

“It started quite gradually, but before I knew it I had lost all interest in life. Even my children and family didn’t make me feel happy. I was tired all the time. I could not sleep. I lost the taste for food which I used to love and I lost weight. I felt so lousy about myself. The worst thing was that I felt embarrassed about the way I felt and could not tell anyone. I felt hopeless and helpless. Once I felt like ending my life and it was then that I got so scared that I told a family member about it. I was taken to see a doctor and I was diagnosed with depression. I began taking medications right away. That was two months ago. Today, with support and medication, I feel good about myself. I no longer feel lost or lonely. I’ve gained all my weight back and my family is happy to see me smiling again.”

– A Community Member

Other Resources:

Each Mind Matters
www.eachmindmatters.com

National Alliance on Mental Illness
www.nami.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
(800) 273-8255

We all have a role in creating more welcoming environments where people can get the support they need. People can and do get better from mental illness. By talking openly and honestly about mental health, we can start to clear a path to support and recovery.

Mental Health Information



Healthy Mind Happy Life

Understanding Health and Wellness



Funded by counties through the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63).



California's Mental Health Movement

Mental Health Terms



Wellness – The quality or state of being healthy in body and mind, especially as the result of a conscious effort.

Balance – Mental steadiness or emotional stability; habit of calm behavior, judgment.

Harmony – Agreement in action, opinion feeling; order or congruity of parts to their whole or to one another.

Optimism – Hopefulness and confidence about the future or the successful outcome of something.

Coping – To deal successfully with or handle a situation; manage.

Hopelessness – A feeling of futility and passive abandonment of oneself to fate.

Cultural Shock – A condition of confusion and anxiety affecting a person suddenly exposed to a different culture.

PTSD – Post traumatic Stress Disorder is persistent re-experiencing of a past traumatic event. Symptoms include nightmares, flashbacks, upsetting memories of the event, and intense distress.

Depression – The condition of feeling sad or despondent; A psychiatric disorder characterized by an inability to concentrate, insomnia, loss of appetite, feelings of extreme sadness, guilt, helplessness and hopelessness, angry outbursts, and thoughts of death.

Anxiety – A state of apprehension and psychic tension; distress or uneasiness of mind caused by fear or danger or misfortune. Symptoms include excessive worry, sleep problems, irrational fear, muscle tension, chronic indigestion, and flashbacks.

Panic Attack – An intense incident of anxiety characterized by feelings of impending doom and trembling, sweating, pounding heart, shortness of breath, and other physical symptoms.

Mental Illness – Any of various disorders in which a person's thoughts, emotions, or behavior are so abnormal as to cause suffering to himself, herself, or other people.

Myths about Mental Health

Myth: Mental illness is something that only happens to other people.

Fact: One in 5 California adults report needing help with a mental or emotional health problem. Children and adults alike experience a variety of mental issues, from depression to anxiety to bipolar disorder.

Myth: Mental illness can't be treated: you're ill for life.

Fact: Not only is treatment available, but full recovery is possible. Today we are learning how to prevent mental illness and promote mental wellness. With support and treatment, between 70 and 90 percent of individuals have a significant reduction in symptoms and improved quality of life.

Myth: People who have been diagnosed with mental illnesses are dangerous and should be avoided.

Fact: Mental illness accounts for, at most, 3 percent of violence committed in the U.S. People with serious mental health challenges are more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators.



Myth: I don't discriminate against people who are diagnosed with a mental illness, but I don't want to work or live near them.

Fact: In addition to being unfair and ethically unacceptable, it is also illegal to deny someone any rights due to their real or perceived mental illness.

Myth: I'm not a psychiatrist, I can't make a difference for a person living with a mental health challenge.

Fact: Many people say that stigma and discrimination can be a bigger challenge to their quality of life than their mental health challenges are. You can help to end stigma by openly accepting people who are diagnosed with a mental illness in your work and in your community. You are in a unique position to give people who are living with mental health challenges what they, just like anyone else, truly deserve – a job, a home, a public service, or simply a respectful conversation – that helps them live a full and productive life.

Myth: The only way a person can recover is through medication.

Fact: Recovery is possible when the person receives the necessary treatment and support. There are many ways to recover, including medication, professional psychiatry and spirituality.