

# KEY MESSAGES

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- Mental Health America has developed its 2019 National Family Caregivers Month toolkit to help caregivers strengthen relationships with their loved ones with mental illness through materials that educate and empower.
- Recovery is not one size fits all and what works for one person might not work for another. It makes sense that caregiving would not look the same for everyone either.
- While no two caregiver relationships are alike, there are some things we know are essential to everyone's recovery.
- Having a plan in place can help a caregiver make sure they set their loved one up to thrive throughout the recovery process - and can ensure that their voice is heard in the event of a crisis.
- With the right tools and perspectives, caregivers and their loved ones can work together as a team to accomplish goals, find a treatment plan that works and be prepared in the event of a crisis.
- It's important for people with mental illnesses to have a voice and be involved in their own recovery. Caregivers should ask their loved one what they want and need and include them in any decisions being made.
- Working towards established goals helps people in recovery stay motivated and hopeful.
- People with mental health conditions are often left out of mainstream activities like employment or education, but they have the right to meaningfully contribute to their community and be respected just like everyone else, peer support can help.
- By staying educated on the latest treatment options, caregivers can help their loved one make informed decisions about their treatment.
- Caregivers are more likely to experience stress, that is why it is important for them to take care of their own mental health.
- When we take the time to invest in our mental health, we can focus on creating an inclusive world for caregivers and their loved ones to thrive, together.

Feel free to supplement these key messages with language from the fact sheets and other materials included in this toolkit.