



# Know Your Care Journey

*A Resource For Black/African Ancestry Communities*

## Destination: Wellness!

### 1. Acceptance Is Empowerment

If diagnosed with a serious mental health condition, you have begun the journey to wellness. Stigma is common in all communities and can be more prevalent in Black/African Ancestry communities. When we have been diagnosed with a condition, it can be hard to accept. That knowledge is true power, because with it comes resources and a support system of OUR choosing to help us survive thrive!

### 2. Stick To The Script(s)

Similar to following a fitness journey for ideal physical health, following our treatment plan allows us to improve our overall wellbeing. A treatment plan may include medicine, therapy and for some, time in a care facility. Following a plan prescribed by clinicians and medical professionals keeps us on track with our care journey. This keeps symptoms in check. Most importantly, it keeps us connected with family, friends and those who love us and have our back.

### 3. Assemble Your [Support] Squad!

Just because you have a diagnosis, does not mean you have to go it alone. Building the right support squad gives you peace of mind, knowing that with your medical care team, trusted family and friends, others in your squad will do their best to keep you on track at times when you may feel most vulnerable.

### 4. You May Fall, And You Can Rise Again

There may be times when you get off track, and that is ok. Nobody is perfect, and nobody's journey is without peaks and valleys. Lean on your support squad in those times, they will be there to help pick you up and set you back on your path.

### 5. Be Your Own Best Advocate

This is YOUR care journey. That is why YOU should expect nothing less than the best care for YOU to reduce symptoms and keep your life on track. Being your own best advocate means asking your treatment provider questions. Tell your care team about past experiences on your care journey that did not work for you, and work together on a shared vision for treatment, goals and clinical and cultural acceptance. It is empowering to express your desire to be treated with care and dignity by YOUR care team.



By knowing YOUR journey and staying the course, YOU are more likely to achieve and sustain recovery. Together we can reduce mental health crises with a shared sense of urgency through our **CRISIS CAN'T WAIT** Campaign. Join us by learning more about this campaign and NAMI's Community Health Equity Alliance initiative, created to improve access to care for people experiencing serious mental health conditions in Black/African Ancestry communities, visit [chea.nami.org](https://chea.nami.org).

