



Mental Health Association of Northern Kentucky

A LEADER IN PROVIDING ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, AND SERVICES THAT PROMOTE MENTAL WELLNESS

EDUCATION AND SCREENING OUTREACH PARTNER FOR THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND
NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

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WHEN MENTAL ILLNESS AFFECTS THE FAMILY

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Ask open-ended questions.
- Check out “whys” of behavior.
- Express empathy & reflect feelings.
- Give clear instructions.
- Use “no-choice” choices.
- Avoid power struggles.
- Criticize the person’s behavior, not the person.
- Use “I” statements.
- Express caring & support.
- Keep calm.
- Be concrete & brief.
- Use “parroting” - repeat back what the person has said.
- Watch for signs of fading.
- Allow for time out for yourself.
- Don’t lie.