

OCTOBER 10

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY



Mental health for all Get involved

What is Mental Health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Early Warning Signs

Not sure if you or someone you know is living with mental health problems? Experiencing one or more of the following feelings or behaviors can be an early warning sign of a problem:

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks like taking care of your kids or getting to work or school

People can experience different types of mental health problems. These problems can affect your thinking, mood, and behavior.

- **Anxiety Disorders:** People with anxiety disorders respond to certain objects or situations with fear and dread. Anxiety disorders can include obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorders, and phobias.
- **Behavioral Disorders:** Behavioral disorders involve a pattern of disruptive behaviors in children that last for at least 6 months and cause problems in school, at home and in social situations. Examples of behavioral disorders include Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), Conduct Disorder, and Oppositional-Defiant Disorder (ODD).
- **Eating Disorders:** Eating disorders involve extreme emotions, attitudes, and behaviors involving weight and food. Eating disorders can include anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating.
- **Mood Disorders:** Mood disorders involve persistent feelings of sadness or periods of feeling overly happy, or fluctuating between extreme happiness and extreme sadness. Mood disorders can include depression, bipolar disorder, Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), and self-harm.
- **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder:** If you have OCD, you have repeated, upsetting thoughts called obsessions. You do the same thing over and over again to try to make the thoughts go away. Those repeated actions are called compulsions.
- **Personality Disorders:** People with personality disorders have extreme and inflexible personality traits that are distressing to the person and may cause problems in work, school, or social relationships. Personality disorders can include antisocial personality disorder and borderline personality disorder.
- **Psychotic Disorders:** People with psychotic disorders experience a range of symptoms, including hallucinations and delusions. An example of a psychotic disorder is schizophrenia.
- **Suicidal Behavior:** Suicide causes immeasurable pain, suffering, and loss to individuals, families, and communities nationwide.
- **Trauma and Stress Related Disorders:** Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can occur after living through or seeing a traumatic event, such as war, a hurricane, rape, physical abuse or a bad accident. PTSD makes you feel stressed and afraid after the danger is over.

RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE

Most people with mental health problems can get better. Treatment and recovery are ongoing processes that happen over time. The first step is [GETTING HELP](#).

What Is Recovery?

Recovery from mental disorders and/or substance abuse disorders is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life and strive to achieve their full potential.

Four Dimensions of Recovery:

- **Health:** Make informed, healthy choices that support physical and emotional well-being.
- **Home:** Have a stable and safe place to live.
- **Purpose:** Engage in meaningful daily activities, such as a job or school, volunteering, caring for your family, or being creative. Work for independence, income, and resources to participate in society.
- **Community:** Build relationships and social networks that provide support.

Develop a Recovery Plan

If you are struggling with a mental health problem, you may want to develop a written recovery plan.

- Enable you to identify goals for achieving wellness,
- Specify what you can do to reach those goals,
- Include daily activities as well as longer term goals,
- Track any changes in your mental health problem and
- Identify triggers or other stressful events that can make you feel worse, and help you learn how to manage them.



MENTAL HEALTH MYTHS AND FACTS

Myth: Mental health problems don't affect me.

Fact: Mental health problems are actually very common. In 2014, about:

- One in five American adults experienced a mental health issue,
- One in 10 young people experienced a period of major depression,
- One in 25 Americans lived with a serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression.

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States. It accounts for the loss of more than 41,000 American lives each year, more than double the number of lives lost to homicide.

Myth: Children don't experience mental health problems.

Fact: Even very young children may show early warning signs of mental health concerns. These mental health problems are often clinically diagnosable, and can be a product of the interaction of biological, psychological, and social factors.

Half of all mental health disorders show first signs before a person turns 14 years old, and three quarters of mental health disorders begin before age 24.

Unfortunately, less than 20% of children and adolescents with diagnosable mental health problems receive the treatment they need. Early mental health support can help a child before problems interfere with other developmental needs.

Myth: People with mental health problems are violent and unpredictable.

Fact: The vast majority of people with mental health problems are no more likely to be violent than anyone else. Most people with mental illness are not violent and only 3%–5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with a serious mental illness. In fact, people with severe mental illnesses are over 10 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than the general population. You probably know someone with a mental health problem and don't even realize it, because many people with mental health problems are highly active and productive members of our communities.

Myth: People with mental health needs, even those who are managing their mental illness, cannot tolerate the stress of holding down a job.

Fact: People with mental health problems are just as productive as other employees. Employers who hire people with mental health problems report good attendance and punctuality as well as motivation, good work, and job tenure on par with or greater than other employees.

Myth: Personality weakness or character flaws cause mental health problems. People with mental health problems can snap out of it if they try hard enough.

Fact: Mental health problems have nothing to do with being lazy or weak and many people need help to get better. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including:

- Biological factors, such as genes, physical illness, injury, or brain chemistry
- Life experiences, such as trauma or a history of abuse
- Family history of mental health problems

Myth: There is no hope for people with mental health problems. Once a friend or family member develops mental health problems, he or she will never recover.

Fact: Studies show that people with mental health problems get better and many recover completely. Recovery refers to the process in which people are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities. There are more treatments, services, and community support systems than ever before, and they work.

Myth: Therapy and self-help are a waste of time. Why bother when you can just take a pill?

Fact: Treatment for mental health problems varies depending on the individual and could include medication, therapy, or both. Many individuals work with a support system during the healing and recovery process.

Myth: I can't do anything for a person with a mental health problem.

Fact: Friends and loved ones can make a big difference. Only 44% of adults with diagnosable mental health problems and less than 20% of children and adolescents receive needed treatment. Friends and family can be important influences to help someone get the treatment and services they need by:

- Reaching out and letting them know you are available to help
- Helping them access mental health services
- Learning and sharing the facts about mental health, especially if you hear something that isn't true
- Treating them with respect, just as you would anyone else
- Refusing to define them by their diagnosis or using labels such as "crazy"

Myth: Prevention doesn't work. It is impossible to prevent mental illnesses.

Fact: Prevention of mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders focuses on addressing known risk factors such as exposure to trauma that can affect the chances that children, youth, and young adults will develop mental health problems. Promoting the social-emotional well-being of children and youth leads to:

- Higher overall productivity
- Better educational outcomes
- Lower crime rates
- Stronger economies
- Lower health care costs
- Improved quality of life
- Increased lifespan
- Improved family life

SOURCE: What is mental health? (2016, February 18). Retrieved October 05, 2020, from <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/your-mental-health/about-mental-health/what-mental-health>