

# Disclosing to A Loved One

## Initiate the conversation

- Introduce the conversation. "I would like to spend some quality time together to talk."
  - Plan when and where and feel emotionally prepared.
  - If your loved one asks why you would like to have this conversation, say "I've been going through a hard time and need support from someone who cares about me."

## Discuss your needs

- Tell your loved one what you need from their response.
  - "I need you to believe me and not ask me questions."
  - "I just need you to listen to me and give me a hug after."
  - "I need you to view/treat me the same after this conversation."

## Communicate your goals

- Let your loved one know why you are disclosing to them and your ideal outcome.
  - "I want to tell you about this experience because..."
    - ...I want you to know why \_\_\_\_ affects me the way that it does.
    - ...there may be times where I need to talk about it or want you to check in on me."
    - ...I trust you and I want you to know about this."

## Share Only What You Want to Share

- Consider how much information or how many details you are comfortable sharing.
- You are not obligated to answer any questions you are not ready to share.
- You have the right to say as much or as little as you like.
- You may also stop disclosing if at any point you feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or simply do not want to finish sharing.
- Plan someone you can go to for support if the conversation does not go well.

## Follow-Up

- *Ask them to follow up with you in the future if they have questions or want to check in. Let them know if you want them to follow up with you about this in the future, or if you prefer, they didn't. You can also indicate if you are comfortable with any questions they may have. By giving them clear instructions about your needs, you are setting boundaries.*

## Self-Care

- *Talking about a difficult experience may take a toll on you.*
- *Make sure to set aside time to practice self-care. Perhaps utilize some grounding/deep breathing practices before and after sharing.*

*Remember that **it is not your job to take care of those to whom you are disclosing.** You are having this conversation so they may know how to help care for you in the ways that you need.*

- *If your loved one has any questions or is having difficulty processing this information, they may visit or call us at the Aurora Center.*



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