

Examples of Disclosure Decisions- General

In this section, you will find examples of scenarios that can be used to practice disclosure decisions with all populations.

Kelly – 18 years old

Kelly is kind, caring, and well-liked by her peers. She is on the high honor roll, is the number one varsity tennis player, and also plays violin in orchestra at her school.

Kelly began to experience depression at age 13. She is also in recovery from bulimia. The summer after her sophomore year in high school, she spent time at an inpatient treatment facility. No one except for her immediate family knows, not even her closest friends. While she was away, she told everyone that she was at tennis and music camps.

Kelly has developed a lot of skills to cope with the challenges she faced. She wishes she could ask for support from others and even offer it to some classmates, but is afraid of potential negative judgment. While she sees herself as mostly strong and capable, she sometimes feels a sense of shame and embarrassment about the time she spent at a treatment facility, and the fact that she's dealt with an eating disorder.

Jamaal – 15 years old

Jamaal is new at his school this year. He is very shy and so far has had a difficult time making friends; however, he recently made the varsity basketball team, which has him feeling a little better. A senior on the team has been welcoming to Jamal.

Jamaal was diagnosed with ADHD and dyslexia in grade school. He feels embarrassed about spending time in the special classroom as a result of his ADHD and dyslexia.

In addition, he has been feeling more and more anxious since he was in seventh grade. Jamaal's mom has pushed back against the school social worker's suggestion that a doctor might be able to offer insights that would be helpful. She does not want her son to have more labels that may cause others to think less of him.

Jamaal often struggles to get out of bed, and by the end of most school days, he feels tired out by his anxious thoughts. It's improved slightly since basketball season started though.

Gabriel – 17 years old

Gabriel is a talented singer, guitar-player, and song-writer. In middle school, he spent a lot of time alone playing music. When Gabriel was 12, he was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. He began smoking pot and drinking with a few guys. During his first year of high school he started to use harder drugs.

Gabriel saw himself as a “bad” kid. His parents put him in a treatment program for both bipolar and addictions where he was introduced to the concept of recovery. He grew to understand that the challenges he faced were not because he was a bad person. Instead he learned about the challenges he faced and ways to overcome them.

Gabriel has been mostly free of any alcohol or illegal drugs for the past two and a half years. He is proud of the person he is becoming. While he has a few strong relationships with people who attend the same recovery meetings he does every week, he feels more alone than ever at school.

Adriana – 14 years old

Adriana does well in school, but doesn't get great grades and isn't in any activities. She keeps to herself and follows the rules. Adriana's mom has always been very involved in their church. Her mom and dad are divorced.

When Adriana was eight years old, she began to be sexually abused by the 15-year old boy who lived next door, the son of a family friend from church, and it continued for two years. Adriana began to engage in self-harm to cope with what she had experienced. She didn't tell anyone at first, but when she was 12, her mother noticed scars on her body, and Adriana broke down and told her everything.

Adriana's parents took her to a therapist to get help for the self-harm, as well as to help her recover from the abuse she experienced. She continues to go to counseling for ongoing support, but still experiences some flashbacks and panic attacks. While Adriana has begun a process of recovery, she still struggles with feelings of worthlessness and shame. She is still withdrawn from people, yet as she grows stronger she finds herself wondering what it would be like to have a circle of friends at school.

Jason – 17 years old

Jason's family moved to the United States from South Korea when he was 3 years old. He began classical piano study at age 5, and ever since then, music has been his passion. He has been pushed to achieve at a high level, attending only the best schools, working with private tutors, and taking advanced classes.

As he grew older, Jason's parents made it clear that they expected him to pursue a career in medicine. But Jason knew that music was his passion. In his freshman year of high school, Jason experienced severe anxiety and depression. At the age of 15, he made a suicide attempt.

Jason survived, and following the advice of the doctors in the hospital, his parents sought psychiatric treatment for him. Jason's parents learned to support him in recovery, as well as to support his dream of a musical career. After he got out of the hospital, his family moved to a new town, and he began attending a new school. Jason's parents have told him not to speak about his suicide attempt and depression at school, but he notices students who seem to be anxious as they try to live up to what others expect of them, and wishes he could do something to support to them.

Rosa – 15 years old

Rosa has faced a lot of loss in her life. Two of her grandparents died before she turned nine years old and her mother died of cancer when she was eleven. She lives with a foster family.

Rosa has started to have constant thoughts that are disturbing and feels like she has to do certain things to prevent the thoughts from coming true. She is unaware that there is a diagnosis called "obsessive compulsive disorder". She spends a lot of time and energy worrying that horrible things will happen to her. She is worried that she, too, will become sick and die. Whenever she notices something slightly "off" with her health, she is consumed with fear, and spends hours googling illnesses and their different symptoms to assure herself that she is ok. She also spends a lot of time engaging in rituals related to superstitions that she believes will keep harm away from her. One example is never stepping on a crack.

Rosa is tired of the energy she invests into these patterns of thought and behavior, but feels powerless to break them. Recently she's wanted to tell her best friend what's going on inside her head, but she's embarrassed about what she'll think of her.

Examples of Disclosure Decision practice- Tourette Syndrome

In this section, you will find examples of scenarios that can be used with all populations to incorporate the experiences and disclosure decisions of those with Tourette Syndrome. These examples include two possible scenarios at the end of each example.

Mary – 16 years old

Mary is 16 years old and has had Tourette for as long as she can remember. She does well in school, is on the honor roll, and is involved in a lot of activities. Mary is very well-liked by teachers and peers. They all know she has Tourette and accepts her for it. Mary's tics are mild but noticeable and occasionally she yells out phrases.

Mary wants to go on a school trip next summer but the only way she could go was to get a job and earn money. She loves fashion and design and decided that she wanted to work in the mall at a clothing store. She aced the 30-minute interview because she's outgoing, has great references and was able to hide her tics for that short period of time. Now she's working and concerned that co-workers, her boss, and customers are noticing her tics.

- Two customers are talking in the dressing room and Mary hears one say to the other, "I wonder what is wrong with that store clerk. I have a niece that does that twitching thing too."

- Mary's boss seems less friendly to her lately.

Stuart – 15 years old

Stuart is a sophomore in high school. He's shy, has trouble making friends and doesn't talk in class.

Stuart was diagnosed with Tourette when he was 8. He barks like a dog, hisses like a cat, jerks his head and his arms, and twists his body around. He sits in the back of the class and has permission to stand up if he needs to. When he feels he has to make noises he tries to leave the class. Either way, the other kids notice him—he's either making noises, ticcing, standing up, or walking out of the room. He has trouble focusing and doesn't participate in class. Because sitting in class is so hard for him, and he's so ashamed of his tics, he usually tells his mother he has a stomach ache or headache so he won't have to go to school. He won't let his mother tell the teachers what is wrong with him and none of the kids know either. He just wishes he could crawl under a rock and not have to be around anyone again.

- Psychology class- discussing rare disorders

- Contemplating responding to an Instagram post

Steven – 15 years old

Steven was diagnosed with a reading disorder when he was in 2nd grade. School was always hard for him and he never liked going. When he was 10 he was also diagnosed with Tourette, Bipolar disorder, and ADHD. At 12, he didn't tic as much (thanks to the medication) but his moods and impulsivity were out of control. He yelled at his teachers and refused to do what they say. Things got so bad that Steven was sent to what they call a "therapeutic school", a school for kids who have trouble functioning in public school. Steven loves his new school and was able to tell the other students about his TS and the associated disorders. Steven also plays on a neighborhood basketball team. He never tics when he's playing but his tics increase right before the games and also afterward. The other players have started to ask him why he does these "strange things". Steven feels OK telling them about his Tourette but, not sure he wants them to know about the associated disorders and why he goes to a special school.

- Hanging out with a friend one-on-one

- Locker room after practice – someone drops their medication and Steven notices it is the same medication he takes. The person looks really embarrassed and afraid that Steven saw the medication

Danny – 15 years old

Danny is 15 years old and a freshman in high school. When Danny was 10, he began blinking his eyes and scrunching his nose. His parents took him to a doctor who said it was just a nervous habit. Over the next five years Danny developed new tics like swinging out his arms, jerking back his head and sometimes yelling out words.

When Danny was in grade school the other students got used to him and didn't tease him. Now that he's in high school he's with a whole new group of students who stare at him, tease him, and call him names. His parents took him to a new doctor, who told him he has Tourette Syndrome. Danny was given medication but the medication makes him tired and it only helps the tics a little. The other kids stare at him and make fun of him. One of the boys behind him tells him to "stop it" when he shouts out. Danny knows he can't help it but he's still ashamed and embarrassed by his tics. He wants people to understand but is afraid that telling them will make things worse.

- Talking with a teacher after class to get extra help with homework

- Facebook – contemplating posting a status about experiences with Tourette