Here are some suggestions on things that we can do and say to help promote a culture of support and reduction of stigma:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not to Say</th>
<th>Things to Say</th>
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**Grief/Loss:**
- They are in a better place now → My favorite memory of them is....
- Everything happens for a reason → They will be missed.
- Be strong/Stay Strong → We all need help at times like this, I am here for you
- I know exactly how you feel → I am here for you.
- There is a reason for everything → I wish I had the right words to say
- Time will heal all wounds → I’m so sorry you’re hurting like this.
- It’s God’s plan → I wish I had the right words, just know I care
- Anything starting with “At least...” → I’m not sure what to say right now, I am sorry.

**Depression:**
- Smile → It sounds like things are really hard right now
- You don’t seem sad → I’m here to listen
- Everyone gets stressed out → I’m sorry that you are struggling.
- Just fake it until you make it → I’m not sure what to say right now, but thank you for trusting me with what is going on.
- Suicide is selfish → I love you and you are not alone.
- You have so much to live for → Tell me more about how you feel
- Promise me you won’t → It sounds as though you are really hurting

**Anxiety:**
- Calm down → I’m here for you. Would you like to take a walk?
- Don’t think about it → I can see you’re really worried
- Just breathe → I’ll stay with you
- Don’t think about it → I don’t know what exactly that is like for you, but I’d love to try and understand.

**General:**
- I understand → Thank you for sharing this with me so that I can understand more about what you’re going through.
- I know how you feel → How can I help you during this time?
- It’s okay; it’s going to be okay → I’m sorry that you’re hurting.
- It’s not a big deal → I’m here for you. Let’s figure out together what will help you.
- Have you tried *(fill in the blanks)* → Can I bring you dinner this week?
- It could be worse → I know it took a lot of courage to tell me this, thank you.
- Count your blessings → Can I keep you company today?
- You should pray more → Do you want me to check in on you?
- Have you been reading your Bible? → Asking for help is always okay.
Framing Our Language: Being mindful of the words we use that can help reduce stigma!

Mental Health:
- He/She is bipolar; He/She is depressed → They have bipolar or They are living with bipolar; They have depression or they are living with depression
- He/she is psychotic → He/she hears voices
  - Why: This reflects that this is an individual and a human – and their conditions do NOT define them. They have a diagnosis but are not solely their diagnosis

Developmental Disabilities:
- He is autistic → He has autism
- She is confined to a wheelchair → She uses a wheelchair
- He’s disabled → They have a disability
  - Why: This reflects that this is an individual and a human – and their conditions do NOT define them. They have a diagnosis but are not solely their diagnosis

Substance Use:
- “Druggie” or “Alcoholic” or “Addict” → They are addicted to substances or they have an addiction
  - Why: This reflects that this is an individual and a human – and their conditions do NOT define them. They have a diagnosis but are not solely their diagnosis
- He's clean or sober → He is in long term recovery
- He suffers from ... → He lives with or is diagnosed with

Suicide:
- Committed suicide → Died from suicide; ended their life
  - Why: The word committed implies it’s a sin or a crime
- Successful/Unsuccessful suicide attempt → Died by suicide or survived a suicide
  - Why: The notion of successful frames suicide as an achievement of something that is tragic
- They are suicidal → They are thinking about suicidal
  - Why: We don’t want to define someone by their experience with suicide