



TIPS FOR BUILDING BETTER

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

For African Americans



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DECONSTRUCT STIGMA

The practice of deconstruction includes,

- addressing and bringing awareness to the use of stigmatizing language around mental illness,
- educating family, friends, and colleagues about challenges African Americans face in the community when it comes to mental and behavioral health,
- being mindful of personal perspectives and convictions toward the African American community to decrease implicit bias and negative assumptions

Address Unhealthy Coping Mechanisms



Unhealthy coping mechanisms can be activities that bring momentary alleviation, satisfaction, or sensations of numbness from pain. Although the ultimate goal of euphoria is achieved temporary solutions can lead to additional issues in the future. Unhealthy coping mechanisms can include avoiding social activities, isolation, detachment from others, or turning to harmful substances.



IDENTIFY HEALTHY COPING STRATEGIES

Coping includes adapting to or enduring adverse occasions or realities, all while trying to maintain a positive self image and an enthusiastic balance. Healthy coping strategies include engaging in activities that can improve your mood such as exercise, reading a book, praying or learning a new hobby.

INCREASE ENGAGEMENT IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Locate a provider that you can establish a relationship with that is based on trust and respect. Finding a provider that brings a sense of comfort and understanding can help break down barriers and eliminate stigma that is associated with behavioral health services. A provider that is intentional in deconstructing stigma in practice is helpful as it contributes a large amount to negative behavioral health outcomes for people with mental health and SUD disorders

