

Self Advocacy: The Impact of Education, Support and Autonomy

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Education

- ▶ Be curious and proactive
- ▶ Block out media
- ▶ Encourage my family and friends
- ▶ Learn about services
- ▶ Define myself
- ▶ Be prepared for stigma



Therapy

- ▶ Doctor shopping
- ▶ Be in charge of the visits
- ▶ Family and friends
- ▶ Brain chemistry
- ▶ Bio-psycho-social model
- ▶ Be authentic and keep no secrets
- ▶ Understand that what works for me may not work for others
- ▶ Therapy can happen outside of the office



Disclosures

- › Identify the benefit of sharing vs. not sharing
- › Protect myself
- › Learn about my rights
- › Practice spilling the beans
- › Offer education
- › Explain what I need and how others can help
- › Be prepared for other disclosures
- › Self care plan...before and after
- › Be prepared for stigma



Education

- › Do my homework about campus services
- › Be pushy if I must
- › Set realistic goals and expectations
- › Safety plan for stressors
- › Break down workload into a clear and organized plan
- › Be proud of small successes
- › Practice positive self talk
- › Refuse to be limited by teachers



Relationships

- › Face my fears
- › Find the power of authentic relationships with friends, families, partners
- › Determine what will and will not work for me
- › Don't blame people for ignorance
- › Offer education in a non-judgmental way
- › Distinguish between emotions and disorder
- › Be prepared for stigma



Employers

- Revisit the need for disclosure
- Be prepared for work performance to be questioned
- Do not settle
- Be honest about workload capabilities and expectations
- Speak up
- Offer thanks for support



Self Care

- Volunteer work
- Be present for both good and bad times
- Recognize my red flags
- Be kind to myself whenever possible
- Find things to look forward to
- Struggle and then stand up
- **Live life on purpose**



Thank you!

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