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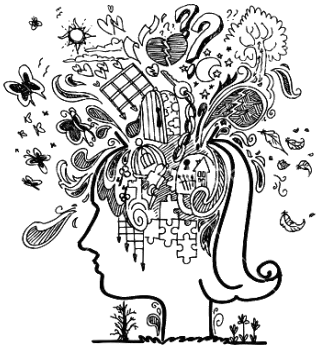

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Introducing!!

MENTAL WELLBEING AND RESILIENCE

~ Jennifer Rohlupuii

The World Health Organization defines mental health as a "state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community."
Mental health is affected by a wide range of risk and protective factors at an individual, familial and social level.

It is possible for all young people to boost their mental health and resilience.

Mental well-being is not just the absence of mental health problems. It is a dynamic state, in which the individual is able to develop his/her potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others, and contribute to the community.

The journey through the phases of adolescence and emerging adulthood is one where young people try out different experiences and take time to make sense of themselves and the world around them. While the majority of young people get through their youth without experiencing serious mental health difficulties, this is not the case for all young people.

Some of the issues that affect young people's mental health includes: Lack of family support, Alcohol and Drug abuse, Poverty, Discrimination, Peer pressure, Stressful life events, Violence, Physical and Mental abuse etc. Mental health problems can affect quality of life, physical health, relationships and social, physical, and educational development.

Focusing only on mental health disorders does not give the whole picture of the state of mental health among young people. One current theoretical framework is resilience, used as a descriptor for positive mental health and well-being. According to Lehtinen (2008), in addition to resilience, positive mental health includes a positive sense of well-being; individual resources, such as self-esteem, optimism and a sense of mastery and coherence; ability to initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships; and ability to cope with adversities.

In order to achieve mental well being and resilience, the following people can play significant roles:

Family –There might be occasions where family members may be the root of the problem, but in most instances encouraging the young person to talk it through with someone in their family can be extremely helpful.

Friends – Friends are often the first to notice when something isn't quite right. Peer mentoring is therefore, important as young people should be able to feel like they aren't the only one going through these problems.

Trusted person – One of the strongest protective factors in the life of a young person is someone he/she can trust completely. That person could be a family member, a teacher, a friend, youth worker, neighbor etc. These trusted persons can play an important role in helping them go through difficult times.

Online supports –The internet is now becoming the first port of call for many young people who want to find out more information on something they are curious about. Online supports can be wide-ranging and include information-based services, peer-to-peer support and online therapy or counseling.

Looking at the above mentioned points there are so many things you and I can do to help our fellow youth to be confident and resilient. So let us join hands and work together to help them develop and fulfill these goals so that they may, one day, make great contributions for the development of our society.

What You Learn!

YWCA of India, an NGO working for the wholistic development of young people, especially women, recognizes that for young people to grow and lead in today's world, they must be empowered, not just socially or economically, but physically and mentally too.

This can only be achieved if young people are given proper knowledge and accurate information about their physical and mental wellbeing. Not only this, when peers work together to promote the growth and development of each other, they help in the learning process and build stronger and trustworthy relationships.

The 6th Edition of the Youth Magazine – Y's Eyes focuses on creating awareness about the importance of mental health for young people and provide accurate information regarding this in a reader friendly format, which is easy to read, comprehensive, with stress busting activities too.

The content of the magazine provides information about the concept of mental health, ways of identifying symptoms and causes of mental illness, and coping strategies to overcome them.

The magazine also contains activities and details on conducting workshops for young people to help build awareness among their peers and community.

Also, color and doodle on the pages – wherever needed!
After all – It's your book! Make it Happy! -----→ :D

We hope you enjoy reading it!

be in love
with your life.
Every minute
of it.

– Jack Kerouac

Chapter 1

Mental Health and Wellbeing

1. Know the Basics

Mental health refers to a broad array of activities directly or indirectly related to the mental well-being.

The World Health Organization's (WHO) defines Health as:

"A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease".

Thus, it is related to:

- The promotion of well-being,
- The prevention of mental disorders, and
- The treatment and rehabilitation of people affected by mental disorders.

Fact Profile:

- Mental health is an integral part of one's overall health; indeed, there is no health without mental health.
- Mental health is determined by a range of socioeconomic, biological and environmental factors.
- Cost-effective public health and inter – sectoral strategies and interventions have been created to promote, protect and restore mental health.

Thus, the importance of individual and community mental health cannot be undermined for the holistic progress of a nation.

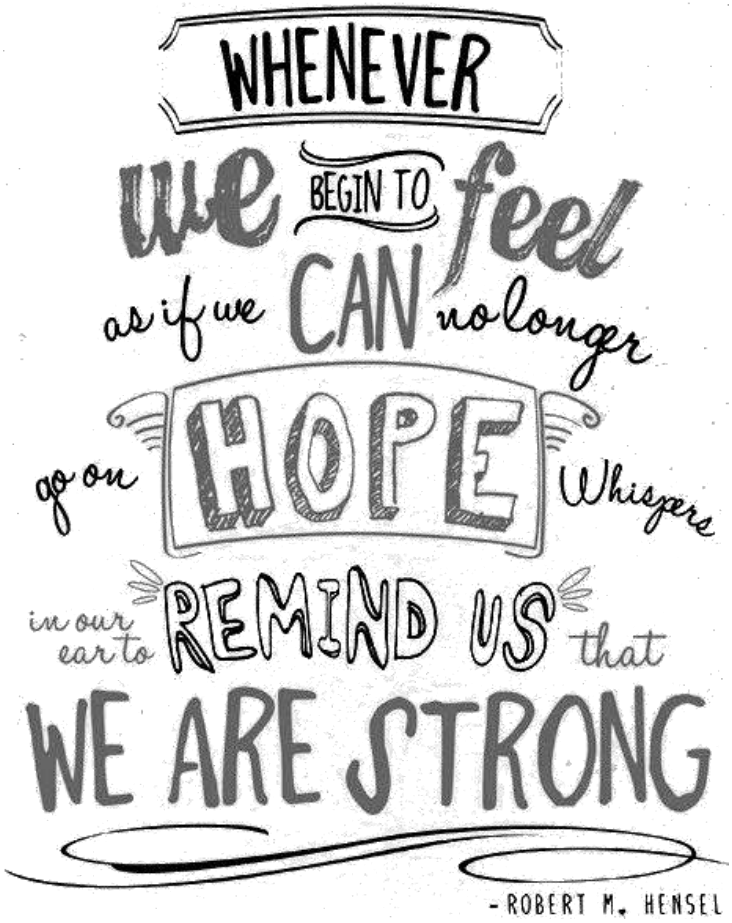
So, basically, Mental Health is:

- ✓ How you think, feel, and act in order to face life's situations.
  For example, how you handle stress and cope with changes.

- ✓ How you look at yourself, your life and the people in your life.
  For example, how you relate to others.

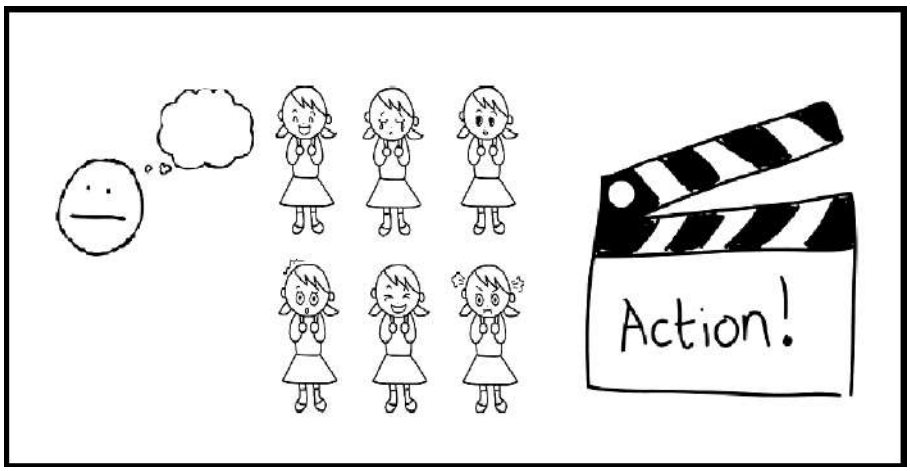
- ✓ How you evaluate your options and make choices.
  For example: how you make decisions and maintain productive activities.

Mental health is a person's ability to enjoy life - to attain a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience.



1.2 Building Blocks of Mental Health

Components of Mental Health comprises of three basic elements which include:



- **Thinking: The Cognitive component**

To recognize your thoughts and to determine if they are reasonable for the situation.
It is important to recognize how you respond to your thoughts, since thoughts produce feelings in us.

- **Feeling: The Emotional component**

It is important to recognize your feelings as well as important to understand where these feelings are coming from, and how you respond to your feelings.

- **Action: The Behavioral component**

Thoughts and feelings result in actions. Actions can be unhealthy as well as healthy. For example: you could pick up the phone and yell at your friend and damage the relationship between the two of you or, you could talk over your thoughts and feelings with your friend or someone close who could help.

1.3 Keeping Mental Health First

Multiple social, psychological, and biological factors determine the level of mental health of a person at any point of time.

For example: persistent socio-economic pressures are recognized risks to mental health for individuals and communities. The clearest evidence is associated with indicators of poverty, including low levels of education.

Poor Mental Health is also associated with rapid social change and stressful work conditions, unhealthy lifestyle and physical ill health, social exclusion, gender discrimination and human rights violation among others.

There are also specific psychological and personality factors that make people vulnerable to mental disorders.

Lastly, there are some biological causes of mental disorders including genetic factors which contribute to imbalances in the chemicals of the brain.

Why is Mental Health important?

- Being aware of our mental health is important because it affects every single other facet of our daily living and functioning.
- Without awareness, it is difficult to pinpoint the source of stress or to understand the issues faced in daily life.
- Proper knowledge about mental health can help the person suffering find the cause of the problem, follow the correct remedy and seek appropriate help.

So, why is Mental Health important for the Youth?

A healthy body is complete only when the mind is healthy too. People depend on you. It's important for you to take care of yourself so that you can do the important things in life — whether it's working, learning, taking care of your family, volunteering, enjoying the outdoors, or so many other daily activities.

It is important because it affects your relationship with others and how you maintain a balance.

It affects how you learn which includes your attentiveness, concentration, and classroom/workplace conduct, ability to organize and to communicate.

Basically, Mental Health also helps improves the quality of life.

When we are free of depression, anxiety, excessive stress and worry, addictions, and other psychological problems, we are able to live our lives to the fullest.
Peace of mind is a natural condition, and is available to everyone.

Mental health strengthens and supports our ability to:

- Have healthy relationships
- Make good life choices
- Maintain physical health and well-being
- Handle the natural ups and downs of life
- Discover and grow toward our potential

Lack of proper Mental Health can lead to other problems such as:

- Experimenting with drugs and alcohol
- Being hostile and regressive
- Taking risks in behavior

Ways to protect our Mental Health is by:

- Eating healthy
- Exercising adequately
- Caring for our health daily
- Take time out for yourself regularly
- Sleeping bountifully
- Managing stress diligently

Chapter 2

Knowing is Preventing

2.1 What's impacting us today?

According to the United Nations, 'YOUTH', are those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. It is not definitely easy being a youth. Sometimes it is tough to avoid being stressed and pressure can build up at different stages of our life: socially in schools, institutions, work place, at home and also in making big decisions.

The burden of mental disorders continues to grow with significant impacts on health and major social, human rights and economic consequences in all countries of the world.

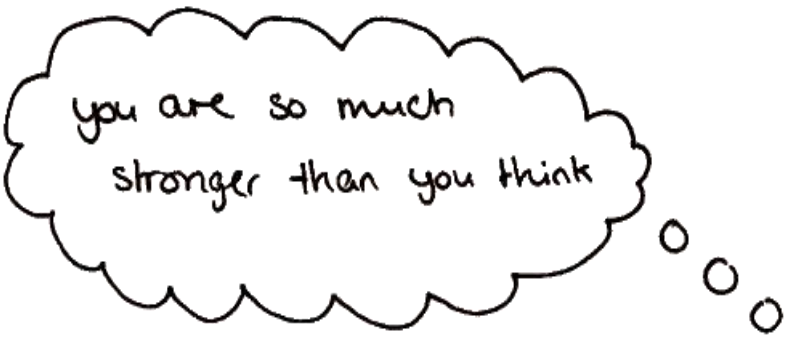
Worrying about these pressures is NORMAL but feeling VERY sad, hopeless and worthless can be a sigh of mental illness or mental health problems. There are several mental illnesses which are common or prevalent among the youth worldwide and are openly visible with our naked eye.

The good news is, there are effective strategies for preventing mental illnesses and there are effective treatments and ways to alleviate the suffering caused by them.

Access to health care and social services capable of providing treatment and social support is the key.

There are many different mental illnesses which are generally characterized by a combination of abnormal thoughts, perceptions, emotions, behaviour and relationships with others.

Some of these illnesses which usually affect the young people includes: Depression, Conduct behaviour, Anxiety disorder, Insomnia, Eating disorder, Panic disorder, ADHD and OCD.



Let us discuss the causes and symptoms of these illnesses one by one:

2.1.1 Depression

Depression is the most common illness in the world which is characterized by sadness, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, tiredness, and poor concentration

Causes of Depression:

- Genetic characteristics
- Changes in hormone levels
- Certain medical illnesses
- Stress and grief
- Can also lead to Substance abuse

Symptoms:

Emotional	Psychological:	Behaviours	Physical problems
Tiredness or lack of energy	Sadness	Trouble concentrating	Withdrawing from people (isolation)
Unexplained aches and pains	Hopelessness	Trouble making decisions	Substance abuse
Changes in appetite Weight loss	Guilt	Trouble remembering	Missing work, school or other commitments
Weight gain	Moodiness	Thoughts of harming yourself	Attempts to harm yourself
Changes in sleep – sleeping too little or too much	Angry outbursts	Delusions and/or hallucinations can also occur in cases of severe depression	
Sexual problems	Loss of interest in friends, family and other routine activities, including sex.		

2.1.2 Conduct Behavior

Conduct disorder (CD) is a psychological disorder diagnosed in childhood or adolescence that presents itself through a repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate norms are violated.

These behaviours are often referred to as "antisocial behaviours. Children who have conduct disorder are hard to control and do not follow the norms and values or the rules.

Causes:

- a lack of impulse control
- a reduced ability to plan future actions
- a decreased ability to learn from past negative experiences
- child abuse
- a dysfunctional family
- parents who abuse drugs or alcohol
- poverty

Symptoms:

Aggressive Conduct	Deceitful Behaviour	Destructive Behaviour	Violation of Rules
Intimidating or bullying others	Lying	Destructive conduct may include arson and other intentional destruction of property	Skipping school
Physically harming people or animals on purpose	Breaking and entering stealing		Running away from home
	Forgery		Substance Abuse

you are special.

there is only one of you
in the entire universe.

2.1.3 Anxiety or Panic Disorder

Anxiety disorders are a category of mental disorders characterized by feelings of anxiety and fear, where anxiety is a worry about future events and fear is a reaction to current events.

Causes:

- genetic factors
- on-going stress
- family background
- physical health issues
- a traumatic event

Symptoms:

Physical	Psychological	Behavioural
• Heart palpitations • chest pain • rapid heartbeat • flushing • hyperventilation • shortness of breath • dizziness • headache • sweating • tingling and numbness • choking • dry mouth • nausea • vomiting • diarrhea • muscle aches • restlessness • tremors/shaking	• Unrealistic and/or excessive fear and worry • mind racing or going blank • decrease concentration and memory • indecisiveness • irritability • impatience • anger, confusion, restlessness or feeling "on edge" or nervousness • tiredness • sleep disturbance • vivid dreams	• Avoidance of situations • obsessive or compulsive behaviour • distress in social situations • phobic behaviour

Differentiating Depressive and Manic Symptoms:

Depressive	Manic
• Sadness, anxiety, guilt, anger • lack of emotional responsiveness • helplessness • hopelessness • self-criticism • self-blame • pessimism • impaired memory and concentration • indecisiveness and confusion • thoughts of death and suicide • crying spells • withdrawal from others • worrying • neglect of responsibilities • loss of interest in personal appearance • loss of motivation • chronic fatigue • lack of energy • overeating or • loss of appetite • constipation • weight loss or gain • loss of sexual desire	• Increased energy and over activity • elated mood • needing less • sleep than usual • rapid thinking and speech • lack of inhibitions • grandiose delusions • lack of insight

Fall
seven
times,

stand up
eight.

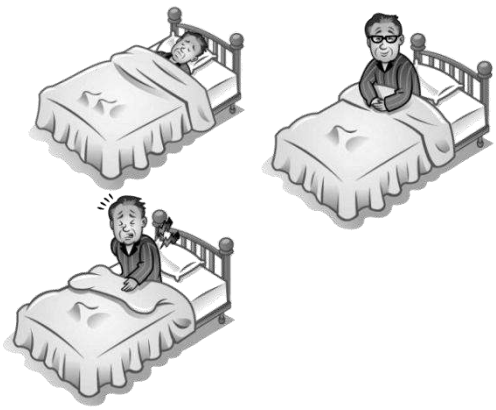
2.1.4 Insomnia

Insomnia means an inability to sleep, but also refers to many different types of disrupted sleep or sleeping patterns. It can be short or long term.

Understanding Primary and Secondary Insomnia

Primary insomnia	Secondary insomnia
Primary insomnia means that a person is having sleep problems that are not directly associated with any other health condition or problem.	Secondary insomnia means that a person is having sleep problems because of something else, such as: – Health condition (like asthma, depression, arthritis, cancer, or heartburn); – Pain; medication they are taking; or a – Substance they are using (like alcohol).

Causes of Insomnia

Acute	Chronic
Significant life stress: job loss or change	Depression and/or anxiety
Death of a loved one, divorce, shifting places	Chronic stress
Illness	Pain or discomfort at night 
Emotional or physical discomfort	
Environmental factors like noise, light, or extreme temperatures (hot or cold) that interfere with sleep	
Some medications (for example those used to treat colds, allergies, depression, high blood pressure, and asthma) may interfere with sleep	
Interferences in normal sleep schedule (jet lag or switching from a day to night shift, for example)	

Symptoms:

- Sleepiness during the day
- General tiredness
- Irritability
- Problems with concentration or memory

2.1.5 Bipolar disorder

Bipolar disorder is a mental illness marked by extreme mood swings from high to low and vice versa. Each of these extreme episodes can last hours, days, weeks, or months. The mood swings may even become mixed, so a person may feel elated and depressed at the same time.

Causes of Bi-Polar Disorder include

Brain-chemical imbalance	Hormonal problems	Environmental factors	Genetics
Neurotransmitter imbalances play a key role in many mood disorders, including bipolar disorder, as well as depression and other mental illnesses. Neurotransmitters are chemicals that facilitate the communication between neurons (brain cells). Examples of neurotransmitters are serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine.	Hormonal imbalances are thought to possibly trigger or cause bipolar disorder.	Abuse, mental stress, a "significant loss", or some other traumatic event may contribute towards bipolar disorder risk. Traumatic events may include the death of a loved one, losing your job, the birth of a child, or moving house. Experts say many things, if the variables are right, can trigger bipolar disorder in some people	Some small twin studies have indicated that there is a "substantial genetic contribution" to bipolar disorder risk. People with a blood relative who has bipolar disorder have a higher risk of developing it themselves.

Symptoms:

- Shifting suddenly from one idea to the next
- Rapid, "pressured" (uninterruptable), and loud speech
- Increased energy, with hyperactivity and a decreased need for sleep
- Inflated self-image
- Excessive spending
- Substance abuse

2.1.6 Eating disorder (Anorexia and Bulimia)

It is a mental disorders defined by abnormal eating habits that negatively affect a person's physical or mental health.
There are two types of eating disorder: anorexia (eats very little) and bulimia (overeating).

Causes

Genetics	Psychological and Emotional Health	Society
Certain people may have genes that increase their risk of developing eating disorders.	People with eating disorders may have psychological and emotional problems that contribute to the disorder.	Success and worth are often equated with being thin in popular culture.
People with first-degree relatives — siblings or parents — with an eating disorder may be more likely to develop an eating disorder, too	They may have low self-esteem, perfectionism, impulsive behaviour and troubled relationships.	Peer pressure and what people see in the media may fuel this desire to be thin.

Symptoms:

- Skipping meals or making excuses for not eating
- Adopting an overly restrictive vegetarian diet
- Excessive focus on healthy eating
- Making own meals rather than eating what the family eats
- Persistent worry or complaining about being fat and talk of losing weight
- Frequent checking in the mirror for perceived flaws
- Use of dietary supplements, laxatives or herbal products for weight loss
- Excessive exercise
- Repeatedly eating large amounts of sweets or high-fat foods
- Eating much more food in a meal or snack than is considered normal
- Expressing depression, disgust, shame or guilt about eating habits

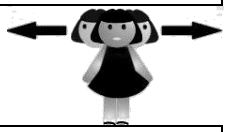
2.1.7 ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)

ADHD is a common mental disorder that begins in childhood and can continue through adolescence and adulthood. It makes it hard for a child to focus and pay attention. Some children may be hyperactive or have trouble being patient.

Causes

Genetics	Environment	Development
ADHD can run in families, and studies indicate that genes may play a role.	Certain environmental factors, such as lead exposure, may increase risk	Problems with the central nervous system at key moments in development may play a role

Symptoms



Predominantly inattentive	Predominantly hyperactive-impulsive
Fail to pay close attention to details or make careless mistakes in schoolwork	Fidget with or tap his or her hands or feet, or squirm in the seat
Have trouble staying focused in tasks or play	Have difficulty staying seated in the classroom or in other situations
Appear not to listen, even when spoken to directly	Be on the go, in constant motion
Have difficulty following through on instructions and fail to finish schoolwork or chores	Run around or climb in situations when it's not appropriate
Have trouble organizing tasks and activities	Have trouble playing or doing an activity quietly
Avoid or dislike tasks that require focused mental effort, such as homework	Talk too much
Lose items needed for tasks or activities, for example, toys, school assignments, pencils	Blurt out answers, interrupting the questioner
Be easily distracted	Have difficulty waiting for his or her turn
Forget to do some daily activities, such as forgetting to do chores	Interrupt or intrude on others' conversations, games or activities

2.1.8 OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder):

It is a mental disorder where people feel the need to check things repeatedly, perform certain routine repeatedly (called "rituals"), or have certain thoughts repeatedly. People are unable to control either the thoughts or the activities. Common activities include hand washing, counting of things, and checking to see if a door is locked.

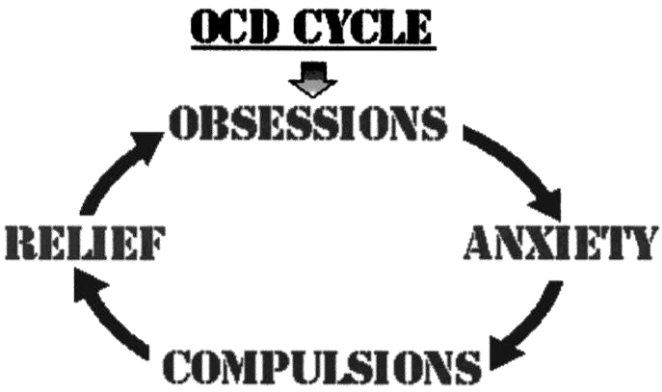
Causes:

- Genetics
- Life experiences/events
- Serotonin (brain chemical transmission)
- Personality behaviour
- Environment
- Neurological

Symptoms:

The symptoms of OCD include both obsessive and compulsive behaviours.

Obsession	Compulsion
Repeated unwanted ideas	Constant checking
Fear of contamination	Constant counting
Aggressive impulses	The repeated cleaning of one or more items
Persistent sexual thoughts	Repeatedly washing your hands
Images of hurting someone you love	Constantly checking the stove or door locks
Thoughts that you might cause others harm	Arranging items to face a certain way
Thoughts that you might be harmed	

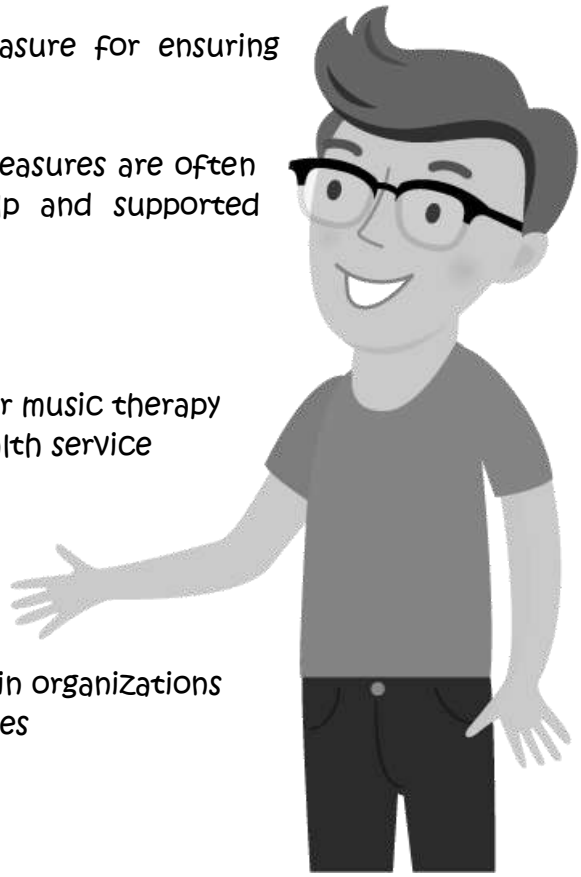


2.1.9 Other mental illness includes:

- Schizophrenia and other psychoses
- Dementia
- Developmental disorder including autism
- Cognitive disorder
- Psychological disorder

2.2 Saving Our Souls: Preventative Measures

Some of the remedies and preventative measure for ensuring mental health include:



- Lifestyle adjustments and supportive measures are often used, including peer support, self-help and supported housing or employment.
- Counseling
- Family support and encouragement
- Psychotherapy
- Creative Therapy session: play therapy or music therapy
- Consulting a doctor or a community health service
- Medication
- Participating in social activities
- Rehabilitation
- Adopt Positive attitude
- Strong will power
- Volunteering in different activities and in organizations
- Making new friends to bring positive vibes
- Avoid using alcohol and drugs.

2.3 Finding Help: The Treatment Team

Knowing the right people to approach at the right time will ensure that the treatment is provided at the earliest.

- Family or primary care doctor
- Nurse practitioner
- Physician assistant
- Psychiatrist, a medical doctor who diagnoses and treats mental illnesses
- Psychotherapist, such as a psychologist or a licensed counsellor
- Pharmacist
- Social worker
- Family members
- Family specialist
- Group therapist
- Recreation therapist

Chapter 3

MENTAL HEALTH CARE

3.1 Adolescence – The Rollercoaster Stage

- Mental health conditions and disorders don't only affect adults. Children and teens can experience mental health problems too.
- Research has shown that adolescence is an especially risky period for mental health problems.
- On top of environment and genes, teenagers go through many changes and challenges in a short period of time.
- Most mental health problems diagnosed in adulthood begin in adolescence.

Following are some ways to have a healthy mental being-

- **Positive parent-teenager relationship:**

  A positive parent-teenager relationship is essential to an adolescent's mental well being. Parents must encourage their children to talk about their feelings and must be supportive of their ideas.

- **Physical health:**

  Children must be encouraged to lead an active lifestyle by maintaining healthy eating habits, getting regular sleep and playing sports. This will help the children in staying healthy, feeling more confident and managing stress.

- **Avoid alcohol and drugs:**

  As children go through adolescence, they might experiment with alcohol and drugs. These are one of the major risk factors for mental disorders in adolescents.

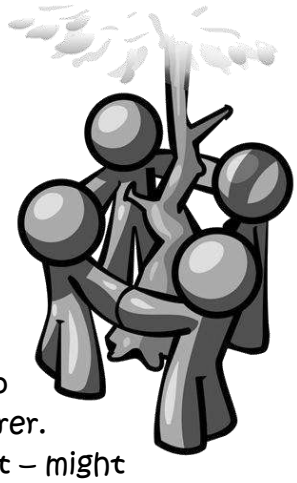
3.2 Talking to children about mental health

If you're concerned about a child's mental health, **start by talking to the child**. This might feel uncomfortable – you might even be waiting for the problem to go away. But talking to the child about how he/she's feeling shows him/her that he/she's not alone and that you care.

Follow these steps to help children struggling with any mental health concerns:

- **Support:**

  Say that even adults have problems they can't sort out on their own. Point out that it's easier to get help when you have someone else's support.



- **Acknowledge:**

  Acknowledge that opening up about personal thoughts and feelings can be scary.

- **Give Perspective:**

  Tell your child that talking about a problem can often help put things into perspective and make feelings clearer. Someone with more or different experience – like an adult – might be able to suggest options the child hasn't considered.

- **Suggest:**

  Suggest some other people the child could talk to if he/she doesn't want to talk to you – for example, parents, aunts or uncles, close family friends.

- **Emphasize:**

  Make the child realize that he/she is not alone. You'll be there whenever he/she's ready to talk.

- **Getting Help for the Child:**

  Mental health problems do not get better themselves. If the child refuses or is unable to confide in you, then it is better to seek professional help.
  Poor mental health or unmanaged mental health problems can affect the child's quality of life, physical health, schoolwork, relationships and development – social, physical, and educational.

Some of the professional support options can be through –
School counselors, psychologists, counselors, local community health centers and local mental health services.

What to do after the Child has been diagnosed?

The child's mental health management strategy will depend on his/her specific needs. But in general, the most important thing you can do is show through your words and actions that you accept and love the child, whatever he/she's feeling.

Some of the ways in which you can help are:

- **Listen:**
  When the child is ready to talk, listen without offering opinions or solutions straight away.
  Be available, but don't push him/her to talk if he/she's not ready.

- **It's Okay:**
  Let the child know that it's OK to feel whatever he's feeling.
  Even if you don't understand why something is upsetting him/her, acknowledge that his/her feelings are real and valid.

- **Encourage:**
  The child needs to talk to someone that he/she trusts.
  If it helps, set up times and places for the child to talk to this person

- **Praise:** The child for his/her achievements, however small

- **Reduce:** family conflict as much as possible

- **Speak:** with the child's health professional about support options in your local area

- **Recognize:** when you need help.
  You can fully support your child only if you're healthy and supported yourself

3.3 ADULTHOOD: Balancing the scale

Mental health problems are **under-identified** by health-care professionals and older people too, and the stigma surrounding mental illness makes people reluctant to seek help.

It is important to pursue a **healthy work/life balance** to achieve healthy mental well-being. However, with our busy schedules, workload and responsibilities, it becomes nearly impossible to achieve the work/life balance.

In our rush to "get it all done" at the office and at home, it's easy to forget that as our stress levels spike, our productivity plummets.

Stress can zap our concentration, make us irritable or depressed, and harm our personal and professional relationships.

Over time, stress also weakens our immune systems, and makes us susceptible to a variety of ailment from colds to backaches to heart disease.

While we all need a certain amount of stress to spur us on and help us perform at our best, the key to managing stress lies in that one magic word: **balance**.

Here are a few practical steps to lead a balanced life and maintain a healthy state of mind-

AT WORK:

- **Set manageable goals each day:**

  Being able to meet priorities helps us feel a sense of accomplishment and control. Be realistic about workloads and deadlines. Make a "to do" list, and take care of important tasks first and eliminate unessential ones. Ask for help when necessary.

- **Be efficient with your time at work:**

  When we delay our work, the task often grows in our minds until it seems impossible. Whenever faced by a big project at work, start by dividing it into smaller tasks. Complete the first one before moving on to the next. The less time you spend doing busy work or delaying it, the more time you can spend productively, or with friends or family.

- **Take five:**

  Taking a break at work isn't only acceptable, it's often encouraged by many employers. Small breaks at work—or on any project—will help clear your head, and improve your ability to deal with stress and make good decisions when you jump back into the grind.

- **Communicate effectively:**

  Be honest with colleagues or your boss when you feel you're in a bind. Chances are, you're not alone. But don't just complain—suggest practical alternatives. Looking at a situation from someone else's viewpoint can also reduce your stress. In a tense situation, either rethink your strategy or stand your ground, calmly and rationally. Make allowances for other opinions, and compromise. Retreat before you lose control, and allow time for all involved to cool off. You'll be better equipped to handle the problem constructively later.

- **Give yourself a break:**

  No one's perfect! Allow yourself to be human and just do the best you can.

AT HOME:

- **Unplug:**

  Recognize the need for personal time and try to relax maybe by reading a book or tuning in to your favourite music.

- **Divide and conquer:**

  Make sure responsibilities at home are evenly distributed and clearly outlined—you'll avoid confusion and problems later.

- **Don't over commit:**

  If you're overscheduled with activities, learn to say," no." Shed the superman/superwoman urge!

- **Get support:**

  Chatting with friends and family can be important to your success at home—or at work—and can even improve your health. People with stronger support

systems have more aggressive immune responses to illnesses than those who lack such support.

- **Stay active:**

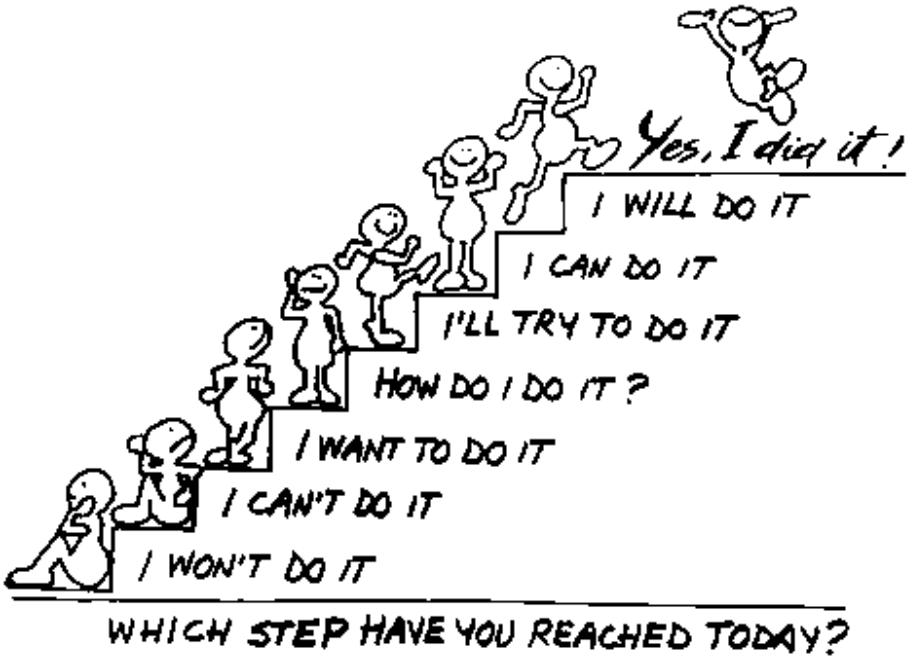
  Aside from its well-known physical benefits, regular exercise reduces stress, depression and anxiety, and enables people to better cope with hard times. It'll also boost your immune system and keep you out of the doctor's office. Take regular walks in a park, play a sport or maybe join a yoga or dance class.

- **Treat your body right:**

  Being in good shape physically increases your tolerance to stress and reduces sick days. Eat right, exercise and get adequate rest. Don't rely on drugs, alcohol or cigarettes to cope with stress; they'll only lead to more problems.

- **Get help if you need it:**

  Don't let stress stand in the way of your health and happiness. If you feel continuously weighed down, it may be time to seek help from a mental health professional. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness—taking care of yourself is a sign of strength.



Chapter 4

Ensuring Mental Wellbeing

4.1 Providing Care and Support

If you support someone with a mental illness, you may face practical and emotional problems from time to time. There is no right or wrong way to support someone with a mental illness. How you support someone will depend on you and the person you care for.

Also, caring for someone with mental health problems brings a lot of challenges. Mental health problems vary greatly in severity. Mild problems are common and can be helped with understanding and support. Severe mental health disorders, such as major depression, are less common and pose more challenges.

Besides, communication can be a struggle for many people with a mental health disorder. Some people don't have the motivation to communicate, while others lack the confidence to say what they really want to. Some people experience hallucinations, which can affect how and when they communicate.

To help the person you care for communicate, give them enough time to make themselves heard and let them know that you accept them and their disorder. Often, people with mental health problems feel cut off from other people, including family, friends and neighbors.

It's important to **listen to what they've got to say** and to **let them express** themselves without interrupting or offering your opinion. Encourage and reassure them if they get upset or appear to be struggling with their emotions.

You may have known the person you care for before they had their mental health disorder. It's important to remember that they just happen to be going through a period of mental distress and your support is important for them.

> You have dealt with so much, and done the best that you can, take a moment now to appreciate how strong you are.
>
> Karen Salmansohn

4.2 Coping Strategies: Sudden Setback or Trauma

If you've experienced trauma, you may be struggling with upsetting emotions, frightening memories, or a sense of constant danger. Or you may feel numb, disconnected, and unable to trust other people.

So, what can be done in case of sudden trauma and setback?

When bad things happen, it can take a while to get over the pain and feel safe again. You may have had one or many very upsetting, frightening, or traumatic things happen to you. When these kinds of things happen, you may not "get over" them quickly. In fact, you may feel the effects of these traumas for many years, even for the rest of your life.

Sometimes you don't even notice effects right after the trauma happens. Years later you may begin having thoughts, nightmares, and other disturbing symptoms. You may develop these symptoms and not even remember the traumatic thing or things that once happened to you.

But with the right self-help strategies and support, you can speed your recovery. Whether the trauma happened years ago or yesterday, you can heal and move on.

Some examples of traumatic experiences can be:

- physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- neglect
- war experiences
- outbursts of temper and rage
- alcoholism (your own or in your family)
- physical illnesses, surgeries, and disabilities
- sickness in your family
- loss of close family members and friends
- natural disasters
- accidents

Some things that may be very traumatic to one person hardly seem to bother another person. If something bothers you a lot and it doesn't bother someone else, it doesn't mean there is something wrong with you. People respond to experiences differently.

Examples of symptoms that may be caused by trauma include:

- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Agitation
- Irritability or rage
- Flashbacks or intrusive memories
- Feeling disconnected from the world
- Unrest in certain situations
- Being "shut down"
- Being very passive
- Feeling depressed
- Eating problems
- Needing to do certain things over and over
- Unusual fears
- Impatience
- Always having to have things a certain way
- Doing strange or risky things
- Having a hard time concentrating
- Wanting to hurt yourself
- Being unable to trust anyone
- Feeling unlikable
- Feeling unsafe
- Using harmful substances
- Keeping to yourself
- Overworking

4.3 Working with Health Care Providers and Counselors

If you possibly can, work with a counselor or in a special program designed for people who have been traumatized. A counselor or people leading the program may refer you to a group. These groups can be very helpful. However, keep in mind that you need to decide for yourself what you are going to do, and how and when you are going to do it. You must be in charge of your recovery in every way.

You may decide to reach out to health care providers for assistance in relieving the effects of trauma. This is a good idea. The effects of trauma, even trauma that happened many years ago, can affect your health. You may have an illness that needs treatment.

In addition, your health care provider may suggest that you take medications or certain food supplements to relieve your symptoms. Many people find that getting this kind of health care **support gives them the relief and energy** they need to work on other aspects of healing. To find health care providers in your community who have expertise in addressing issues related to trauma, contact your local mental health agency, hospital, or crisis service.

Wherever you go for help, the program or treatment should include the following:

- **Empowerment:**

  You must be in charge of your healing in every way to counteract the effects of the trauma where all control was taken away from you.

- **Validation:**

  You need others to listen to you, to validate the importance of what happened to you, to bear witness, and to understand the role of this trauma in your life.

- **Connection:**

  Trauma makes you feel very alone. As part of your healing, you need to reconnect with others. This connection may be part of your treatment.

If you feel the cause of your symptoms is related to trauma in your life, you will want to be careful about your treatment and in making decisions about other areas of your life.

The following guidelines will help you decide how to help yourself feel better.

- Have hope

  It is important that **you know that you can and will feel better**. In the past you may have thought you would never feel better—that the horrible symptoms you experience would go on for the rest of your life.
  Many people who have experienced the same symptoms that you are experiencing are now feeling much better. They have gone on to make their lives the way they want them to be and to do the things they want to do.

- Take personal responsibility

  When you have been traumatized, you lose control of your life. You may feel as though you still don't have any control over your life. **You begin to take back that control by being in charge of every aspect of your life.**

  Others, including your spouse, family members, friends, and health care professionals will try to tell you what to do. Before you do what they suggest, think about it carefully. **Do you feel that it is the best thing for you to do right now?** If not, do not do it. You can follow others advice, but be aware that you are choosing to do so.

  It is important that you make decisions about your own life. You are responsible for your own behavior. Being traumatized is not an acceptable excuse for behavior that hurts you or hurts others.

- Talk to one or more people about what happened to you.

  Telling others about the trauma is an **important** part of healing the effects of trauma. Make sure the person or people you decide to tell are safe people, people who would not hurt you, and who understand that what happened to you is serious. They should know, or you could tell them, that describing what happened to you over and over is an important part of the healing process.

  In connecting with others, avoid spending all your time talking about your traumatic experiences. Spend time listening to others and **sharing positive life experiences**, like going to movies or watching a ball game together. You will know when you have described your trauma enough, because you won't feel like doing it anymore.

- Develop a close relationship with another person.

Part of healing means trusting people again. Think about the person in your life that you like best. Invite them to do something fun with you.

Build a peer or support group who have similar interests and are keen to listen and include you.

Things You Can Do Every Day to Help Yourself Feel Better

There are many things that happen every day that can cause you to feel ill, uncomfortable, upset, anxious, or irritated. You will want to do things to help yourself feel better as quickly as possible, without doing anything that has **negative consequences**, for example, drinking, committing crimes, hurting yourself, risking your life, or eating lots of junk food.

Read through the following list:

Check off the ideas that appeal to you and give each of them a try when you need to help yourself feel better. Make a list of the ones you find to be most useful, along with those you have successfully used in the past, and hang the list in a prominent place—like on your refrigerator door-as a reminder at times when you need to comfort yourself.
Use these techniques whenever you are having a hard time.

- **Do something fun or creative,** something you really enjoy, like crafts, needlework, painting, drawing, woodworking, making a sculpture, reading fiction, comics, mystery novels, or inspirational writings, doing crossword or jigsaw puzzles, playing a game, taking some photographs, going fishing, going to a movie or other community event, or gardening.

- **Get some exercise.**

  Exercise is a great way to help yourself feel better while improving your overall stamina and health. The right exercise can even be fun.

- **Write something.**

  Writing can help you feel better. You can keep lists, record dreams, respond to questions, and explore your feelings. All ways are correct. Don't worry

about how well you write. It's not important. It is only for you. Writing about the trauma or traumatic events also helps a lot. It allows you to safely process the emotions you are experiencing. It tells your mind that you are taking care of the situation and helps to relieve the difficult symptoms you may be experiencing.

Keep your writings in a safe place where others cannot read them. Share them only with people you feel comfortable with.

- **Use your spiritual resources.**

  Spiritual resources and making use of these resources varies from person to person. For some people it means praying, going to church, or reaching out to a member of the clergy. For others it is meditating or reading affirmations and other kinds of inspirational materials. It may include rituals and ceremonies—whatever feels right to you. Spiritual work does not necessarily occur within the bounds of an organized religion. Remember, you can be spiritual without being religious.

- **Do something routine.**

  When you don't feel well, it helps to do something "normal"—the kind of thing you do every day or often, things that are part of your routine like taking a shower, washing your hair, making yourself a sandwich, calling a friend or family member, making your bed, walking the dog, or getting gas in the car.

- **Wear something that makes you feel good.**

  Everybody has certain clothes or jewelry that they enjoy wearing. These are the things to wear when you need to comfort yourself.

- **Get some little things done.**

  It always helps you feel better if you accomplish something, even if it is a very small thing. Think of some easy things to do that don't take much time. Then do them.
  Here are some ideas: clean out one drawer, put five pictures in a photo album, dust a book case, read a page in a favorite book, do a load of laundry, cook yourself something healthful, send someone a card.

- **Learn something new.**

  Think about a topic that you are interested in but have never explored. Find some information on it in the library. Check it out on the Internet. Go to a class. Look at something in a new way. Read a favorite saying, poem, or piece of scripture, and see if you can find new meaning in it.

- **Do a reality check.**

  Checking in on what is really going on rather than responding to your initial "gut reaction" can be very helpful.
  For instance, if you come in the house and loud music is playing, it may trigger the thinking that someone is playing the music just to annoy you. The initial reaction is to get really angry with them. That would make both of you feel awful. A reality check gives the person playing the loud music a chance to look at what is really going on. Perhaps the person playing the music thought you wouldn't be in until later and took advantage of the opportunity to play loud music. If you would call and ask him to turn down the music so you could rest, he probably would say, "Sure!"
  It helps if you can stop yourself from jumping to conclusions before you check the facts.

- **Be present in the moment.**

  This is often referred to as mindfulness. Many of us spend so much time focusing on the future or thinking about the past that we miss out on fully experiencing what is going on in the present. Making a conscious effort to focus your attention on what you are doing right now and what is happening around you can help you feel better. Look around at nature. Feel the weather. Look at the sky when it is filled with stars.

- **Observe something that has special meaning for you.**

  Stop what you are doing and take a long, close look at a flower, a leaf, a plant, the sky, a work of art, a souvenir from an adventure, a picture of a loved one, or a picture of yourself. Notice how much better you feel after doing this.

- **Play with children in your family or with a pet.**

  Romping in the grass with a dog, petting a kitten, reading a story to a child, rocking a baby, and similar activities have a calming effect which translates into feeling better.

- **Do a relaxation exercise.**

  There are many good books available that describe relaxation exercises. Try them to discover which ones you prefer. Practice them daily. Use them whenever you need to help yourself feel better. Relaxation tapes which feature relaxing music or nature sounds are available. Just listening for 10 minutes can help you feel better.

- **Take a warm bath.**

  This may sound simplistic, but it helps. If you are lucky enough to have access to a Jacuzzi or hot tub, it's even better. Warm water is relaxing and healing.

- **Listen to music.**

  Pay attention to your sense of hearing by pampering yourself with delightful music you really enjoy. Libraries often have records and tapes available for loan. If you enjoy music, make it an essential part of every day.

- **Make music.**

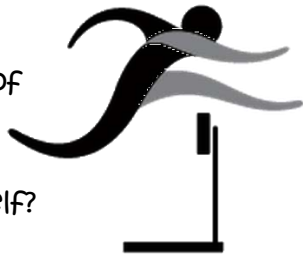
  Making music is also a good way to help yourself feel better. Drums and other kinds of musical instruments are popular ways of relieving tension and increasing well-being. Perhaps you have an instrument that you enjoy playing, like a harmonica, kazoo, penny whistle, or guitar.

- **Sing. Singing helps.**

  It fills your lungs with fresh air and makes you feel better. Sing to yourself. Sing at the top of your lungs. Sing when you are driving your car. Sing when you are in the shower. Sing for the fun of it. Sing along with favorite records, tapes, compact discs, or the radio. Sing the favorite songs you remember from your childhood.

Perhaps you can think of some other things you could do that would help you feel better.

Some Barriers to Healing



Are there any things you are doing that are getting in the way of your healing, such as alcohol or drug abuse, being in abusive or unsupportive relationships, self-destructive behaviors such as blaming and shaming yourself, and not taking good care of yourself?

Think about the possible negative consequences of these behaviors. For instance, if you get drunk, you might lose control of yourself and the situation and be taken advantage of. If you overeat, the negative consequences might be weight gain, poor body image, and poor health. You may want to work on changing these behaviors by self counseling, using self-help books, working with a counselor or joining a support group.

Moving Forward on Your Healing Journey

If you are now about to begin working on recovering from the effects of trauma, or if you have already begun this work and are planning to continue making some changes based on what you have learned – you will need courage and persistence along the way.

You may experience setbacks. From time to time you may get so discouraged that you feel like you want to give up. This happens to everyone. Notice how far you've come. Appreciate even a little progress. Do something nice for yourself and continue your efforts. You deserve an enjoyable life.

Always keep in mind that there are many people, even famous people, who have had traumatic things happen to them. They have worked to relieve the symptoms of this trauma and have gone on to lead happy and rewarding lives. **You can too.**

YOU ARE SO MUCH

stronger

THAN YOU THINK.

Chapter 5

Voice of the Youth

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: TAKEAWAY EXPERIENCE

~ Ishita Solanki

How does one relate to the words 'Mental Health' and 'Well-being'? To me "Mental" pertains to "Mind" and "Health" pertains to "Body". Similarly, "Well" is to do with "Favourable" and "Being" is to do with "Present Condition".

This is how I began organizing my thoughts for this article. As I kept juggling with words, "Mental" caught my attention. In Gujarati parlance, when used it has a negative connotation. "Aa to mental che", would convey, "This one is mad".

This is it. Mental state is the focus, I arrived. Averse to look up for research or psychological aspect of understanding the mind, I took off with the three new found words – "This is it". Soon, the late Michael Jackson (MJ) and his unfinished album – This is it –squeezed out from a latent neuron. I was carried down memory lane to the poignant end of this moonwalker, owing to misuse of substance. Probably, there was reason to believe that an individual's personal traits coupled with disturbed childhood, family, community and life experiences become the deciding factors about the state of the mental health of the person. Such individuals are more vulnerable to adopting culturally, socially and ethically unacceptable behaviour.

As a teenager, to me MJ was a thriller, nothing else mattered. Years later today, as a mother of teenagers, I moan MJ's loss, but even more am grieved that at his funeral he had the world with him while during his lifetime as a top of chart pop-star, he continued to battle the grip of substance abuse all alone.

I was worried. What experiences my teenage children would be going through? Buzz, a telephone conversation of my daughter with her dance academy friend one Sunday morning ran vividly in my thoughts. Whispering she said, "Hello, the academy has announced a condolence prayer meeting tomorrow for Alisa (name changed), who succumbed to suicide". Incessant suicide among children does raise questions about their lack of preparedness to deal with situations. To name a few- demands to outperform, pangs of teenage life, urge to possess gadgets for peer acceptance, over indulgence of parents in deciding their child's future. However, it was unexpected that such news was seen as a loss calling for condolence, by an Institute, Alisa was attached to.

The gesture was courageous in many ways. First, it showed unconditional love for the girl. Secondly, they came across as being kind to the bereaved family. Most important was the choice to pray and submit to the will of God. Reflection on the incidences clarified the essence of the words in the title.

The Learning: Mental Health and Well-being of individuals can be safeguarded if our interdependence on each other is not looked upon as a burden but a privilege. How we choose to respond, act, react, relate, agree or disagree in our day to day interactions or transactions, is a reflection of our own mind and shapes another individual's well-being too, only if we care. Perhaps as a friend, neighbour, parent, teacher, employer, professional, government official or whatever role we assume, can we strive to show love, be kind, and be prayerful?

WITH GOOD MENTAL HEALTH COMES GOOD PHYSICAL HEALTH

~ GLADYS P E ISAAC

In the sixties there used to be a movie called' it's a mad mad mad 'world but with the turn of the century it's just not a mad world it is total chaos no one knows what's happening around it's just a mad rush for everything.
In this melee of life to have and maintain good physical and mental health is a herculean task but everyone has to strive for a proper balanced physical and mental health

People who are in good mental health have the ability to recover effectively from illness, change, and miss fortune all of which are imperative in this 21st century. It's not only adults but also young children too who suffer from psychological problems that sometimes manifest as physical problems too. The factors which cause them could range from economic disadvantages, bullying, bereavement, physical disabilities, studies, peer group pressures and so on the list could be endless.
Everyday emotional well-being has to be built up and it involves identifying and building up on and operating on one's strengths rather than on problems or weaknesses.

We have to believe that our lives are important and that one deserves to be happy and secure. if you work on this you will experience healing from anxiety and depression ,will be able to change unhelpful patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving, you will gain self confidence and believe in yourself and you will be able to grow and live your life fruitfully ,healthily, and happily. We have to make ourselves emotionally strong and develop emotional resistance. Young people should be exposed to methods on how to handle conflict, take up responsibilities and how to manage life in general. Adolescence and young adulthood are fraught with changes and growth, how these changes are met during these years will determine one's future life.

An emotionally and mentally strong person will be able to manage and adjust to change, he or she will be able to deal with stress and have a positive self concept they will also have the ability to love and care for others and can act independently to meet his or her needs. Everyone will has problems but those who are emotionally stronger will be able to solve their own problems and in doing so help others to solve theirs and derive happiness and satisfaction in life.

In order to build emotional and mental health one has to observe one's own response and reactions to life then you will know if you are building a good life and how it will affect your personal well being and future. Emotional wellbeing can be likened to a well. When the water is pure and clear it gives life to all who drink of it

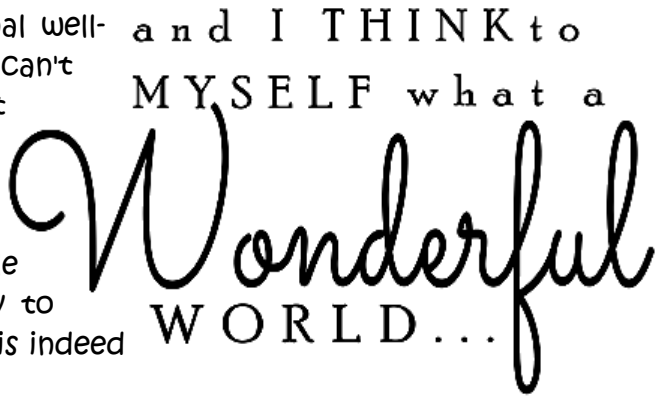
but when the water becomes toxic it corrodes one's own life and that of the others who drink of it.

One must build resilience to live in this modern world, learn to maintain flexibility and balance in life. One may have to deal with traumatic experiences, stressful circumstances but one has to learn to rise above them, step forward and deal with problems and step back and take stock and assess oneself. Sarah Stewart Brown a well being expert from the University of Warwick has said that feeling happy is just a part of mental well-being and it's far from the whole. Good mental well-being does not mean you never experience negative feelings or situations you find different but it does mean that you have the resilience to cope when times are tougher than usual.
No one can give well being to you it is you who has to take action it is something that you have to do. The more you put in the more you are likely to get out .so be content ,be active ,keep learning ,give to others, be mindful, aware of your thoughts feelings, your body and the world around you, that is conscious mindfulness.

Mental health and wellbeing are not two sets of words that need to be separated they go hand in hand, if there is no mental health there is no well being and wellbeing is possible only if one is mentally sound. Imagine a scenario where someone who has a proper job a wonderful family and a pleasant lifestyle suddenly feels and does crazy things he feels and acts weird it may happen frequently or once in a while there are two options open to the person, one, he just bears it out alone or he can take the help of a doctor or his friends or family and the things get worse and worse till it goes out of control. The second option is where he or she takes the help of a qualified doctor and tells the family and others and takes them into confidence and together they will be able to solve and help the person and then he could surely live a healthy and happy life.

We need to start making people aware of the fact that we all could be susceptible to small mental illnesses which they can be cured if there is proper intervention; there is no need to suffer from mental illness today. There are a lot of people to help out there we just have to reach out and make use of them. Mahatma Gandhi has said it is health which is real and not pieces of gold or silver.

Good health contributes to the emotional well-being and happiness of a person. Money can't buy happiness and happiness is not dependent on wealth, so what we have to do is to be active, think positive, have friends, enjoy a good family life, be aware of the surroundings and the people around, and remember be happy and try to make others happy and u will find that it is indeed a wonderful life and a wonderful world.



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING AMONG ADOLESCENTS

~ Anita Naidu

She was an absolute enigma – A beautiful doe-eyed beauty but always wore a forlorn and lost look- an intelligent 12th grader who seemed fettered and cramped and wanted an outlet…..When I cajoled her to mingle with her friends, she confided, "Ma'am I don't know what to talk, I open my books but cannot study, I have lost the ability to smile." After interacting with her mother and talking to the child I realized that this intelligent girl was a victim of severe anxiety and depression. The startling facts she revealed about her home scenario made me cringe with shame and fear and it was then I realized that sometimes our children are not safe even at home.

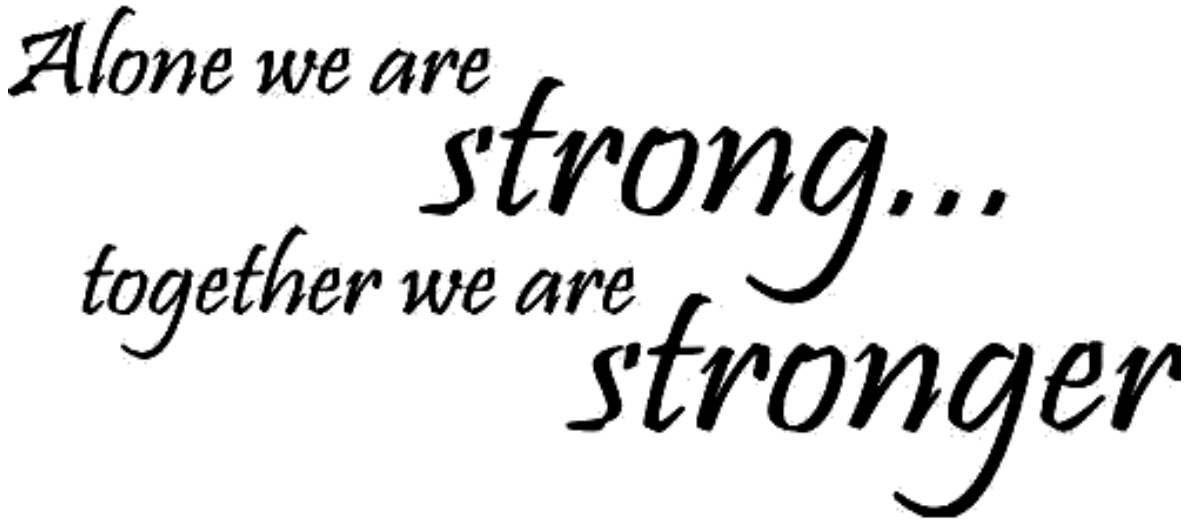
A growing young boy suddenly tells his teacher one day, "Sir, I am a Gay and I am not ashamed of it." The boy was so vocal and so honest in his expression that the teacher was flabbergasted and was not able to accept such a statement. Can educators or Indian parents digest such things so easily? How many parents are prepared to take their children to therapists or counselors for discussing such delicate issues?

The **present age is the age of Liberty and freedom**. The highly competitive fast paced world is fraught with elements that severely affect growing children. Intense peer pressure, parental expectations, insecurity etc have changed the texture of an adolescent's life. As compared to previous centuries our young adolescents today are overwhelmed with rising levels of depression, anxiety disorders and the associated loss of mental and emotional well being. The environment today is so cramped and unfriendly that it debars our children to become a wholesome personality.

During my educational journey of twenty five years, I have dealt with hundreds of children with behavioral issues. Children are not born immoral or indisciplined. The "problem child" as we term them is actually the problem of the child. When we empathetically peek into the background of such students we will find how crushed these blooming buds are. Family dysfunctions, divorce of parents, poor parenting skills, early experimentation with drugs, alcohol, sex etc may be stories behind their troubled behavior. Educational institutions today are posed with the challenges of growing number of students with serious psychological problems. "Troubled" students with behavioral disorders sometimes are a threat to others on campus i.e. their friends, classmates, teachers etc in terms of disturbing, disruptive, aggressive or violent behavior. Mental health problems can have a profound effect on all aspects of students physical, emotional, cognitive and interpersonal functioning.

Mental Health and Well being are not two entities but two ends of a single entity- each balancing the other. Bodily ill health has its effects on the mind and likewise mental ill health also has its reaction on the body. As Sound Mind in a Sound body so is its reverse. What our society needs today is Mentally healthy children who have a wholesome balanced personality. The role of Educational institutions in today's scenario is more than just imparting and facilitating knowledge....Teachers need to go beyond the 'chalk and duster'. They have to act as Mentors, Facilitators and Counselors, work in tandem with the parents for the proper upbringing of the children. Taking action and raising awareness of mental health conditions can break down obstacles and improve the chance of recovery. Parents and teachers should recognize the warning signs, and should never hesitate to seek professional help when required. Together we need to fight the stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for equal care.....

After all healthy children are required for a Healthy Nation.



POSITIVE RECOVERY: ON THE PATH TO MENTAL WELLBEING

~ Sonia Paul

Drowning in Monday morning blues, slipped on the bathroom floor, elevator went bonkers on you, missed the daily local train/bus, late for office; we've already termed it the "worst day ever" in what consumed just the first few slots of a 24 hour day, we've already imposed a miniscule of negativity on our grey matter. What follows throughout the day is just built upon that fragment of antagonism and before we know it, our mind is clogged up with negativity entwined with frustration, anger and irritation. We humans, lost in the daily humdrum of affairs often forget how deep an impact these small things have on our mental health.

So, what is mental health?

According to a report furnished by the World Health Organization (WHO), 'mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.' While most of us will sweep the topic of mental health under the carpet, it is quite worthwhile to realize that mental health and well-being go hand-in-hand and an adverse effect on it can cause deterioration in complete setup of our human body, gradually turning into a case of mental illness. Nonetheless there is a myriad of theories and practices that talk about not falling in the trap of the illness and maintaining the health.

The first step towards a better mental health is Positive Recovery. According to Sarah Stewart Brown, Professor of public health, University of Warwick "feeling happy is a part of mental well-being... feelings of contentment, enjoyment, confidence and engagement with the world are all a part of mental well-being. This includes self-esteem and self-confidence as well." While this does not expunge the possibilities of us falling into dire situations, it acts more like a life support in combating situations and maintaining a positive approach towards it [aal izz well... if you know what I mean].

The second conjuncture to maintaining mental well-being is knowing how to deal with mental disorders. Now, this might come as a surprise to you, but even something as simple as stress is a kind of a disorder. According to a report outlined by WHO, mental disorders are important risk factors for other diseases, as well as unintentional and intentional injury, thus making us more susceptible to other diseases, namely cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and vice versa. Combating stress is as simple as acquiring it, as one has to keep a positive outlook towards 'life', start looking at the bigger picture and realizing that every failure and fall-out is temporary and will pass. Lastly, the thing that remains of importance is to realize that our mind (control center) is what defines us as a human and dysfunction of any kind can change our well-patterned life, affecting others around us too.

ENSURING MENTAL HEALTH: SUPPORT AND CARE

~Rajni Sonar

Mental Health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. Your Mental Health doesn't always stay the same. It can change as circumstances change and as you move through different stages of your life.

If you are in good Mental Health, you can-

- Make the most of your potential
- Cope with life
- Play a full part in your family, workplace, community and among friends

Importance of Mental Health

Mental Health is everyone's business . We all have times when we feel down or stressed or frightened . Most of the time those feelings pass. But sometimes they develop into a more serious problem and that could happen to any of us. Good mental-health is a sense of well-being, confidence and Self-Esteem.

- When we are mentally healthy we can,
- Form positive relationships
- Use our abilities to reach our potential
- Deal with life's challenges

Well-Being

It basically defines the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy.
Well- Being is simply defined as feeling good and functioning well.
There are five simple and practical steps that we can take to improve our well being-

- Connect with the people around you
- Being physically active is good for the mind and the body
- Become aware of the world around you
- Keep learning new skills and set yourself challenges
- Be a good citizen and help others.

Importance

Improving your well being not only leads to the prevention of disease, but can lead to outcomes that include:

- Better Physical health
- Healthier lifestyles
- Improved recovery from illness

- Fever limitations in daily living
- Higher educational attainment
- Greater productivity, employment and earnings
- Better relationships with adults &children
- More Social cohesion & engagement

Types of mental illness faced by young people today:

Mental Illness are of different types but some of the major types are depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, bipolar mood disorder, personality disorders, trauma and eating disorder

Mental Illness is a condition that impacts a person's thinking , feeling or mood and may affect his or her ability to relate to others and function on a daily basis. For eg- Bi-polar Disorder

Types of Mental Health Problems are-

1) Anxiety & Panic attacks
2) Bipolar Disorder
3) Body Dysmorphic Disorder
4) Personality Disorder
5) Dissociative Disorder
6) Drugs Addiction
7) Eating Problems
8) Hearing Voices
9) Hypomania & Mania
10) Loneliness
11) Depression

One of the most prevalent types of mental **illness** faced by young people today is **Depression**

Depression is one of the most common problems in the world today, affecting all the age groups. (25% of the youth suffer)
The National Institute of Mental Health in U.S.A calls Depression "The common cold "of Psychological Disorders.

Why does it occur?

Many people believe that wealth is a fast track to happiness. But it's not true.
Various international studies have shown that it is the quality of our personal relationships, not the size of our bank balance, which has the greatest effect on our state of wellbeing.

Research shows that people who pursue "extrinsic " goals like money and fame are more anxious , depressed & dissatisfied then people who value "intrinsic" goals like close relationship with loved ones.

The Symptoms and causes of depression manifested in 3 ways:

1) There is disturbance in the person thoughts. The person becomes passive develops "nothing matters" attitude.

2) Self-esteem + Self Confidence levels disrupt.

3) Loses interest in regular, routine activity and the activities which brought pleasure earlier. Example, food, music, studies, work etc.

4) Suicidal thoughts.

5) Self-pity.

People who are in depression are themselves the root cause of their problem. Outsiders may think someone is torturing them but slowly they withdraw and get into their own shell like snails. Lack of energy, lethargic hormonal changes, physiological function can get disturbed , loose weight in a drastic way or gain weight.

Mainly "Sleeplessness" is the major cause& symptoms in depression because all the negative thoughts comes to them.

First indication that depression setting in is constant feeling of Sadness, excessive anger, fear, guilt, tears and irritability.

Emotion is a core level which cause depression. Emotion has to be managed and regulated then it will save us. We should not let emotion overcome us.

Stress related obsessive behaviour and substance abuse:

Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) is a mental disorder where people feel they need to perform certain routine activity repeatedly. For example, Hand washing, counting of things

Inspite of a range of theories and considerable research scientist so far have not been able to identify a definitive cause for a person developing OCD.

However it is believed that OCD is likely to be the result of a combination of genetic, behavioral or environmental factors. That triggers the disorder in a specific individual at a particular point of time.

Depression is also sometimes thought to cause OCD, although again opinion is split, with the majority of experts believing that depression is often a symptom of OCD rather than a cause.

Substance Abuse:

It is well established that the effects of stress can damage people's mental and physical well-being. It is not so much that stress is bad but that people have an inability to deal with it. One of the ways that individual may attempt to manage their stress is by using alcohol or drugs. This type of Self-medication can provide temporary relief but is ultimately self-defeating.

Ways of dealing with stress:

1) Exercise regularly
2) Eat healthy Meals
3) Get enough Sleep
4) Talk about or Express your feelings
5) Spend time with friends and loved ones
6) Develop new skills
7) Relax & enjoy your hobbies
8) Set realistic goals
9) Talk to your health professional

What to do in case of sudden trauma and set back?

Body – Focused Therapies can help to control your distress. This includes physiotherapy and osteopathy but also complementary therapies such as massage, yoga, meditation can help you to develop ways of relaxing and managing stress and trauma.

It is always suggested that trauma-focused psychological therapies should be offered before medication, wherever possible.

Ensuring mental Well-Being:

We all want to feel good about ourselves and the world around us and be able to get the most from our lives.

There is also evidence that good mental well being is important for our physical health and that it can help us achieve the goals we set for ourselves.

Providing Care and Support for Mental illness:

Caring for someone with Mental Health Problems brings unique challenges

1) Encourage the person you're supporting to be independent & take part in everyday activities.

2) Treat people who have mental health problems with dignity & respect.

3) Support their choices and encourage their efforts to get well.

4) People with mental health & substance use problems have a right to take an equal part in society. Let's make sure it happens.

5) Openly talk about mental health problems which will help others realize the scientific fact that mental health issues are medical issues and they need to be understood & treated.

6) Mental Health also starts with each individual & take care of your own mental health by doing what you need to do to remain mentally well.

7) If its medication or meditation, do what it takes to keep your mind healthy

"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not destroyed. ~ 2 Corinthians 4:8-9

Positive testimonies and encouraging stories of courage

Mrs. Neera is a 27 year old married woman, from Uttar Pradesh. After her marriage she came down to Bangalore and started living with her husband .Her husband was an IT Professional who was busy with his work and her mother-in –law use to interfere in their personal matter through phone from UP. She had no friends, no support where she can go share her talks and resolve the problems so she was very lonely and frustrated after marriage. She believed that she could be friends only through her husband's approval or if he's a part of it.

Then when she came for counseling it was understood that she was a very skillful girl because she had learned Yoga before and even she herself didn't realize the fact that she can teach yoga in a city like Bangalore where people are ready to pay for it and learn .But the motive was not to earn money, more that that was to socialize and make friends to make herself busy. After counseling the belief was encouraged that she is an educated, independent, talented woman who is capable to manage herself where the husband's involvement is not necessary all the time. She volunteered herself into Art of Living and she started teaching yoga to a lot of young girls. She opened up more and started to see herself as a whole self.

She turned up to the therapy and was assertive with relation to her husband and even he sort of realize that she's happy and adapting herself in a free liberal city like Bangalore. This is how Counseling made an effort in making a difference in her life.

Finding a Therapist who can help you heal

Therapy can be an effective treatment for mental and emotional problems. Someone you trust who makes you feel cared for and the experience to help you make changes for the better in your life.

A good therapist helps you to become stronger and more self-aware. But you have to be an active participant to make the most of your sessions.
Talking about your thoughts and feelings with a supportive person makes you feel better. It can be very healing to talk about something that's on your mind. And it feels good to know that someone else cares about you and wants to help you.

It can be great help when you can share your problems with family members and friends but sometimes we need help that people around us are not able to provide.
When you need extra support or some expert guidance talking to a therapist and counsellor can help.
Therapist are professionally trained listeners who can help you get to the root of your problems overcome emotional challenges and make positive changes in your life.

When to stop Therapy or counseling:

When to stop therapy depends on you and your individual situation. Ideally you will stop Therapy, when you and your therapist have decided that you have met your goals.
Leaving therapy can be difficult. Remember that the therapeutic relationship is a strong bond, and ending this relationship is a loss-even if treatment has been successful. Talk about this with your therapist. These feelings are normal. It's not common for people to go back briefly to a therapist from time to time as needs arise.

Some people continue to go to therapy on an ongoing basis, especially if you don't have other people to turn for support in your life. Ideally, your therapist will be able to help you develop outside sources of support, but that's not always possible. If therapy meets an important need in life and the expenses are not an issue, continuing indefinitely is a legitimate choice.

Facilitating a Mental Health Session with peer group

Mostly when people are not able to cope with their physical illness they face a lot of stress and have Mental Health problems. For Example, Diabetes

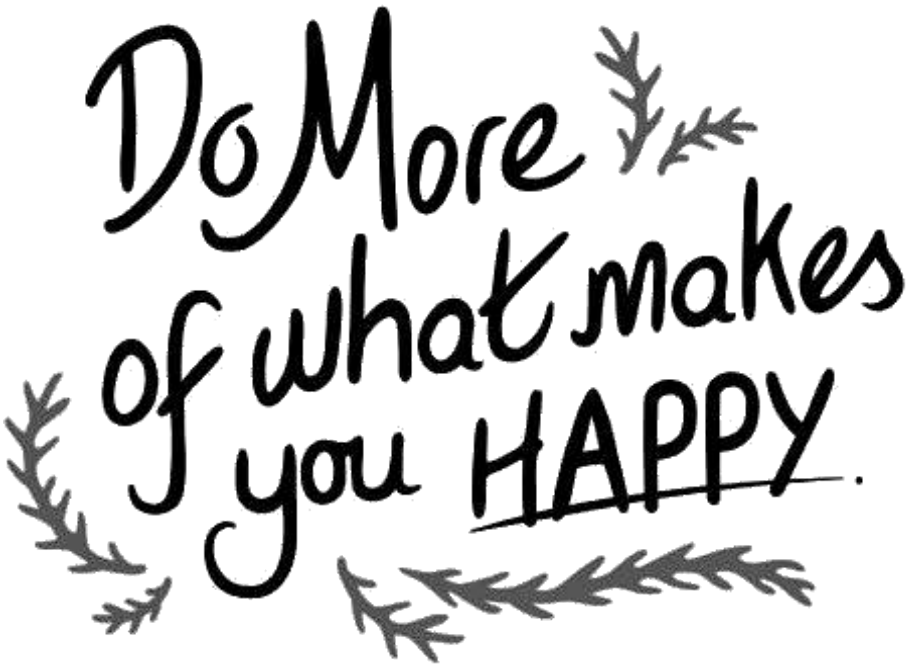
Facilitating peer support groups requires time and resources. If an organization is considering providing a mental health peer support group then the need should be emphasized to allocate dedicated resources. It is therefore important for organizations to provide ongoing, timely and appropriate support to them throughout the process.

The Project goal is to increase the skills of mental health peer supporters in providing support for the prevention or self-management of diabetes in the high-risk population of people living with a serious mental illness, and to increase awareness in the diabetes community of the role mental self management.

Through the training program, peer supporters learn that they can best support others in the prevention and self management of diabetes by:

1) Actively listening to what a peer needs and wants with respect to their physical health and wellbeing, and meaningfully sharing their knowledge, experiences and perspectives.

2) Developing competency in encouraging peer self-care or strengthening peer support or promoting peer self-advocacy.



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING

~ Dr. V. Sabitha

Every day two Bulls fight
In every person's mind.
Positive and negative thinking
Do you know who wins?????
'The one you feed' wins

WHO defines health as complete physical psychological, social & spiritual well being. Mental Health is defined as a state of well being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential and can cope with the normal stressors of life. They work productively and fruitfully and are able to contribute to his or her community (WHO, 2007)

Mental Health is a major health issue across the globe especially in this current era. It is an integral part of health – indeed there is no health without Mental Health. Mental Health includes our emotional, psychological and social well being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It is not simply the absence of diagnosable mental health problems. People who are emotionally healthy are in control of their emotions and behavior. It includes our way of interaction with others, contribution to the community, dealing with stressful situations, participating and sharing of interests and maintaining harmony within ourselves and the environment.

The presence of positive characteristics is one of the hallmarks of mental and emotional health. There were two neighbors A and B. A daily disposes their household wastes in the dustbin while B disposes it in the road side itself. A observed B's activity and instructed her not to do so. B did not respond and continued as usual. Thus A daily started carrying her neighbor's waste from the roadside to the dustbin. This continued for a week and later when B; while walking on the road happened to stamp on the waste she disposed and incurred injury, after which she realized her mistake. If A had felt bad about B's behavior and had started fighting with her, there would have been a great chaos every time. If B had complied to A's instruction, beforehand, she could have avoided the injury and maintained a harmonious relationship.

To the contrary, everyone suffers from mental health problems at one point of time or the other in their life and such temporary problems do not necessarily lead to mental illness. However, being mentally unhealthy limits one's potential as a human being and may lead to more serious problems.

Being emotionally and mentally healthy does not mean never going through bad times or experiencing emotional problems. We all go through disappointment, loss

and change. Even though these are part and parcel of one's life, it can still cause sadness, anxiety and stress.

The difference is that people with good emotional health have an ability to bounce back from adversity, trauma and stress. This ability is called *'Resilience'.* People who are emotionally and mentally healthy have the tools for coping with difficult situations and maintaining a positive outlook. They remain focused, flexible and creative in bad times as well as good.

One of the key factors in resilience is the ability to balance stress and your emotions. The capacity to recognize your emotions and express them appropriately helps you avoid getting struck in depression, anxiety or other negative mood states.

Each individual is different. Mental health does not always stay the same in individuals. It can change as circumstances change and as one moves through different stages of life. Being in *good adjustment* with the people and the environment is essential for good mental health. What is important is the capacity to handle frustrations and disappointments in life and the emotional maturity to regulate emotions and express it in a desirable manner.

Mental health problems are increasing due to pressures in life. Many people experience problems when they try to balance the demands of work or studies and family and leisure activities. In order to maintain and strengthen your mental and emotional health, it is important to pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Do not let stress and negative emotions build up in you. Try to maintain a balance between your daily responsibilities and the things you enjoy.

If you **take care of yourself** you will be better prepared to deal with challenges, as and when they arise.

Some techniques to maintain good mental health

1. Sharing with others:

Sharing problems with people who are attentive and provide moral support and encouragement will reduce the intensity of problems and helps us to stay in good mental health.

2. Regular exercises:

Physical activity releases endorphins from the body which in turn boost a person's self esteem, concentration and provides a sense of well being.

3. Healthy Lifestyle:

'Your food will be your medicine'- Hippocrates

Balanced diet and adequate sleep are the two very important factors in maintaining good physical and mental health.

4. Meditation and Yoga:

Meditation is a skill of effortlessly minimizing mental activity so that the body settles into a state of rest, deeper than deep sleep, while the mind becomes clear and alert. It is very effective to improve mental well being, concentration, behavioral regulation and inter-personal relationships.

5. Appeal to your senses:

Activities like listening to music, smelling flowers, massaging your body or having a warm drink etc. makes you energized and refreshed.

6. Engaging in meaningful creative work:

Engaging in activities like gardening, writing, drawing, painting, playing instruments make you productive despite getting paid for it and helps to imbibe positive thoughts.

7. Make leisure time a priority:

Always find time to engage in activities that makes a person feel good, like watching funny movies, going to a beach, reading a good book etc.

Positive aspects of emotional and mental health allow one to participate in life to the fullest extent possible through productive meaningful activities and strong relationships. It also helps one to cope up with life's challenges and stressors.

Mental health can be a rewarding experience benefitting all aspects of life including boosting your mood, building resilience, improving productivity and performance and finally contributing to one's overall well being

MENTAL ILLNESS A GROWING PROBLEM TODAY

~ Dr. Shakuntala David

Kids and teens are constantly changing. They grow up quickly and before anyone knows, our giggly, energetic toddler is a teenager who sleeps until noon. As we grow, it's normal to change as we learn new things and our bodies transform into our adult selves. But with all these changes going on, how can we tell what changes are normal? At what point should we start worrying that a child's tantrums or teenager's mood swings are more than just "growing pains?" It can be hard to tell. The truth is, for many kids, these sudden changes aren't just a part of growing up—they're symptoms of a mental illness.

What Is Mental Health?

It is a health condition characterized by alterations in thinking, mood or behavior (or a combination of the three).
Mental disorders are mediated by the brain and associated with distress and/or impaired functioning.

They can be the result of family history, genetics or other biological, environmental, social or behavioral factors that occur alone or in combination.
Mental illnesses can affect how well kids do in school and how they form relationships with other kids and adults. Mental illnesses, if not treated early, can be disruptive enough to a normal development that can affect children and young people for the rest of their lives.

Below are some common mental illnesses that affect children and teens:

- **Anxiety Disorders:**

  are the most common illness to affect children and youth. About 6% of all children experience an anxiety disorder at some point. Anxiety disorders can cause one to be extremely afraid of things or situations to the point that it interferes with daily life and routine .

- **Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (Adhd):**

  affects just under 5% of children at any given time. ADHD makes it very difficult for children to focus their attention and retention. A child with ADHD is also more impulsive and harder to settle down than other children.

- **Conduct Disorder Affects Children:**

  It leads children to be extremely aggressive and destructive behaviour towards other people, pets or property. They may also seem like they don't care about important but basic rules, such as by doing things like regularly skipping school or running away from home.

- **Depression:**

  is a mood disorder that shows up most often during the teenage years. About 4% of young people experience depression. Depression can affect a child or youth's attitudes and emotions, making them feel unusually sad or irritated if for more than two weeks at a time then it is disrupting normal life.

- **Psychosis:**

  is a condition that involves loss of contact with reality. It affects 3% of the total population but most often appears later in adolescence and early adulthood. It can be seen on its own or is a combination of many collective symptoms.

- **Bipolar Disorder:**

  is a mood disorder in young people. It usually starts during the teenage years, but in rare cases, it may be seen in younger children. Bipolar disorder can cause a young person's moods to change back and forth between extremely high moods, called mania, and extremely low moods, called depression.

- **Eating Disorders:**

  are less common in young children, but the risk increases with age. Anorexia and bulimia affects young males and females aged 15-30. Eating disorders involve a distorted body image along with seriously harmful behaviours to manage food and weight, making it difficult to nourish oneself properly.

- **Schizophrenia:**

  affects about 1% of the total population, and usually shows up between the ages of 15 and 25. Schizophrenia makes it hard for people to think and speak in an organized way. It can also cause people to lose touch with reality and hallucinate.

- **Suicide:**

  often goes alongside a mental illness. Suicide continues to be the second leading cause of death among 15 to 24 year-olds, after motor vehicle accidents. Suicidal thinking or attempts are also common. A survey found that in one year, 5% of youth had made a suicide attempt and 12% seriously thought about suicide.

Who Does It Affect?

Just as with adults, mental illnesses can affect children and teens from all family types and cultural and socio economic backgrounds. Children and teens in certain situations, though, can be at higher risk for mental illnesses and may also face additional barriers to getting help.

Some of these situations include:

- Young people with a family history of mental illness
- New immigrants and refugees
- Dalit children and youth – facing hostility and abuse in society
- Children living in urban slums
- Young people who've gone through a major life change such as moving to a new city/ new country or new school
- Young people who have faced or witnessed trauma, including -abuse social /physical/emotional or sexual
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered youth
- Young people with substance use problems
- To name a few vulnerable population…

Could My Child; My Friend; My Sibling Have A Mental Illness?

It can be hard to tell the difference between normal changes as a child grows, and the symptoms of mental illness.

Watch out for:

- Shown sudden changes in their behaviour? (e.g., an active child becomes quiet and withdrawn or a good student suddenly starts getting poor grades)
- Suddenly changed their feelings? (e.g., a child may show signs of feeling unhappy, worried, guilty, angry, fearful, hopeless or rejected)
- Start avoiding places or situations that others don't routinely avoid?
- Recently complained of physical problems like frequent headaches or stomach aches, problems eating or sleeping, or a general lack of energy?
- Start suddenly keeping to themselves?
- Start to use (or is using more) alcohol or other drugs, especially when alone?

- Shown signs that they're having trouble coping with regular activities and everyday problems?
- Shown little regard for the feelings or property of others?
- Expressed terror or disgust over their weight, or changed how they eat, in unhealthy ways?
- Start making odd or repetitive movements beyond regular playing?
- Deliberately hurt themselves or talk of suicide?

If someone is showing one or more of these changes, and it's impacting their daily life, the best thing to do is talk to them about how they're feeling and then talk to the family doctor to rule out other complications. Keep in mind that all talk of suicide must be taken seriously.

What Can We Do About It?

Unfortunately, only one in five children and teens in India who need mental health treatment cannot get it. There are many reasons for this. Parents; teachers and caregivers have mixed feelings about acknowledging the fact that children and teens need help for mental illness; like any other physical illness. They may worry about being blamed for their child's change in behaviour and the social stigma around mental health in India. Mental illnesses can be frightening, and many people worry what others will think if they talk about their experiences.

The good news is that mental illnesses can be treated successfully, and early treatment can help reduce the impact of a mental illness on a young person's life. The kind of treatment that works best for a person will depend on his or her needs. Talking to a counsellor or doctor to learn more about the different options is helpful.

Counseling:

- Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy—
  Helps young people recognize and change thinking patterns and behaviours that are not good for their mental health

- Family Therapy—
  Can helps to look at what one can do as a family to help children and young people through their mental illness, and manage behaviours.

- Interpersonal Therapy—
  Helps young people to feel more comfortable interacting with others.

- Educational Interventions—
  Can help young people by teaching them ways to manage the time/lessons and exams in our country educational set up.

Medication:

There many different types of medications that are being prescribed for children and young people including medications for mood, for anxiety, for psychosis, and for ADHD. If the person is not comfortable taking medications, then express it openly to the doctor. They can explain which medications, if any, would be right for the child and go over the benefits and risks of medications. For young people, medications are usually not the first type of treatment considered. If they're suggested, they are usually meant to work in connection with other treatments or supports.

Support Groups:

For teens, groups of others who've gone through or are going through what you're going through (sometimes called peer support groups)
Groups for family members of someone with a mental illness, including children, to meet other families in similar situations

YWCA's Can Look At:

- Having trained counselors in mental health to be part of the counseling centers
- Create awareness about mental illness issues at all levels
- Confront social stigma by providing safe spaces for children; young people and families
- Running and facilitation support group

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF ADOLESCENTS

~ Ragamala Rahi Datta

School, family and peer groups are considered to be the major socializing agents of an individual. He/she immediately comes into contact with these agents once he/she steps inside the earth as a human being. The individual becomes a constituent of these agents, which ends up influencing his/her decisions and choices in the future. Taking into contemplation, the important role these socializing agents play in an individual's life, right from birth to old age, this article aims to focus mainly on the mental health and development of an individual at the adolescent period: the process of developing from a child into an adult. This also talks about the problems one faces during adolescence in terms of emotional, psychological and social well being.

An individual's life starts with his/her family members, and in his/her journey of life, he/she ends up interacting with other socializing agents. For example, when a child initially starts going to school, he does not come as a clean slate, but already has a different set of values and beliefs earlier learnt in context of living around his family members and relatives. The attitude, beliefs and behavior patterns that the people exhibit around the child have a great impact on him since they are the first adult model. This is an ongoing process where the child develops various ideas and beliefs over a period of time. With so many ideas, belief and attitudes, constantly going on in and around someone's head for a long time, may create a conflict in an individual's mind leading to emergence of mental health problems. Studies conducted by WHO has shown that mental health problems are more likely to emerge in late childhood and early adolescence. In particular, depression is the largest cause of the burden of disease among young people.

We often discuss the importance of physical health and hygiene but what we really tend to sideline most of the time is about the significance of mental health and wellbeing. As defined in the Annual Report of the World Federation for Mental Health, mental health is "not merely to the absence of mental disorder, but a state in which the individual lines harmoniously with himself/herself and others, adapting to and participating in an ever changing social setting and with the sense that he is achieving self realization through satisfaction of his needs".
Phrasing this simple, mental health means the habituating the individual to him/her and to the world, with sheer efficacy, contentment, enthusiastic and socially considerate behavior, as well as being able to accept the challenges and realities of life.

Mental health is something that doesn't have a degree or level to which one can achieve, but it is something towards which one has to accomplish through various ways. Such as: living a healthy lifestyle by eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, engaging oneself in worthwhile activities , facing new challenges and situations with zest and confidence, accepting one's mistakes and shortcomings and trying to deal it without undue activity.

During the time of adolescence, the body and mind undergoes drastic changes and as an outcome of the physical development, where the body takes on a different appearance, where both the boy and girl experience the strivings and awareness of their sexuality. These experiences are far more conspicuous for girls as they develop faster and earlier than boys. Also their bodily changes become more noticeable. This may make them feel more conscious about their body in presence of their peers of the same age group. Also the adolescent's perception about the world changes, where he/she feels the need to be independent and free. This may lead to emergence of conflicting thoughts within one's mind.

Along with physical changes, adolescents develop certain emotional changes too. For example: feeling overly sensitive about their physical appearance, where they feel irritated quite easily and lose their temper. Adolescence is the process of becoming an adult, where there is an inclination towards finding out one's unique characteristics as an individual and exploring one's true identity. There is also a general tendency to associate more with their friends, rather than their family members. Psychologically, it may be because they feel that they are on the same page with their friends and can connect more to them.

Adolescence is also the period where the individual has crossed his/her late childhood years but is yet to enter the threshold of adulthood, which can potentially lead to an uncertain time. The individual may begin to wonder and think about new and unfamiliar aspects of life such as career, livelihood, etc. The uncertainty becomes more evident when the expectations that people close to the individual expects him/her to take on greater responsibilities than what was expected from as a child. Eventually, the individual grows into the new roles and duties he/she has been prescribed, but this takes time, determined by how they respond to the situations.
One of the major socializing agents, peer groups, may influence the way through which an individual represents the ideas of popular media and the culture that presented to them. The individual feels the need to conform to the norms of the peer group so as to be a part of it. It may be uncomfortable at times and also damages one's like/dislikes over a period of time.

Adolescence is also the phase where the individual develop sexual maturity. The individual develops certain feelings for the opposite sex. The individual develops a more realistic way of thinking and establish an assortment of social relations apart from the family. These problems may not only create an adverse effect on the

individual's physical health and personal life but also his/her mental health and wellbeing.

Individuals during this period are bound to undergo dramatic changes and shifts. But there are other approaches through which these problems can be handled. It all comes down to the individual and the people surrounding him/her. The two major socializing agents that have a prime influence on an individual: the family and school should prepare certain measures and steps through which the individual will be aware of the changes and shifts, once he/she crosses the threshold of late childhood years. The family members and school teacher should try creating a friendly for the individual where one can confide his/her emotions and feelings. It is important to maintain positive relationships where there is respect, empathy and positive ways of resolving conflict. They should try to understand the individual's perspective even if it is not on the same line. The idea should be of creating a secured future for today's individuals can not only be achieved through physical health and education, but also through mental health and wellbeing.

We should all focus on generating mental health as a pragmatic purpose for today's generation.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: EARLY INTERVENTION IS VITAL

~ MALEEHA RAGHAVIAH

There is no individual who can be categorized as 100 per cent fit physically. This is also true with regard to the mental health and well-being of a person. All of us, human beings are plagued by some minor physical deficiency or the other, and similarly in the case of our mental well-being too all individuals are incomplete in varying degrees. However, defining mental health and well-being is a difficult proposition. Who are the persons who suffer from mental health deficiency and need care and counseling? It is only when the deficiency in mental well-being exceeds the parameters set by societal norms that problems surface. In fact, the standards that are set for mental health vary from country to country, and community to community. It varies with time, place, culture and expectations of the particular group. We in India also have set standards of what mental well-being means. A much-accepted definition of mental health goes thus "An individual should be able to stand on her or his own feet without making undue demands or impositions on others."

In the backdrop of the contemporary modern world that is moving at a hectic pace the growing young generation ought to be the focus of our concern. Today, mental health of children and young adults pose one of the greatest social challenges that need to be addressed in a proactive manner, and without any stigma attached to the intervention that need to be undertaken.

When a baby is born, the entire family goes all out to care for it physically. The mother performs the plethora of duties attached to the tending of the baby - from napping changing to breast and bottle feeding and bathing besides administering the immunization and vaccination regimen to strengthen the immune system. As the baby grows, as much as the physical care, the mental well-being of the child needs to be the focus of attention too. Play time with the mother is an integral part of the baby's growing up and essential for the child's development – helping it grow physically, socially and emotionally. It is the mother's presence of helping the baby to walk, introducing it to the outdoors and providing the experience of travelling and exploring new places that will richly pay in developing the child mentally and emotionally.

The teachers and the parents have the responsibility to assist the child cope with the stress of going to school and handling the classroom situation. The child is also faced with the situation of adjusting with peers be it at home, school and the society at large. While some children may not need additional support and intervention in dealing with these situations, in the case of others a helping hand in the form of counseling could be required to tackle life situations.

The contemporary world has visualized different methods to assist children grow up into physically and mentally healthy individuals. Professional training programmes are held for counselors who can be effective guides to growing children. However, it is up to the parents of the child to seek and make use of such assistance when they notice any aberration in the behavior of their child. To accept the situation and ask for intervention at an early stage is vital.

SCHIZOPHRENIA – A MOTHER'S STORY

~ JENNIE TALWALKER

There once was a little boy called Abhay who was the pride and joy of his parents. He had a healthy childhood with no major illnesses and had plenty of friends in the neighbourhood and in school. He was inquisitive, lively and a bit of a mimic which amused his two younger sisters.

At age 11 years his class teacher described him as having original ideas and having the ability to express facts and opinions lucidly. His grades were high across the board and his drawn illustrations had meticulous detail.

So when did this clever, happy boy become sick?It was a very gradual process and so unexpected that neither family nor teachers took the vague signs seriously. Commonly teenagers have emotional ups and downs and even depression without any long-term effects.

Gradually, however his interest in school dropped-off.

Though shy before, now incipient changes of personality occurred like dreaminess, social withdrawal and a preoccupation with mystical thoughts. Possibly it was our love for Abhay which blinded us to his growing distancing from reality. Through college years disturbing behaviour trends showed-up. He seemed almost a different person. On occasions aggressive, with diminishing social skills, even sometimes reluctant to get-up from bed!

No encouragement of ours could lift his moods. His common remarks were, "What is the point?", "I'm bored", Nobody cares", "Why was I born?", "My whole life is a waste."

To fast forward, it is now 30 years from the time a diagnosis of schizo-affective disorder was given to Abhay. The disease, we learned, is a chronic one and hard to treat. He remains physically fit, but shows little will-power or power of concentration for steady employment. He graduated in economics and statistics but cares for neither discipline. He craves appreciation and would like more friends, even a girl-friend. As middle age nears he carries deep regrets for missing his potential achievements. There is no feeling of self-worth. He reads reports of research and longs for the cure which must come one day.

There are millions of schizophrenic patients, in fact 1% of the world population suffers this affliction to some degree. Only the lucky ones have caring families,

good medication or understanding acquaintances who can tolerate their scrambled thinking.

If you know such sufferers remember they are extra sensitive so try to bear with their awkward mood-swings without taking offence. For close relationships this is an on-going strain until the sunshine pops through on occasions revealing the hidden, caring individual underneath the grumpiness.

On Mother's Day Abhay brought me a lovely flower as a surprise! My hope for him was renewed!

WOMEN AND MENTAL HEALTH

~ Aradhana Bordoloi

Mental health can be understood as psychological well-being or the absence of mental/psychological illness.

The famous Austrian psychologist Sigmund Freud defined mental health as the capacity "to work and to love". This is a widely accepted definition of mental health among mental health workers.

Mental Illness:

Psychologically healthy individuals perform mental functions well, have fulfilling relationships with others and cope well with change and adversity. Individuals with mental illness usually cannot perform the above mentioned functions. They have health conditions such as altered thinking, mood or behavior usually characterised by distress and/or dysfunction.

A person with mental illness has a significant burden of disability and distress and depending on its severity it can cause interference in daily functioning or by severely debilitating.

Mental illnesses are of two types:

1) Neurosis: also known as psychoneurosis, neurosis are mental illnesses such as stress, phobias, depression, anxiety disorders etc.

2) Psychosis: psychosis are major illnesses such as schizophrenia, autism, mental retardation etc. they are marked by delusions, hallucinations as well as distorted thinking. They may require psychotic drugs as well as counseling.

Despite being common, mental illness is under diagnosed by doctors. This is because patients are usually hesitant to seek professional help for mental illness due lack of awareness about these problems and the social stigma attached with mental health. Because of this reluctance, mental health is an often neglected aspect of well being. One of the most common and major causes of mental and even physical illnesses are stress. For example exposure to excessive levels of stress can lead to physical diseases like ulcers and heart conditions and mental diseases like depression.

Gender and Mental Health:

Overall rates of mental illnesses are almost similar for both men and women but gender differences are found in patterns of mental illness.

Gender determines the different levels of control men and women have over certain aspects of their lives such as social position, status, treatment in society and susceptibility and exposure to specific mental health risks. Some of these risks are:

- Gender based violence such as Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)
- Socio-economic disadvantage
- Low income
- Subordinate social status

Studies consistently show that women suffer from stress more than men. In a study conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 2006, it was reported that 51% of women suffer from stress compared to 43% of men.

In another study conducted by Nielsen titled "women of tomorrow" of 6,500 women across 21 nations an overwhelming 87% of women in India reported suffering from stress, with 82% asserting they had insufficient time to relax. Given below is a list of the top 10 most stressed countries for women. The percentages indicate the percentage of women claiming to be stressed.

- India (87%)
- Mexico (74%)
- Russia (69%)
- Brazil (67%)
- Spain (66%)
- France (65%)
- South Africa (64%)
- Italy (64%)
- Nigeria (58%)
- Turkey (56%)

One of the reasons for the high level of stress in Indian women is the increasing difficulty of juggling many roles in work and home. While career opportunities are rapidly expanding, family expectations and social norms remain rooted in tradition, so they try to conform to standards of the "ideal daughter", "ideal wife", "ideal daughter-in-law". On top of that women feel they have to overcompensate at work too, to counter imagined notions about their competence.

Stress Management

Women usually neglect their mental health; more so, since they usually put others needs before their own. There are a few steps that can be taken by women to combat stress:

- Exercise
- Avoiding caffeine
- Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing exercises
- Decreasing negative self talk and instead seeing oneself in a positive light
- Taking a break from stressful situation through activities such spending time with loved ones, engaging in hobbies, listening to music etc
- Learning to feel good about competent jobs instead of demanding perfection

The above mentioned techniques can help women combat stress and effectively manage it.

ENSURING MENTAL WELLBEING: REMEDIES

~ DEEPIKA SHARMA

Many mental conditions can be effectively treated with one or a combination of the following remedies:

Keep a diary:
Note the events during which you feel anxious, angry or depressed and the thoughts going through your mind. Write honestly and remember no will be judging you on the basis of what you write.

Meditate:
Meditation makes your mind calmer and more focused. If you do not have too much time, a simple ten minute meditation can help you to overcome your stress and find some inner peace.

Take time out for yourself every day:
Do something for yourself every day. Even 20 minutes of relaxation or doing something pleasurable for yourself can decrease the stress level.
Take care of your body by eating a well balanced diet. Drink lots of water. Try to include yoga or exercise in your routine.

Reach out:
Talk to others face to face or even on the phone. Share what's going on.
Laugh out loud: Talk to someone who makes you happy. Lighten up your mood by watching a comedy movie.

Put your phone down:
Spending hours glued to your phone can promote anxiety and lower self-esteem especially among teenagers. You don't have to waste your time, spending hours sorting through hundreds of photos, to decide which ones to post online. You can make a much better use of your time.

Walk in nature:
A walk in the park or a garden soothes our mind.
Listen to some music: Listening to soothing music is one of the best ways to reduce the stress level. Create your own playlist, relax and enjoy.

Be positive: Think about all the good things in your life. Remember negative thoughts lead to a negative mood state and positive thoughts lead to a positive mood state.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

~ Pragati Chauhan

Mental health is a state of well being in which every individual can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to give contribution to his or her community.

Causes affecting mental health and wellbeing:

Stress: Day to day stress affects our mind as well as our body resulting in poor mental health due to the chemical changes taking place in our brain.

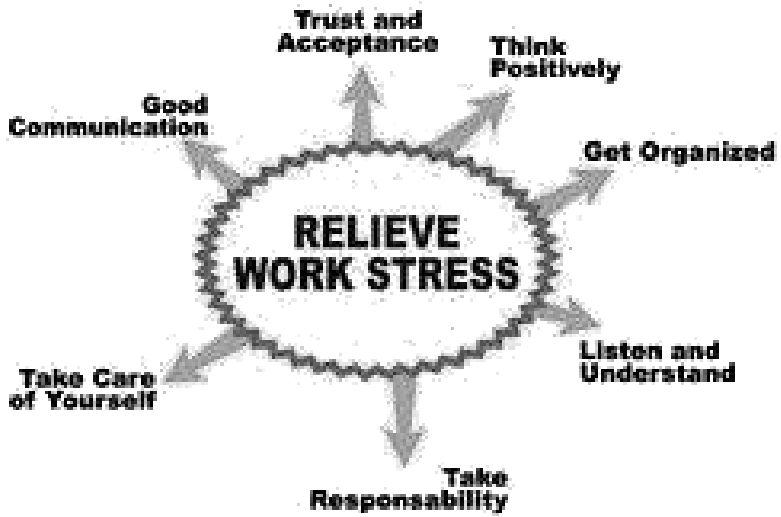
Diet: Unhealthy diet directly affects our physical health which as well affects our mental health also. Unhealthy choices such as excess processed foods, junk food, sweets and food with low nutrient value can cause poor mental health.

Lack of sleep: causes fatigue hence affects the ability of our brain to pick the information required to do the day to day work.

Drugs: interfere with the brain working process hence affecting the messages generated by brain, resulting in poor mental health. They can arouse certain emotions or dampen down others.

Social cause: living in poor conditions or social isolation, abuse, divorce etc. can cause lot of stress hence affecting a person's mental health too.

Heredity: many mental illnesses run in families and is heredity resulting in poor genes and abnormal brain functioning leading to poor mental health.



I CAN'T SAY I CAN'T IF I CAN

~ Amaya P Sohsley

I am a girl who lacks confidence. There are times that I used to say to myself "I can't do things alone". I give many excuses such as I'm too young, I don't have much knowledge, and people might look down on me if I make any mistake, and so on. I never have the confidence or the courage to handle any tasks alone. In spite of the fact that I have qualifications, I sometimes forget that God has chosen me to serve for the needy. I neglected the qualities that God provided me to speak out on behalf of the voiceless.

It happened one fine Sunday, and with one single sentence when the Pastor of that church ask a question "Why Jesus choose to sit on a donkey when He had gone to Jerusalem as a King". He based this question from Mark 11: 2-3. Though we all consider a donkey to be a foolish animal, yet the Pastor reminded the congregation that a donkey also symbolizes an innocent and faithful animal. Jesus chose to sit on a donkey instead of a horse. This message touched me. Similarly people might think that I'm a useless and waste product who do not have the courage or confidence but I'm glad that I have the Almighty God who knows my weaknesses and capability. I now believe that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. No one can close a door for me if God is with me. From now onwards, I do not say that I am not capable of doing the work alone. I motivate myself that I will do it and I will overcome the challenges also one day. Often in my work place, when I have to organize programs I use to worry that the program might not be effective or might not be useful for the people. Now, I commit the program to God and claim His blessings for impacting the people for which it is meant. Indeed every step that I have taken, I have felt God's blessings on me. Indeed my objective in life henceforth is to use my talent for blessing others.

With this message I would like to appeal to all the readers especially, the young girls like me never to lose hope. Instead, to take courage to overcome the difficulties and conquer them. If you are called to be a social worker, ask for God's wisdom and direction; respond to it after committing it to the Lord and move on from your comfort zone. Speak on behalf of the voiceless. Never say that "I cannot do it" like I used to say earlier. Remember that one day we will be judged not only by our faith in Jesus but also by our deeds. Helping people even in a very small way this will make you feel good even if it might not be worthy to others. To help people you do not have to have a good qualification, it requires only a zeal and willingness. Criticisms may arise in future but consider them as stepping stone for success.

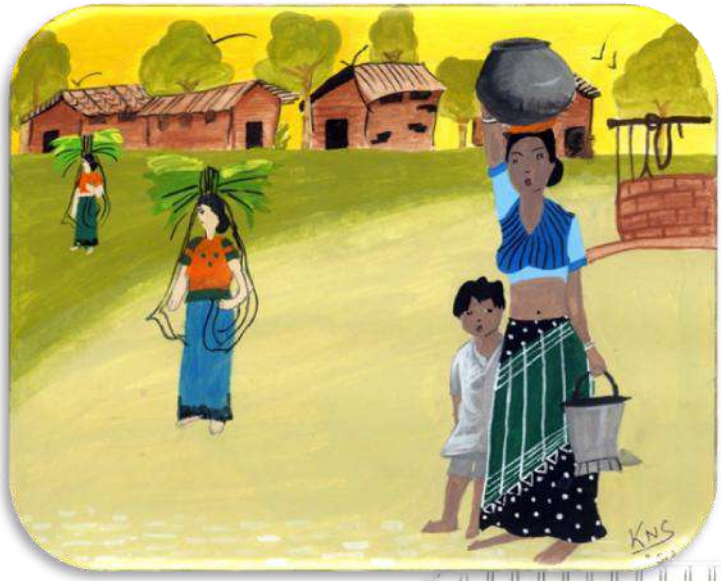
Come on, girls, let us change things and live one day at a time.

TOGETHERNESS: A WAY TO CHILDREN'S GOOD MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

~ Kinshuka

I have grown up experiencing that spending memorable times with parents (more so with one's mother, especially for a girl child) is a factor that affects a child's mental health and well being.

I have tried to depict this through artwork done during my growing years in two settings, urban and rural. The sketch of an infant in the comfort of her mother's lap during leisure time and the painting showing the simple act of a child accompanying his mother for household chores both portray a deep sense of security and bonding. Togetherness during growing years is a wonderful experience for a children and goes a long way in promoting good mental health and general well-being.



MENTAL WELLBEING

~ Rohini Singh

Chapter 6

Activity Page

Crossword Puzzle: Coping with Stress
Part 1

Instructions

- Find the words in the grid by looking Only Forward or Down.
- Circle them with a pencil or use a marker to highlight the letters. Have fun!

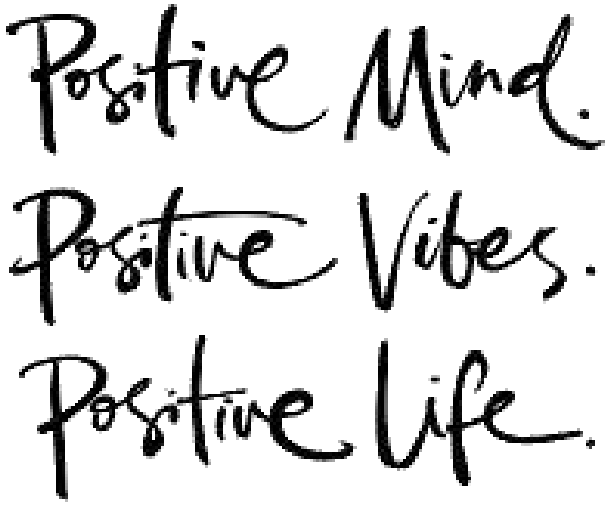
T	I	M	E	M	W	E	L	L	N	E	S	S	D	Z
U	B	J	E	I	C	T	A	E	S	T	R	E	S	S
E	A	P	U	N	F	H	S	I	N	H	D	Z	R	E
V	L	J	C	D	S	O	K	S	S	K	T	I	E	X
T	A	M	O	A	X	U	F	U	U	R	D	N	D	E
E	N	A	P	N	Y	G	O	R	P	E	T	P	U	R
N	C	N	I	D	U	H	R	E	T	L	W	O	C	C
S	E	A	N	B	V	T	H	T	I	A	A	S	T	I
E	P	G	G	O	S	S	E	I	G	X	F	I	I	S
N	F	E	W	D	M	W	L	M	H	I	I	T	O	E
C	L	M	I	Y	A	Z	P	E	T	N	N	I	N	T
B	O	E	T	F	O	O	D	S	U	G	A	V	P	R
E	O	N	H	C	A	T	T	I	T	U	D	E	L	Y
C	D	T	C	J	K	H	E	A	L	T	H	Y	A	X
C	G	O	O	D	N	U	T	R	I	T	I	O	N	Y

ASK FOR HELP	HEALTHY	RELAXING
ATTITUDE	LEISURE TIME	STRESS
BALANCE	MANAGEMENT	TENSE
COPING WITH	MIND AND BODY	THOUGHTS
EXERCISE	NUTRITION	TIME
FOODS	POSITIVE	FLOOD
GOOD	REDUCTION PLAN	WELLNESS

Answers

Part 1

T	I	M	E	M	W	E	L	L	N	E	S	S	*	*
*	B	*	*	I	*	T	A	E	S	T	R	E	S	S
*	A	*	*	N	*	H	S	I	*	*	*	*	R	E
*	L	*	C	D	*	O	K	S	*	*	*	*	E	X
T	A	M	O	A	*	U	F	U	*	R	*	*	D	E
E	N	A	P	N	*	G	O	R	*	E	*	P	U	R
N	C	N	I	D	*	H	R	E	*	L	*	O	C	C
S	E	A	N	B	*	T	H	T	*	A	*	S	T	I
E	*	G	G	O	*	S	E	I	*	X	*	I	I	S
*	*	E	W	D	*	*	L	M	*	I	*	T	O	E
*	*	M	I	Y	*	*	P	E	*	N	*	I	N	*
*	*	E	T	F	O	O	D	S	*	G	*	V	P	*
*	*	N	H	*	A	T	T	I	T	U	D	E	L	*
*	*	T	*	*	*	H	E	A	L	T	H	Y	A	*
*	G	O	O	D	N	U	T	R	I	T	I	O	N	*



Crossword Puzzle: Mental Health
Part 2

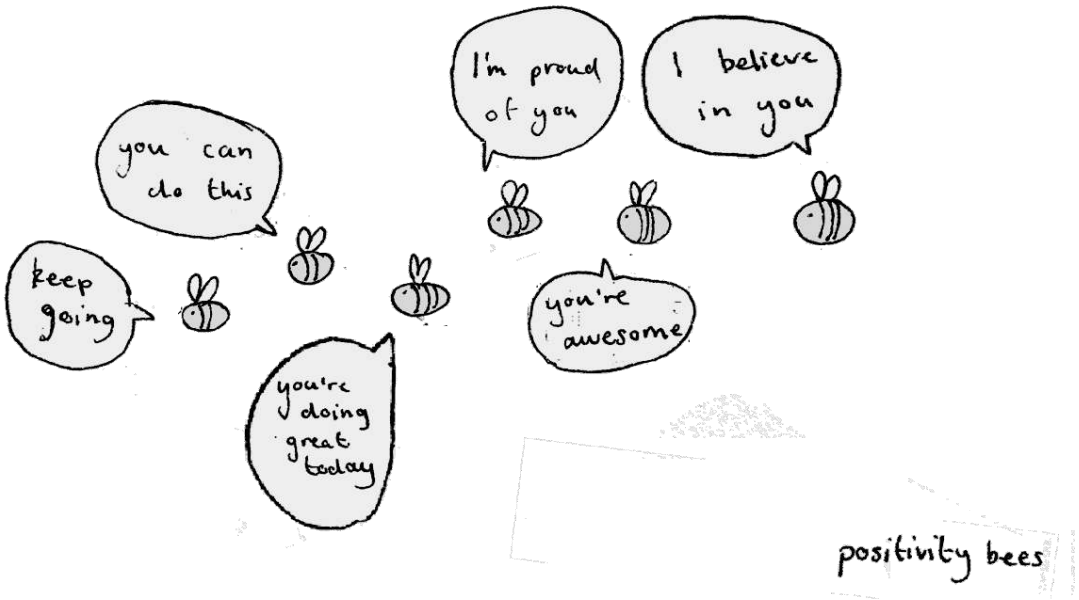
Instructions

- Find the words in the grid by looking Only Forward or Down.
- Circle them with a pencil or use a marker to highlight the letters. Have fun!

L	L	L	S	H	A	P	P	I	N	E	S	S	O	R	H	M	E	W	A	O
T	P	B	S	K	S	E	G	N	E	L	L	A	H	C	C	I	W	R	O	A
A	E	D	V	D	E	N	I	A	L	A	U	T	O	N	O	M	Y	S	A	S
O	R	P	R	O	M	O	T	I	N	G	P	O	Y	A	U	U	L	S	E	E
G	S	L	A	T	N	E	M	P	O	L	E	V	E	D	I	A	N	L	U	I
S	O	D	D	O	U	B	T	I	N	G	O	R	J	R	I	O	F	R	E	T
U	N	I	V	O	L	T	A	A	G	L	T	C	D	C	I	-	T	T	W	E
P	A	M	I	G	G	E	U	E	U	N	E	D	O	T	A	S	A	M	I	R
P	L	H	S	E	E	I	E	F	E	N	E	S	A	C	E	R	E	S	E	Y
R	I	L	U	O	L	O	T	M	O	S	S	M	T	I	E	F	L	I	B	T
E	T	L	A	J	M	H	R	I	S	E	R	U	C	D	L	A	H	C	E	I
S	Y	I	L	T	G	E	S	E	I	I	A	N	I	E	E	E	U	I	L	T
S	H	L	S	U	W	S	R	R	F	L	E	S	S	O	E	O	U	T	O	N
I	T	I	O	O	E	P	A	F	I	T	N	A	N	G	E	R	N	I	N	E
O	C	H	P	R	E	D	A	Z	E	O	T	A	M	K	N	R	H	R	G	D
N	T	M	G	D	N	-	A	P	C	H	E	E	N	I	P	Y	E	C	I	I
D	E	E	N	U	F	T	M	H	R	C	O	N	F	I	D	E	N	T	N	S
U	R	D	O	L	I	O	N	F	P	O	T	E	N	T	I	A	L	M	G	N
L	E	B	E	O	C	C	O	N	S	T	R	U	C	T	I	V	E	Q	I	T
E	R	S	N	A	I	M	S	L	O	W	F	N	O	T	I	S	D	I	B	E
E	H	E	O	U	E	B	I	I	R	I	O	P	H	Y	S	I	C	A	L	T

Options for the Crossword:

ANGER	AUTONOMY	BELONGING	BOUNDARIES
CHALLENGES	COMPETENCIES	CONFIDENT	CONSIDERATE
CONSTRUCTIVE	CRITICISM	DENIAL	DEPRESSED
DEVELOPMENTAL	DOUBTING	EMPOWERMENT	HAPPINESS
IDENTITY	SLOW	PERSONALITY	PHYSICAL
POTENTIAL	PROMOTING	REGRESSION	SELF
SELF-ACTUALIZATION	SELF-AFFIRMATIONS	SOCIAL	SUPPRESSION
THOUGHTFUL	TRUE	VISUAL	



Answers

Part 2

*	*	*	*	H	A	P	P	I	N	E	S	S	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	P	*	*	*	S	E	G	N	E	L	L	A	H	C	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	E	*	*	D	E	N	I	A	L	A	U	T	O	N	O	M	Y	*	*	S
*	R	P	R	O	M	O	T	I	N	G	*	*	*	*	*	*	L	S	E	E
*	S	L	A	T	N	E	M	P	O	L	E	V	E	D	*	A	N	L	U	*
S	O	*	D	O	U	B	T	I	N	G	*	*	*	*	I	O	F	R	E	*
U	N	*	V	*	*	*	*	*	*	L	T	*	*	C	I	-	T	T	*	*
P	A	*	I	*	*	*	*	*	U	N	*	D	O	T	A	S	A	M	*	*
P	L	*	S	*	*	*	*	F	E	N	E	S	A	C	E	R	*	S	*	Y
R	I	*	U	*	*	*	T	M	O	S	S	M	T	I	E	F	*	I	B	T
E	T	*	A	*	*	H	R	I	S	E	R	U	C	D	L	*	*	C	E	I
S	Y	*	L	*	G	E	S	E	I	I	A	N	I	E	*	*	*	I	L	T
S	*	*	*	U	W	S	R	R	F	L	E	S	S	*	*	*	*	T	O	N
I	*	*	O	O	E	P	A	F	I	T	N	A	N	G	E	R	*	I	N	E
O	*	H	P	R	E	D	A	Z	E	O	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	R	G	D
N	T	M	G	D	N	-	A	P	C	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	C	I	I
*	E	E	*	U	F	T	M	*	*	C	O	N	F	I	D	E	N	T	N	*
*	R	*	O	L	I	O	*	*	P	O	T	E	N	T	I	A	L	*	G	*
*	*	B	E	O	C	C	O	N	S	T	R	U	C	T	I	V	E	*	*	*
*	*	S	N	*	*	*	S	L	O	W	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	H	Y	S	I	C	A	L	*

QUICK ANXIETY SCREENING TEST

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?

This anxiety test or anxiety screening quiz will quickly help you determine whether you may be suffering from an anxiety disorder.

Instructions:

As per your choice in the options given below, grade yourself as follows:
First option = 0
Second option = 1
Third option = 2
Fourth option = 4
Then tally the score and read the analysis provided at the end.

1. Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge?

- Not at all
- Several days
- More than half the days
- Nearly every day

2. Not being able to stop or control worrying?

- Not at all
- Several days
- More than half the days
- Nearly every day

3. Worrying too much about different things?

- Not at all
- Several days
- More than half the days
- Nearly every day

4. Trouble relaxing?

- ○ Not at all
- ○ Several days
- ○ More than half the days
- ○ Nearly every day

5. Being so restless that it is hard to sit still?

- ○ Not at all
- ○ Several days
- ○ More than half the days
- ○ Nearly every day

6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable?

- ○ Not at all
- ○ Several days
- ○ More than half the days
- ○ Nearly every day

7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen?

- ○ Not at all
- ○ Several days
- ○ More than half the days
- ○ Nearly every day

Result of your Quick Anxiety Test

SCORES

If you scored...	You may have...
15 & Up	Severe Anxiety
10 - 14	Moderate Anxiety
6 - 9	Mild Anxiety
0 - 5	No Anxiety

0 – 5: Your Anxiety is Normal

Congratulations!

You've answered this quick anxiety quiz in a manner that suggests that while you may occasionally be experiencing some anxiety symptoms from time to time, you're not likely to be suffering from any type of anxiety disorder at this time.
Most people experience fleeting anxiety feelings from time to time in their lives -- this is normal and expected.
If, however, you are experiencing anxiety symptoms strongly enough that they are interfering with your daily life functioning you are strongly advised to consult a trained mental health professional for further consultation. Only a mental health professional will be able to make a valid diagnosis.

6 – 9: Mild to Moderate Anxiety Possible

Based upon your responses to this quick anxiety quiz, you appear to possibly be suffering from a mild to moderate anxiety disorder.

Many people function normally and with little problem with this amount of anxiety in their everyday life. Only if this anxiety causes you significant distress or impairment in your daily functioning would it typically be diagnosed by a mental health professional.

You should not take this as a diagnosis of any sort, or a recommendation for treatment. However, you may find it beneficial to seek further diagnosis from a trained mental health professional, especially if this concern is causing you hardship or stress in your life.

10 – 14: Severe to Moderate Anxiety Possible

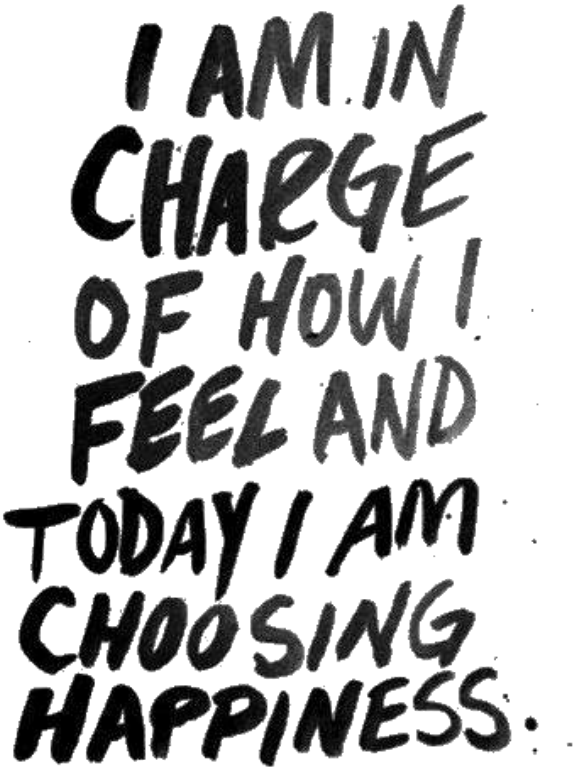
Based upon your responses to this quick anxiety quiz, you appear to possibly be suffering from a moderate to severe anxiety disorder. People who have answered similarly to you typically qualify for a diagnosis of an anxiety disorder and have sought professional treatment for this concern.

You should not take this as a diagnosis of any sort, or a recommendation for treatment. However, it would be advisable and likely beneficial for you to seek further diagnosis from a trained mental health professional, especially if this concern is causing you hardship or stress in your life.

15 & Up: Severe Anxiety Likely

Based upon your responses to this quick anxiety quiz, you may be suffering from a severe anxiety disorder.
People who have answered similarly to you typically qualify for a diagnosis of an anxiety disorder and have sought professional treatment for this concern.
You should not take this as a diagnosis of any sort, or a recommendation for treatment.

However, it would be advisable and likely beneficial for you to seek further diagnosis from a trained mental health professional as soon as possible, especially if this concern is causing you hardship or stress in your life.



Mental Health Myths and Facts

Mental Wellness is one of the most important part of our healthy existence.
It also has the most amount of misinformation and myths surrounding it, which may lead to confused ideas about understanding concepts of Mental Health

Thus, read on to learn a few Myths and facts concerning Mental Health
Try playing a true and false game with your friends to make it more interesting. Read up more about it and add to the list.

Myth: Mental health problems are very rare. **Fact:** 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in any given year.
Myth: People with mental illness aren't able to work. **Fact:** We probably all work with someone experiencing a mental health problem
Myth: Young people just go through ups and downs as part of puberty, it's nothing. **Fact:** 1 in 10 young people will experience a mental health problem.
Myth: People with mental health illnesses are usually violent and unpredictable. **Fact:** People with a mental illness are more likely to be victims of violence.
Myth: People with mental health problems don't experience discrimination **Fact:** 9 out of 10 people with mental health problems experience stigma and discrimination.
Myth: It's easy for young people to talk to friends about their feelings. **Fact:** Nearly three in four young people fear the reactions of friends when they talk about their mental health problems.

DOODLE – O – RAMA

Stress Busting Exercises

Doodling is not only a great way to pass the time during a boring class, but it can help you improve your artistic skills and find your passion. As long as you relax and let your hand do the thinking, you'll be on your way to having original, funny, or even gorgeous doodles.

Here are some great tools to doodle with:

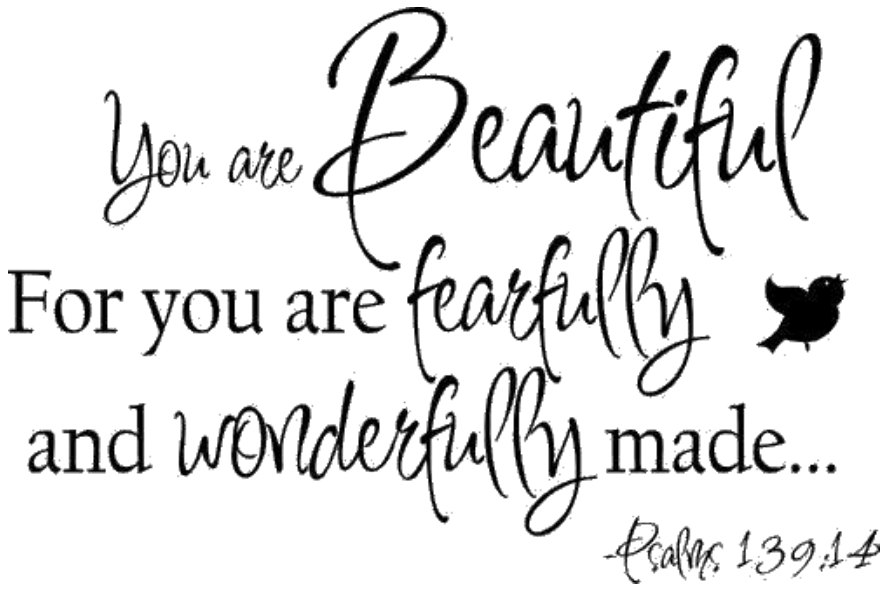
Simple supplies:

- Pencil
- Ink Pen
- Highlighter
- Marker
- Ballpoint pen

Artist supplies:

- Charcoal
- Chalk
- Coloured Pencils
- Paint
- Pastels

Follow the images provided below and try coloring or shading. Use your imagination and seek some quite time for yourself as you do so.



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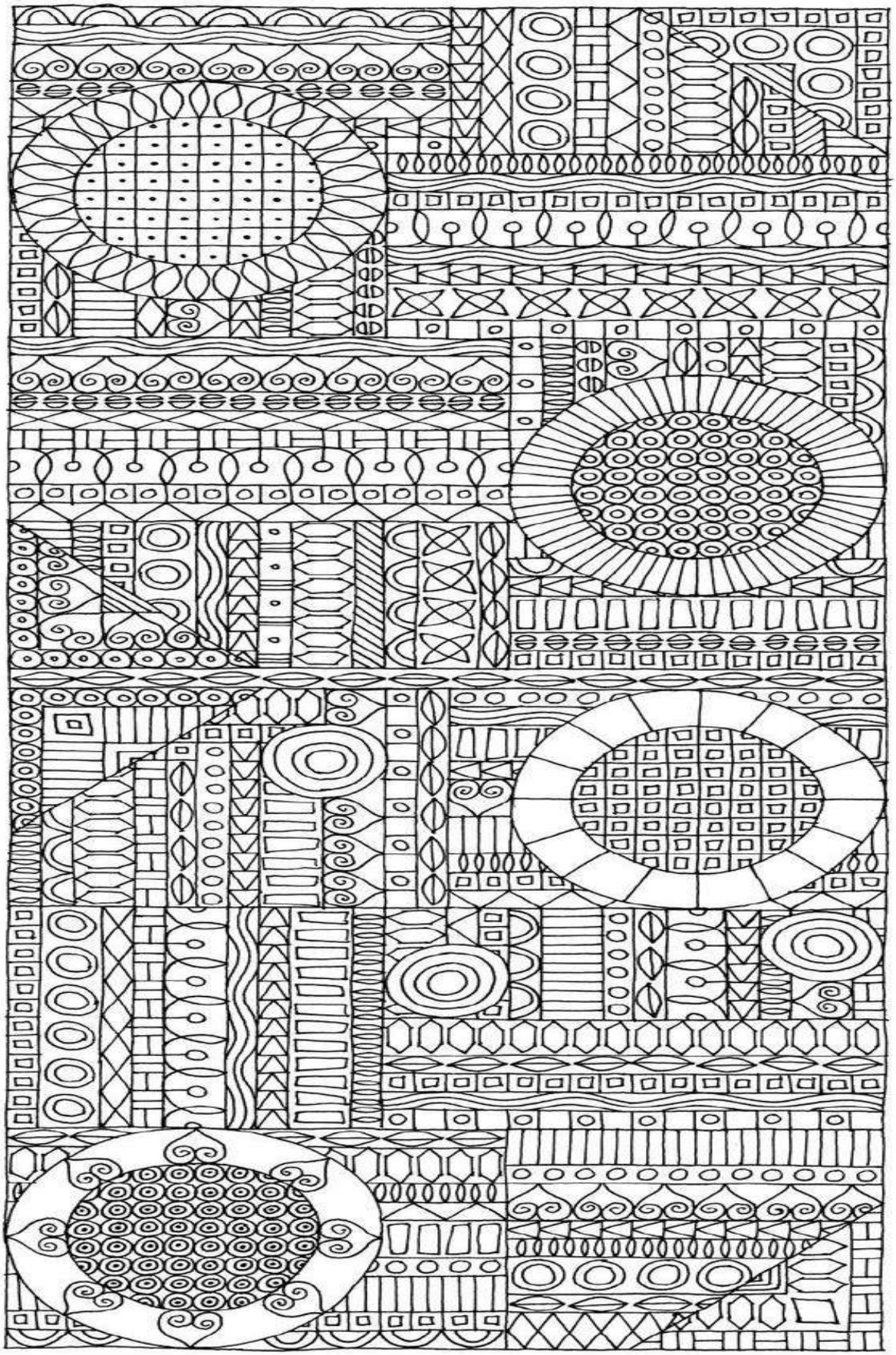
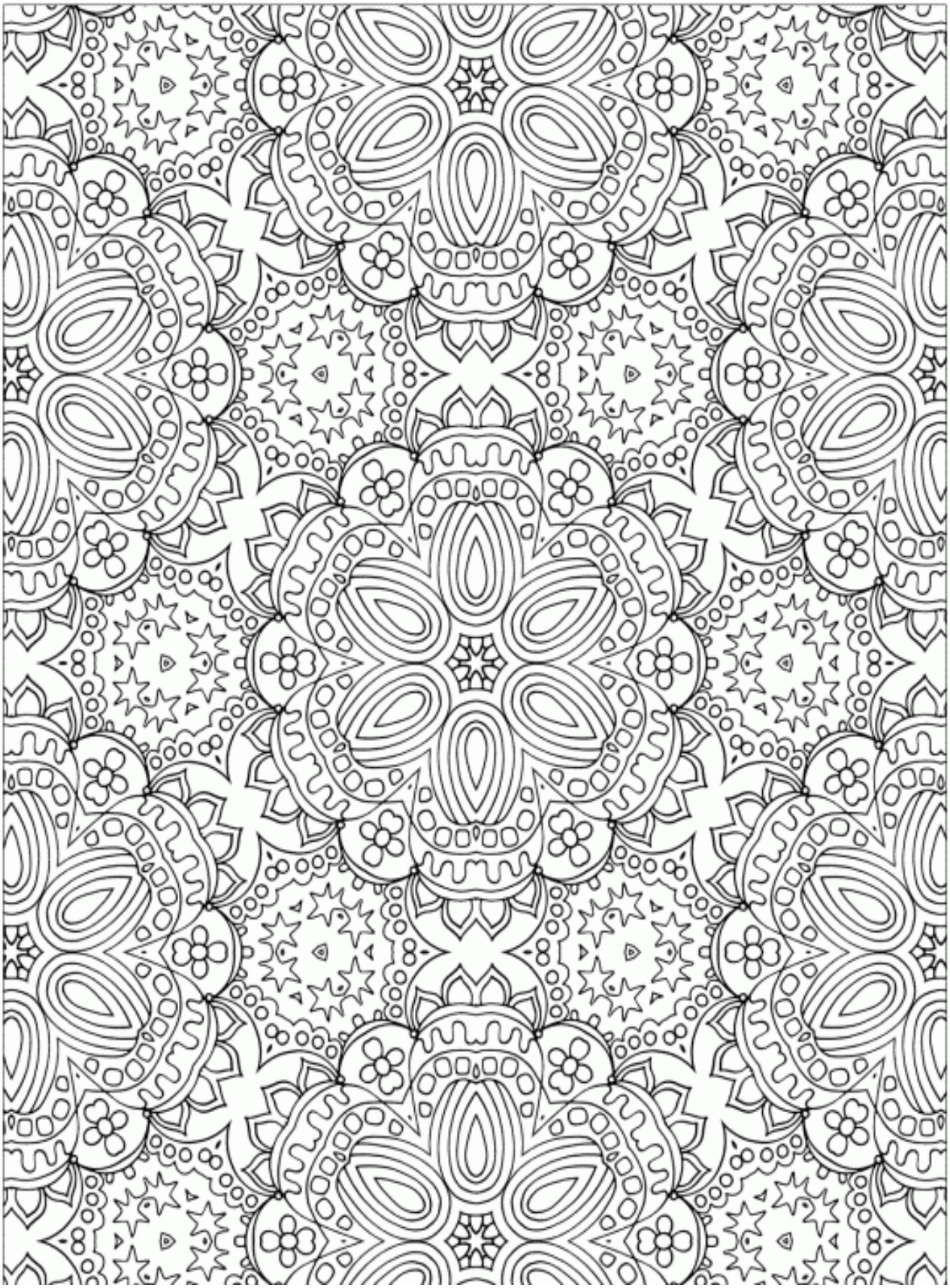


PAGE 2



Chapter 7

The Way Forward

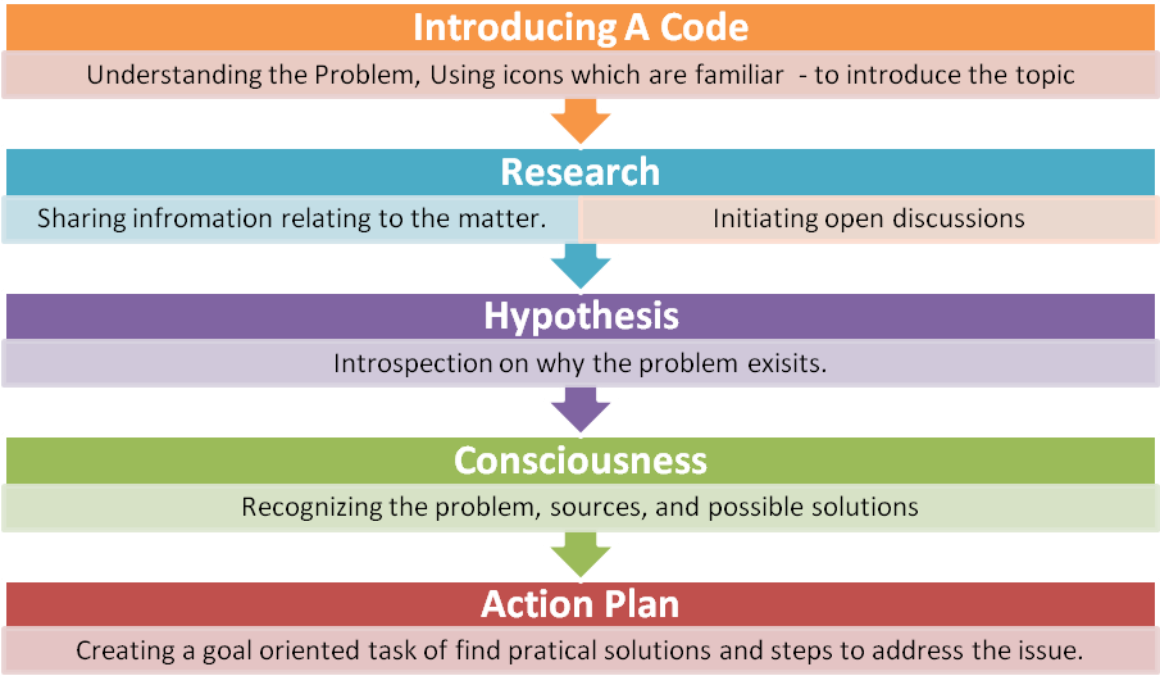
Advocacy By the Youth

The best way to ensure that what we have learnt is passed on and the momentum continues is by following the 'Each One Teach One' mantra.

The youth today wants meaning and purpose to everything they learn, see or do.

Providing this clarity and understanding the true context of our advocacy and being able to filter it down to our group is essential to creating an impact on the lives of young people. The methods of preaching and dictating no longer work effectively and therefore, we need to find more innovative, interactive and engaging methods to reach out to the young people. One of the methods of doing this is by following the problem solving methodology.

The steps for conducting a workshop based on this principle are as follows.



The best way to reinforce and create an interactive session is by allowing the participants to first know their group members and to come by a comfort level where each individual feels inclusive and respected to be able to share their ideas or thoughts.

A good facilitator will be able to conduct a session in such a way that the participants are free to share their views without the feeling of being judged or questioned; and

allows them enough freedom to ponder over their own questions and create an effective environment for health debating and brainstorming, to come up with practical solutions.

Some of the ingredients required for conducting an effective workshop are as follows:

- **Privacy**: Personal matters discussed within the group are confidential and stay in the group. We don't use the things we hear here in other situations; this applies to the facilitators as well.

- **The 'I' mode**: We talk about ourselves, our feelings and experiences, our views, etc. We're open and honest in what we say.

- **My Culture** is the unique way in which I have learned to respect values and traditions. I can respect my culture, and I respect the culture of others.

- **Be Selective** about what you say and what you don't say. Not everything is appropriate for sharing with everyone, and it is fine to keep your feelings and thoughts to yourself if you don't feel comfortable sharing them with the group.

- Being **Actively Involved** and taking initiative to be an active part in the group discussion. Give yourself scope to determine what you want to address today, so don't wait passively for someone else to take the initiative.

- **Sexuality** doesn't just mean sleeping with someone. There are major differences between different cultures and people (men and women, young and old) in the way we deal with the concept of sex and what it means. We must create open and comfortable environment to allow participants to engage freely in discussion.

- **Listening** to each other makes for a good discussion.

- **Humour** is important, and it's good sometimes to defuse highly charged subjects. Laughing at other people isn't acceptable though.

Think Tank

Note Page

CITATIONS

- Mental health: strengthening our response (Fact sheet) – World Health Organisation
- Mental disorders (Fact sheet) – World Health Organisation
- Health & Education by National Institution of Mental Health
- Critical Thinking and Emotional Intelligence by Linda Elder
- Mental Health by Women's Health, US Dept. of Health and Human Service
- Youth and mental health by Capital District Health Authority's Mental Health Program
- Treatment by Mental Health America of Wisconsin
- Information about Mental Illness and the Brain by National Institutes of Health (US); Biological Sciences Curriculum Study, by Bethesda (MD)
- Work Life Balance by Mental Health America
- Supporting someone with a mental illness by Rethink Mental Illness
- Dealing with the Effects of Trauma – A Self Help Guide by A SAMHSA Publication, University of New Hampshire
- About Mental Health by Time to Change.org