

Discussing Your Illness with Others

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This tool is intended to help you think about when, how and with whom you might wish to discuss your mental health. When it comes to sharing this information, there are no right or wrong approaches. But taking time to consider the benefits and costs that might come with sharing can help you feel more confident about your decisions.

When you are considering whether or not to talk to a family member, friend or coworker about your mental health, use the space below to list the benefits and costs (“pros” and “cons”) of sharing. Make a separate list for each person you are thinking about. Remember that no issue is too small to put on your list – if it’s important to you, it belongs on the list.

Once you’ve completed your list, you may find it helpful to rank your statements in order of importance by placing a number (#1 being most important) next to each.

I am considering sharing details about my depression with my boss. If I choose to share, I may face the following positive benefits and/or negative consequences:

RANK	POSSIBLE BENEFIT OF SHARING (+)	RANK	POSSIBLE COST OF SHARING (-)
5	I don't like keeping secrets	3	She may lose confidence in me
1	I may need to leave work early	6	She may tell her boss
	Once a week for appointments	4	I'll feel like she's always watching
2	I'm going to need to cut out		To see how I'm doing
	Overtime		

Based on the analysis above, I have decided:

- ☐ ***to share***
- ☐ ***not to share***
- ☒ ***to delay my decision for now, and revisit at a later date.***

For More Information

University of Michigan Depression Center

800-475-6424

www.depressioncenter.org

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Once you’ve completed your list, you may find it helpful to rank your statements in order of importance by placing a number (#1 being most important) next to each.

I am considering sharing details about my depression with _____. If I choose to share, I may face the following positive benefits and/or negative consequences:

RANK	POSSIBLE BENEFIT OF SHARING (+)		RANK	POSSIBLE COST OF SHARING (-)

Based on the analysis above, I have decided:

- ☐ ***to share***
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