



## HANDOUT: Tips for Looking After Yourself

### Things to consider before organising an activity

- When campaigning, you might want to consider doing this with other Anti-Stigma Ambassador's rather than on your own .

### As an Anti-Stigma Ambassador, you are not expected to...

- You are not required to be an expert on all aspects of mental health, nor a spokesperson for the Stamp It Out Partnership Hub.
- As an Anti-Stigma Ambassador, you are not expected to give information, advice and guidance, or offer support to someone.
- You must not be campaigning in settings with children and young people.

### Challenging stigmatising opinions

- You may hear opinions from people who are not aware what they are saying is hurtful in relation to mental health. Sometimes people are repeating ideas that they have been taught, or things they consider to be an ordinary and acceptable thing to say.
- Where people express stigma and discrimination openly, it can be a good opportunity enabling you as an Anti-Stigma Ambassador to explore stereotypes or misconceptions a person has, and to openly challenge them in a safe way (as covered in both the 'Challenging Stigma & Discrimination' and 'Social Contact' training).

### Sharing your own experience

- Your personal experience of mental health is a resource which will help to change people's attitudes towards mental health – but use it only in a way in which you feel comfortable.
- Think about what level of personal disclosure you would be comfortable with prior to talking to someone as part of your campaigning activities. If you are having difficulty deciding, think about how you would feel if someone reacted badly to an aspect of what you have shared. If you would find it difficult to deal with, it might be best not to share that particular part of your story. This does not mean that you will not be ready to do so in the future.

## **Being mindful of your own wellbeing**

- Be mindful of your own wellbeing and take the time to notice any changes that could indicate that you need to keep yourself safe. Be aware of your surroundings and consider personal safety when going to and/or running meetings and activities.

## **Looking out for others**

- Plan ahead about what you might do if you are concerned about someone's wellbeing. If you have any questions around safeguarding as an Anti-Stigma Ambassador, please email the Anti-Stigma Ambassador inbox. We will aim to respond to you as soon as possible: [stampitoutdurham@gmail.com](mailto:stampitoutdurham@gmail.com)
- It might be useful to have some local information to hand to signpost people to. Remember you are not necessarily recommending services, just sharing information. The following are national helplines that could be useful to share:
  - Mind Infoline: 0300 123 3393. Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk). Text: 86463
  - Rethink Mental Illness Advice Service: 0300 500 0927. Email: [advice@rethink.org](mailto:advice@rethink.org)
  - The Samaritans: call 116 123. Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)
  - Shout: text 85258

## **Challenging conversations**

- Own your statements by starting with 'I' and going on to describe what you think or feel. For example, you could say: "I don't feel comfortable continuing this conversation." By using 'I' in this way, you take ownership of the statement, which is both powerful and demonstrates that you personally care about the outcome.
- Some conversations could be difficult to manage and may not go as well as expected. Any rejection is not personal. The conversation may sow positive seeds for the future.

## **After the activity**

- Be kind to yourself if conversations or activities don't go as planned. You could spend some time to stop and think about what went well and what you might do differently next time.
- Take time to talk to someone. Just as you may want to encourage conversations about mental health, make sure you also take time to have these conversations yourself.

Above all else, look after yourself and enjoy the experience! **Do you have any other tips to share on how to keep safe?**