

The balancing act: Chronic conditions and mental health

SOT

Lea Anne Varble (LEE // ANN // VAR-bull)

OSF HealthCare psychotherapist

"You can no longer do the things you used to do. Sometimes you can no longer work. Your identity is affected. That causes feelings of depression. There's also anxiety. People with certain illnesses get very anxious when they leave the house. They don't know how it's going to affect them in an hour." (:35)

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"What you think determines how you feel, and how you feel determines your behavior. So if we can change the way someone is thinking about something, many times it changes how they feel about it. And then it changes how they address it and behave toward it." (:20)

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"Maybe they all agree they can't tell their family [about their struggles]. They won't understand. Then the therapy part of the group is for me to challenge that. I'll ask: How else can we think about this?" (:19)

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"Speak directly. Communicate what your needs are. Maybe even argue for what you need." (:14)

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"[Friends and family] should watch for the person not taking their medications, becoming more apathetic about taking care of themselves and isolating more." (:16)

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"Burnout might be resolved by having someone in your circle make the appointments. Or give in and get a case manager who can do these things for you. Using resources doesn't mean you're not independent. It means we're independent enough to know what resources to use." (:52)

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“See how they innovate new ways of doing it. Encourage their creativity. Have them find their own resources. They then build confidence.” (:17)