

What is Advocacy? Can I be an Advocate?

There are many ways to advocate... and only *you* can define yourself as an advocate

Advocacy is the active support of an idea or cause

Its roots are the Latin “vocare,” to call, voice or speak

There is no wrong way to advocate!

You might:

- Join NAMI-NYS and a local affiliate
- Tell your story to another person
- Meet with your legislators
- Comfort your loved one who experiences pain due to stigma and misconceptions
- Ask questions! It’s your right to understand your or your loved one’s illness
- Write a letter to the editor expressing your opinion on mental illness
- Research and gather local statistics
- Call your assembly member or senator and urge her/him not to cut funding for mental health services
- Get trained to run a support group for family members or consumers, teach a NAMI education course or be a resource for future courses
- Attend or testify at public hearings to tell your story at the State Capitol

And much, much, much more! What else can you think of?
