatment.<sup>1</sup>**

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## How we talk about mental health matters.

### Choose respect.

The words we choose can have a negative effect on how we view mental health and people dealing with behavioral health challenges.<sup>2</sup>

### Be open.

By embracing an openness to discuss mental health conditions,<sup>3</sup> there's an opportunity to reduce stigma by acknowledging shared challenges.

### Defy stigma.

When we start defining the mental health condition and not the person,<sup>4</sup> we can help reduce the stigma for those seeking support and treatment.

## It's time to change the conversation.

Together, we can start having healthier conversations about mental health. Because when we change how we talk, we help people be heard.

### Let's change how we talk about mental health.

Find resources for healthier conversations and other ways to stay healthy at [BlueCrossNC.com/MyMentalHealth](https://www.bluecrossnc.com/MyMentalHealth).

RESILIENT K S  
O A W E I R D B A I U  
T H R O T E H U M A N  
P Y E I S N U T T Y A  
B E A U T I F U L A E  
A S L E R R A T I C M  
Z C M O O D Y S O F F  
A V U L N E R A B L E  
X I R A G T U N I C M

<sup>1</sup> National Alliance on Mental Illness, *NAMI Launches Stigmafree Company Partnership*, July 7, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, *Language Matters in Mental Health*, University of Texas at Austin, Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (Accessed October 7, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> Brodey, *62% of Employees Want Leadership to Speak Openly About Mental Health*, Forbes, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> *Stigma-Reducing Language*, Shatterproof (Accessed October 7, 2020).