Managing Personal Information:
The Disclosure Decision

WA State Behavioral Health Conference

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Before we get started...

- Think of a time (work, school, socially) when you managed a piece of your personal information.

- Write it down.

- Put it away---we won't be looking at it as a group but will refer to it later.

Objectives

1
Distinguish between the terms disclosure and managing personal information.

2
Describe the benefits and costs of the disclosure of sensitive personal information.

3
Apply strategies to assist individuals with managing personal information and their disclosure decisions.

What comes to mind when you hear the word disclosure?

Takes thought and planning

Can be reevaluated over time

Stigma

- Community Stigma
- Provider Stigma
- Internalized (Self) Stigma
  - "Why Try Effect"

Corrigan et al. 2022; Yanos, 2018

The focus is on strengths, interests, knowledge and capabilities.

Collaborative and mutual, and a partnership.

Individuals are responsible for their own recovery.

All individuals have the capacity to learn, grow and change.

Helping activities occur in natural settings.

The entire community is viewed as an oasis of potential resources.

Strengths Based

Goscha, 2020; Pratt, et. al., 2014; Rapp & Goscha; Xie, 2013

Disclosure can lead to:

Improved Quality of Life

(Corrigan, 2022; Mayer et al., 2021; Rüsch et al., 2019)

Better Recovery

(Bril-Barniv et al., 2017; Mayer et al., 2021)

Reduced Self-Stigma

(Hielscher & Waghorn, 2017; Rüsch, et al.,2014)

Access to Accommodations and not feeling like you are hiding something (McGahey et al., 2014; Rüsch, 2018)

Managing Personal Information and Disclosure

Is most effective when a person...

- is clear about the purpose and desired outcome.
- discloses to the right person.
- does so in a timely and appropriate manner.
- can identify and articulate their strengths, skills, and disability-related needs.
- is knowledgeable about their rights.

What are people disclosing and in what settings?

Disclosure Decision Making

- Binary approach

- Decision-Making Tools
  - Honest Open Proud/Coming out Proud (Rüsch, et al., 2021)
  - Conceal or Reveal (CORAL) (Henderson et al., 2013)
  - Plan for Managing Personal Information (PMPI) (Heiscler & Waghorn, 2016; McGahey et al., 2014; Waghorn & Spowart, 2010)

Preparing to Disclose

Explore
- Explore the benefits and costs of disclosure.

Review
- Review laws that protect individuals' rights

Choose
- Choose disclosure language that minimizes stigma.

Discuss
- Discuss the need for supports.

McGahey et al., 2016; Waghorn & Spowart, 2010

Costs and Benefits

- Cost-Benefit Analysis

What do you think the costs and benefits of disclosure are?

Laws Protecting Individuals

The Rehabilitation Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act

Fair Housing Act

Language to Minimize Stigma

Words Matter

Avoid (Stigmatizing)	Use Instead (Less Stigmatizing)
Sam is not normal	Sam lives with a mental health condition
Sam is bipolar	Sam has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder

Plan for Managing Personal Information: Employment Example

- Goals

- Personal strengths, knowledge/skills, and resources

- Sensitive information (e.g., gaps in work history, reasons for leaving jobs)

- Work barriers or limitations (chosen language to describe these)

- Possible workplace accommodations and supports

Heilscher & Waghorn, 2017; McGahey et al., 2014; Waghorn & Spowart, 2010
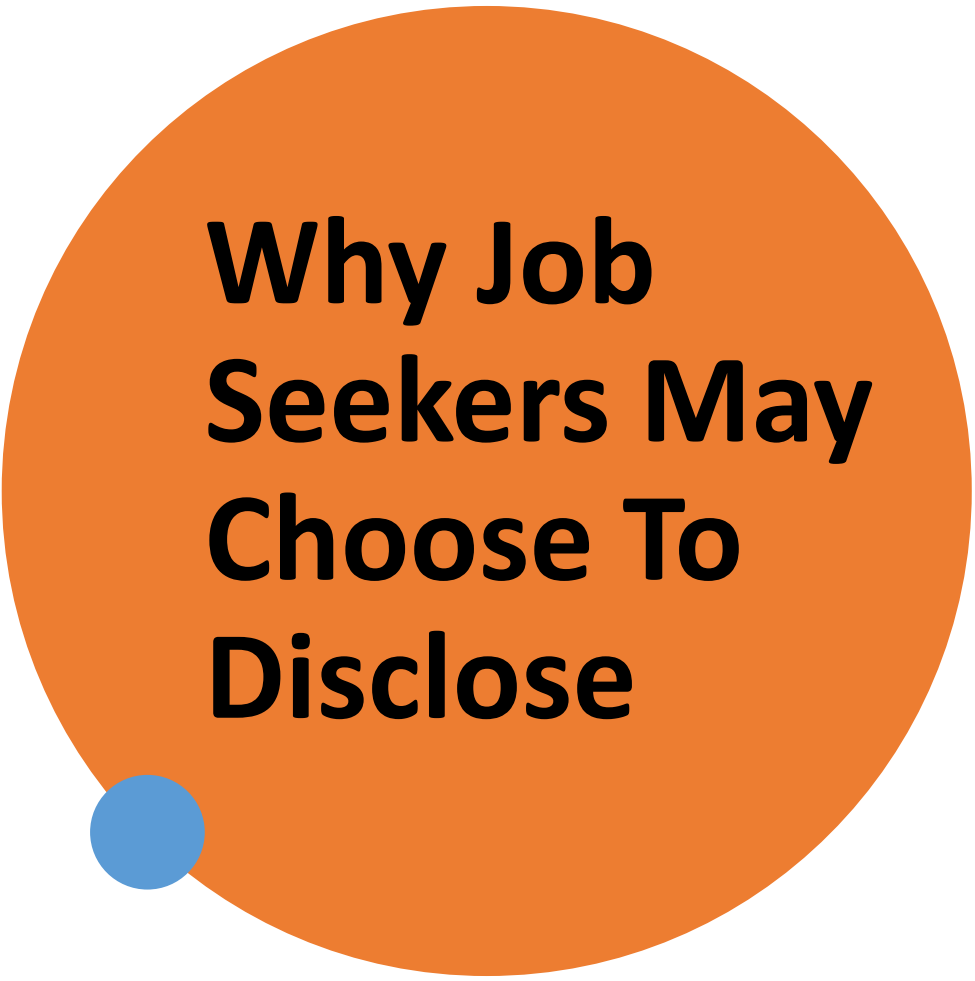
Some Questions to Consider

Who to tell and why this person?

What specifically do I want to share with them?

What outcome do I expect?

What if I get a different, less-than-positive outcome?

Other questions to consider?

Corrigan, 2022

Why Job Seekers May Choose To Disclose

Carmine is very interested in working with individuals who have recently been hospitalized because of suicidal attempts. He is working toward a Bachelor's degree in psychology and believes his past personal experiences living with a psychiatric disability, specifically managing symptoms related to depression and suicidal thoughts, will be an asset in his work.
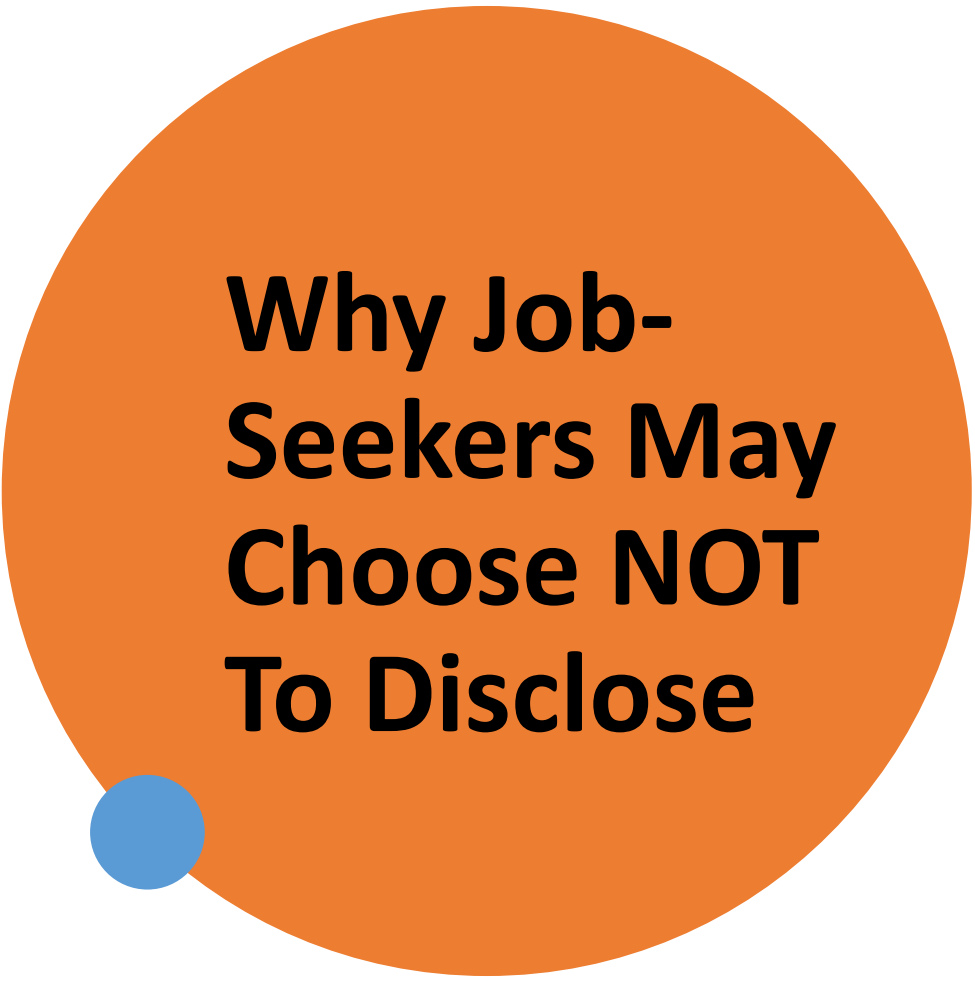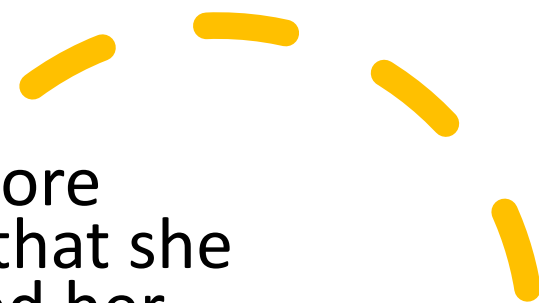
It's your turn...

Why might someone choose to share personal information with:

- their neighbors or landlord?

- fellow students or instructors?

- someone they are dating or a friend they just met?

How would someone share this information?

Why Job-Seekers May Choose NOT To Disclose

Jenny has decided to explore pharmacy positions now that she has successfully completed her training as a pharmacist. She has decided not to disclose her mental health condition because she feels that her training and preparation have adequately prepared her to be a successful pharmacist. She has tested these skills in her clinical rotations at various pharmacies in the area.

It's your turn...

In what situations, why might someone choose **not** to share personal information with:

- their neighbors or landlord?

- fellow students or instructors?

- someone they are dating or a friend they just met?

Putting it Together

Jane is interested in pursuing a career as a librarian. She has a master's degree in library science. However, she hasn't worked in this field for several years. Recently, Jane applied for a position as a children's librarian at a local library. Jane is expressing uncertainty as to whether she should disclose to her employer that she is living with bipolar disorder.

1. What are the benefits to Jane disclosing?

2. What are the costs to Jane disclosing?

3. Under what circumstances might Jane disclose?

4. What language can Jane use?

4. What strategies will you use to assist Jane with this decision?

Resources

Honest Open Proud: To Erase the Stigma of Mental Illness

https://hopprogram.org/

NAMI Words Matter

https://stigmafree.nami.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Words-Matter-printable.pdf

Recovery Oriented Language Guide

https://mhcc.org.au/publication/recovery-oriented-language-guide/

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Questions or Comments?

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