



## **Mental Health Shabbat Conversation Starters**

### Become an Ally

Shabbat is a valuable opportunity to renew and recharge. It can be a great opportunity to discuss mental health – our own and others. Speaking about mental health during Shabbat, when our restful pose may allow expansive reflection, can serve to diminish stigma and shame, creating a safe space to speak our inner thoughts and feelings.

### Start with a Story

Research tells us that speaking our personal truth and our lived experience is one of the best ways to diminish stigma. Share a personal story. Few lives have failed to be touched by mental illness. If you mention others in your story, be sure to maintain safety and confidentiality. This will encourage others to speak more openly. Invite others to share their stories.

### Jewish Text for Reflection

*If I am not for myself, who will be for me?*

*And when I am for myself alone, what am I?*

*And if not now, then when?*

~ Rabbi Hillel, Pirkei Avot, The Ethics of our Ancestors 1:14

You could choose this or another text. Should you choose this text, it could be a way to ask how we might be responsible for others in our community and how we may be responsible for our own mental well-being.

### Promoting Self-Care

Question for reflection: How do you manage stress?

### Other Questions for Discussion

- How pervasive do you think mental health problems are in the Jewish community?
- What does Torah offer to help people who suffer from mental health problems?
- How do you feel we as a community can be more inclusive and accepting of, and helpful to, individuals struggling with mental health challenges?