

# **Friend or Foe:** How our relationships influence our mental health

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1:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

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## What qualifies as a friendship?

- Definitions
- Traits
- Beliefs
- Examples



## A good friend...

Treats you  
with respect

Is reliable,  
even in bad  
times

Doesn't judge  
or criticize

Is consistent

Can be trusted

Is eager to  
help

Makes time  
for you

Is supportive

Listens with  
care

Is honest

Enjoys your  
company

Makes you  
feel  
comfortable

Loves you

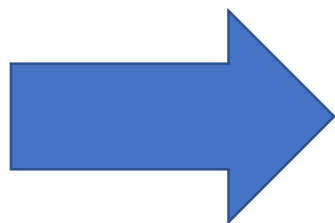
Is like  
sunshine

Is willing to  
share their  
pizza

*If you had a friend with these traits,  
do you think your friendship would affect your mental wellness?*

## What qualifies a friendship?

- Definitions
- Traits
- Beliefs
- Examples



*A relationship between two individuals who are caring and supportive to one another.*

May vary per person/context



## A good friend?

Treats you  
with respect

Is reliable  
sometimes

Doesn't judge  
or criticize

Is consistent

Can be trusted  
With some  
things

Is eager to  
help

Makes time  
for you

Is supportive

Listens with  
care

Is honest

Most of the time

For some things

Enjoys your  
company

Makes you  
feel  
comfortable

Loves you

Is like  
sunshine

Is willing to  
share their  
pizza

When no one else  
is around

On some  
days

*If you had a friend with these traits,  
do you think your relationship would affect your mental wellness?*

## Sometimes friendships are a bit complicated...



*...and may affect our mental wellness*



Relationships

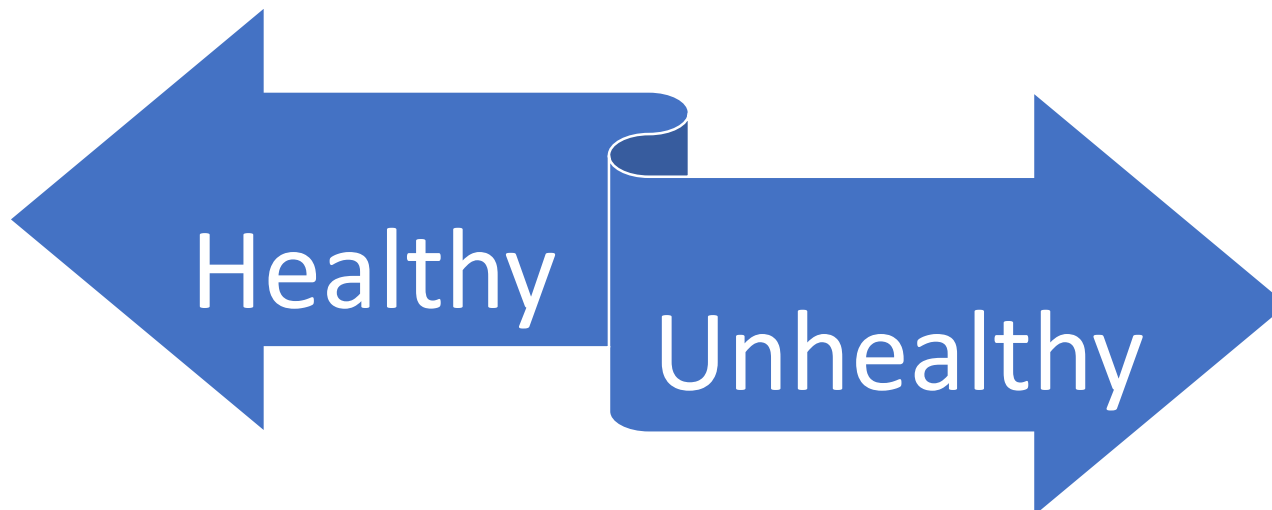
Mental  
Wellness

- Parents
- Siblings
- Partners



## As any other relationship, friendships may...

- ...have peaks and valleys
- ...be complicated
- ...range from healthy to unhealthy
- ...affect our mental wellness

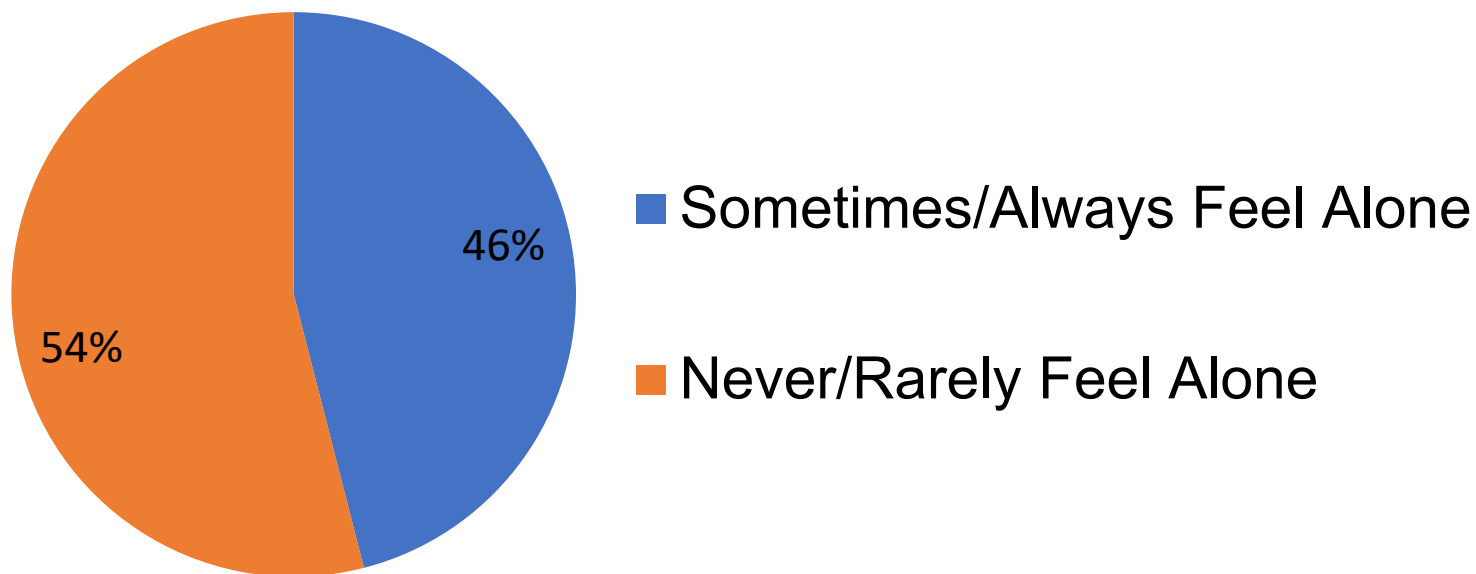




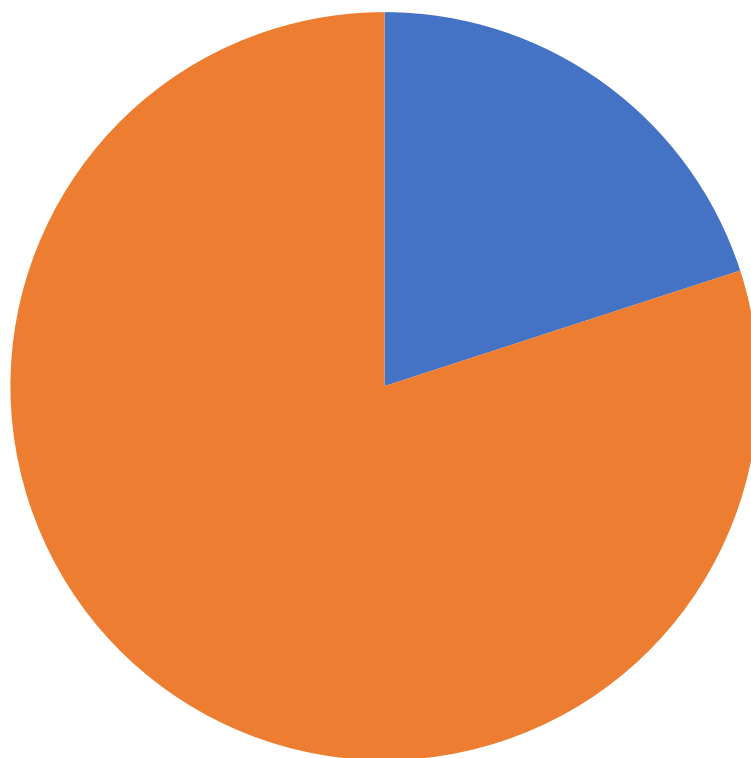
## The Loneliness Epidemic

In the last 50 years, rates of loneliness have doubled in the USA

### Feeling Lonely



## *What role do friendships play?*



- I have someone close to confide in
- I do not have someone close to confide in



## Let's recap...

Friendships  
may affect  
mental  
wellness

We don't  
learn enough  
about  
friendships

We are facing  
a loneliness  
epidemic

We need to  
learn more  
about healthy  
friendships

Our Movement. Our **Moment.**

**#NAMICON19**



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National  
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So let's learn about healthy  
friendships!





## What qualifies as a healthy friendship?

Communication  
& Kindness

(The lack of)  
Toxicity &  
Abuse

Enjoyment &  
Connection

Care & Support

## Communication & Kindness

- I have good conversations with my friend.
- When I need to share, my friend genuinely listens.
- When I need to confide in someone, I can trust my friend.
- My friend is open and honest with me.
- My friend does not judge or criticize me for sharing.



## Communication & Kindness

- I feel comfortable sharing with my friend.
- My friend does not snap at me.
- If I get into a disagreement with my friend, we can talk through it.
- When I need to talk, my friend isn't distracted (e.g., phone).
- My friend is not aggressive towards me.



## Toxicity & Abuse

- I feel safe around my friend.
- My friend is not mean to me.
- My doesn't friend blame me and is able to take accountability.
- My friend does not lie to or about me.
- My friend does not gossip about me.





## Toxicity & Abuse

- My friend does not insult or humiliate me.
- My friend does not exclude me.
- My friend does not pressure or manipulate me.
- My friend does not threaten or coerce me.
- My friend has not harmed me.



## Enjoyment & Connection

- Even the mere thought of my friend makes me feel good.
- My friend understands me.
- I feel attuned to my friend.
- My friend and I have similar interests.
- I can be myself around my friend.



## Enjoyment & Connection

- I enjoy my time with my friend.
- My friend and I have good memories together.
- I look forward to seeing my friend.
- When we are together, it is mostly (if not always) positive.
- I am satisfied with the amount of connection we have.



## Care & Support

- My friend cares for me.
- We both share equally.
- We accept our differences.
- We have mutual respect
- We both invest in our bond.





## Care & Support

- I can count on my friend when I need help.
- I am happy to help my friend when in need.
- I am glad to set time aside for our friendship.
- My friend is considerate of my needs.
- My friend does not take me for granted.





## Fostering Healthy Friendships

Healthy  
friendship  
assessment



Reflection

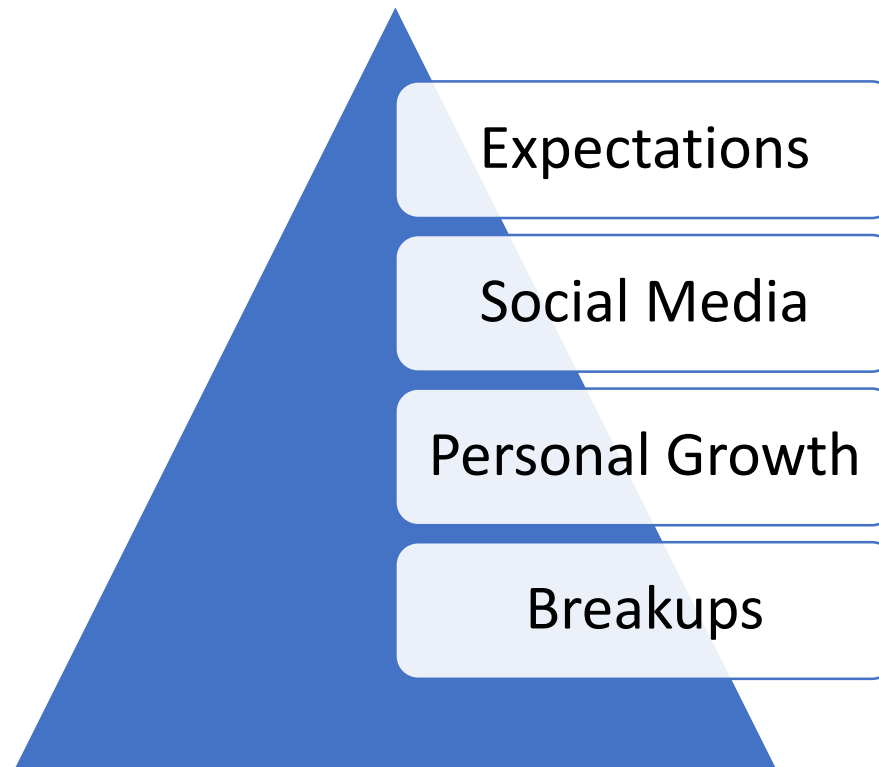


Room for  
growth



Mutual  
Support

## Common Challenges







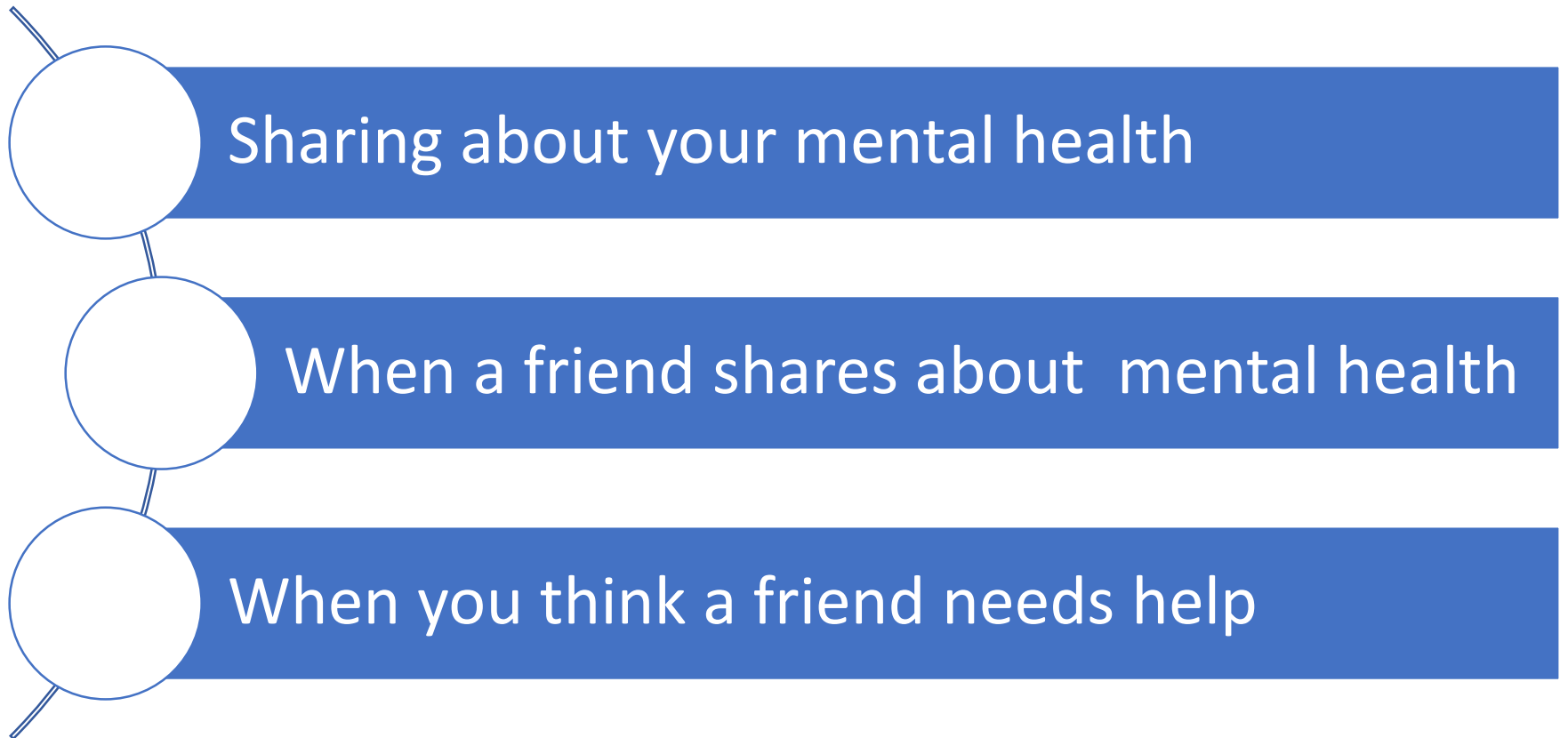
## Diagnoses & Friendships

When you have a mental illness, you may think that your friendships are bound to be more complicated. You may even deem healthy relationships impossible. This is **NOT** true. It's very important to dispel the internalized stereotype that your relationships will suffer because of your mental diagnosis.

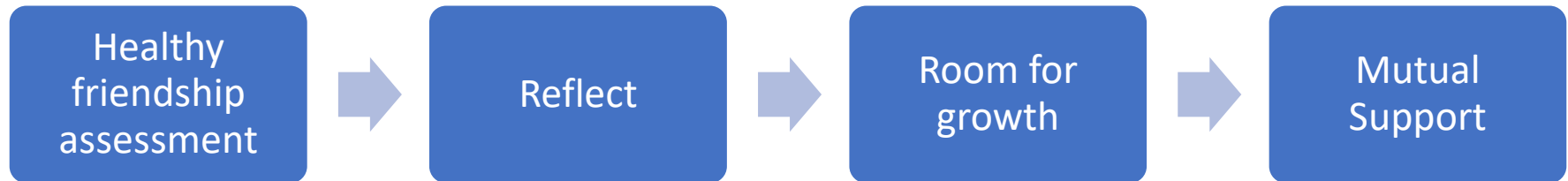




# Discussing Mental Health in Friendships



## Sharing about your mental health





## When a friend discloses a diagnosis

Listen

Be compassionate

Be Provide Support

Educate Yourself

Establish  
Boundaries



## When you think your friend might need help

Reflect

Educate  
Yourself

Listen

Provide  
Support

Establish  
Boundaries

## *The power to create a*

- How friendships may impact mental wellness.
- How to tell the difference between a healthy and unhealthy bond.
- How to talk to your friend about mental health.



## Friend or Foe: *How our relationships influence our mental health*



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