

*Mental Health Awareness:
Breaking the Stigma &
Promoting Access to Care*

Objectives

- Recognize the signs & symptoms of the common mental health challenges of the pandemic
- Promote mental health awareness
- Break the stigma and stop the silence
- Create a compassionate culture
- Promote access to care



The Stress Epidemic: Poll

U.S Stress Statistics

Data

Percent of people who regularly experience physical symptoms caused by stress 77 %

Regularly experience psychological symptoms caused by stress 73 %

Feel they are living with extreme stress 33 %

Feel their stress has increased over the past five years 48 %



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION



Mental Health Implications

- Trauma/PTSD
- Feelings of grief and loss
- Increase in stress, anxiety and depression
- Increase in substance abuse
- Relationship conflict
 - Higher divorce rate
 - Rise in domestic violence
 - Increased child abuse
- Burnout



Mental Health Continuum



Mental Health By The Numbers

- 1 in 4 Americans experience a mental health condition in a given year
- 1 in 25 live with a serious mental health condition
- 42 million deal with an anxiety disorder
- 16 million deal with major depression
- Over 6 million are managing bipolar disorder



Minority Mental Health Awareness

- [Racism's Toll on Mental Health](#)—PTSD, fear, more labeling diagnosis, etc.
- [The Mental Health Care Gap](#)—Poverty gap, lack of representation in the field, stigma, criminal justice, etc.
- LGBTQ+ individuals are twice as likely to experience a mental health disorder during their lifetime due to stigma and trauma.
 - [Human Rights Campaign](#)



Early Detection of Mental Illness

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating/learning
- Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable “highs” or feelings of euphoria
- Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger
- Avoiding friends and social activities
- Difficulties understanding/relating to other people
- Changes in sleeping habits or feeling tired

Early Detection of Mental Illness

- **Changes in eating habits**
- **Difficulty perceiving reality**
- **Inability to perceive changes in one's own feelings, behavior or personality (lack of insight)**
- **Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (such as headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing "aches and pains")**
- **Inability to carry out daily activities or handle daily problems and stress**
- **An intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance**

Seasonal Affective Disorder

- 70% people feel worse in the winter
- “winter blues”
- Weather might exacerbate other underlying mental health issues
- Less sunlight—decreased serotonin which balances mood
- Worse in different parts of the world—Chicago, Maine, etc.
- Climate change creating new weather patterns

Signs of SAD

- Irritability
- Lower mood
- Tiredness low energy
- Relational problems
- Hypersensitivity to rejection
- Lethargy
- Lack of motivation
- Weight gain
- Craving carbs



Tips to Cope with SAD

- Vitamin D, omega 3 fatty acids good nutrition—blood test
- Have thyroid checked—problems can affect mood
- Exercise
- Light therapy—sun lamps—make environment brighter and sunnier
- Counseling—CBT, mindfulness, etc.
- Medication
- Stress management
- Socialize, don't isolate
- Get outside

Substance Abuse Awareness Statistics*



1 out of 10

Americans have a drug
or alcohol problem



1 out of 7

of us have a family
member with a problem

* According to the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)

Addiction Issues: Signs & Symptoms

- Inconsistency
- Relational problems
- Denying responsibility
- Physical complaints
- Lying/secretcy
- Sleep disturbance
- People around who enable
- Financial/legal consequences
- Problems handling conflict
- Performance problems
- Denial/rationalization/minimizing
- Not morning people/high absenteeism



Dual Diagnosis Statistics*



10.2m

Approximately 10.2 million adults have **co-occurring** mental health and addiction disorders.¹

* According to the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)

Receipt of Mental Health Services and Substance Use Treatment in the Past Year Aged 18 or Older 2017

Note: Mental health service is defined as having received inpatient care or outpatient care or having used prescription medication for problems with emotions, nerves, or mental health. Specialty substance use treatment refers to treatment at a hospital (inpatient only), rehabilitation facility (inpatient or outpatient), or mental health center in order to reduce or stop drug or alcohol use, or for medical problems associated with drug or alcohol use.

Note: The percentages do not add to 100 percent due to rounding.



Suicide Awareness

Suicide completion rates have surged to a 30-year high.

Globally, over 800,000 suicides are reported each year, with many more going unreported.

In the US, over 121 people complete suicide a day.

Risk of suicide for people aged 18-24 highest during pandemic

[The Next Covid Crisis Could Be A Wave Of Suicides:](#)

Study predicts 75,000 “deaths of despair.”



Ninety Percent



90% of those who suicide have an underlying mental illness.

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S.



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255

Hours: Available 24 hours. Languages: English, Spanish. [Learn more](#)

Suicide Warning Signs

- Hopelessness
- Despair
- Isolation
- Lack of engagement
- Avoiding future talk
- Passive statements as clues
- Cries for help
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Acting anxious, agitated or restless
- Talking about having no purpose

Suicide Prevention

- Tell someone—speak up
- Call a hotline
- Call 911
- Go to ER
- Err on the side of caution; don't minimize or delay



56%

Adults with mental
illness do not
receive treatment.

(Mental Health America, 2018)



Barriers to Care

- Shame
- Stigma
- Cost
- Time
- Racism: #BIPOCMentalHealth

Stigma

- Cultural
- Gender-based
- Mental health issues viewed as weakness
- We all have mental health just as we have physical health



**WE MAY
BE APART,
BUT WE'RE
IN THIS
TOGETHER.**

We ALL have mental health issues as part of being human

Your mental health is a normal response to your nature & nurture

Genetic predisposition

Stressors versus support and self-care



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Stomp Out Stigma

Having mental health issues:

- Is not our fault
- Does not mean we are crazy
- Is not a weakness
- Is not something you just “get over” or “push through”

Treatment is available & effective

- Life changing & life saving



Break the Stigma: Language Matters

- Be mindful of language related to mental health & addiction
- Avoid use of these terms in a negative connotation:
 - Bipolar, alcoholic, etc.
- Refrain from terms that foster shame & stigma:
 - Crazy, wacko, insane, unhinged, mental case, psycho



STOP SHAMING PEOPLE FOR:

taking medication for mental health

being in therapy

showing symptoms of mental illness

relapsing in recovery

using coping methods that differ from yours

past trauma

using humor to cope

visible, healed self harm scars

suicidal thoughts or ideation

being open with their mental health

not being ready to talk openly about their mental health

Create a Collaborative Culture

Avoid phrases that discourage support & collaboration:

- "man up"
- "power through"
- "put on your big girl pants"
- "suck it up"

Speak in terms of "I, We and Us"
versus "You and Them"



Compassion

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

- *Maya Angelou*



Practice Compassion

- Don't assume you know what others are feeling
- Ask how they are doing
- Listen actively
- Don't minimize or argue with feelings
- Avoid judgment
- Ask for what they need



Empathy

- Must important relational tool
- Put yourself in the other's shoes
- Deep understanding
- Reflect understanding of other's feelings with kindness and compassion
- Shared emotional experience
- Keep a developmental lens
- [Useful article](#)



Empathic Vs. Non-Empathic Responses

"It is completely understandable that you are upset. (Validating)

"Don't let it get you that upset. You shouldn't feel that way." (Invalidating)

"That must have been really disappointing. I imagine you feel very frustrated." (Empathic, recognizing feelings.)

"It's not that big of a deal. What's our schedule today?" (Minimizing, Under-responsive)

"I felt similarly when I went through XYZ. How can I help?" (Relating, Normalizing, Supportive)

"I wouldn't care if that happened to me. You are too sensitive. Buck up." (Critical)

4 Steps to Providing Support:

- **Approach:** state what you are noticing in a kind, compassionate and confidential manner
- **Listen:** without judgment and respond with empathy
- **Give reassurance,** information and resources
- **Be the bridge:** Encourage professional help, support & follow-up

How to make a referral [video](#) & [article](#)



Define Your Role

What are your responsibilities?

- Education
- Resources
- Intervention
- Know and update Policies & Procedures

What are not your responsibilities?

- To diagnose or determine their degree of suffering/impairment
- To be a therapist
- Treatment outcome



Speak Up & Ask for Support

- Avoid isolating with your feelings
- Connect with others
- Speak up & share openly
- Ask for what you need
- Create and participate in online communities
- Utilize teletherapy



Barriers to Accessing Support

- Busyness
- Fear (difficulty trusting)
- Pride
- Shame or stigma
- Guilt
- Fear of imposition
- Low self-esteem, not feeling deserving
- Learned helplessness
- Hopelessness
- Loss of power and control (ego)
- Loss of credit (ego)
- Early life messages
- Expense
- Introversion or shyness
- COVID-19 safety precautions

EAP Services:

- **EAP Services through Work/Life Matters**
 - Voluntary referrals
 - Services for family members
 - Resources to alleviate stressors
 - Childcare & Eldercare
 - Legal & Financial
 - Educational resources
- 3 free sessions per issue, per year, per family member
- 1-800-386-7055, 24/7
- www.ibhworklife.com | username: Matters | password: wlm70101



Utilize Your Benefits:

- **Vacation**
- **Sick benefits & FMLA for time as needed**
- **Insurance Benefits (Mental Health Parity Law)**
- **Flex Spending/Health Savings Accounts**



Understanding Mental Health Providers

- **Psychiatrists (MD)** provide medication and sometimes therapy.
- **Psychologists (PhD, PsyD)** provide therapy and sometimes testing.
- **Therapists (LCPC, LCSW, LMFT)** provide therapy.



Counseling & Therapy Resources

- [United Healthcare](#) has launched a free (to anyone) 24/7 support line staffed by mental health experts: Call 866-342-6292
- Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a [Crisis Counselor](#)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255
- [Find a Mental Health Facility Near You](#)
- Most insurance companies are covering teletherapy and some like Aetna have waived copays for telemedicine.
- [PsychologyToday's Find-A-Therapist Directory](#)



Free Self-Test Tools:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/tests>

<https://psychcentral.com/quizzes/>



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"Address mental health and...

we'll address our criminal justice issues,
we'll address a lot of our health-care issues,
we'll address a lot of our education issues,
and we'll address a lot of our economic issues.

The ripple effect of doing the right
thing in mental health is enormous."

PATRICK J. KENNEDY



Thank You
for Being
an
Advocate



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Support Resources

[National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#)

- [Advocate for Change—Vote4MentalHealth](#)
- Take the [StigmaFree Pledge](#) to #CureStigma
- [Share your story](#)
- Take action on [advocacy issues](#)
- [Walk for mental health](#)

[Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance Advocacy Center](#)

[Hope for the Day](#)

Hope for the Day's tagline is "It's okay not to be okay" and they provide education, outreach and action to break the silence around mental health.



Support Resources

[iFred](#)

iFred's mission is to shine a positive light on mental health and eliminate stigma through prevention, research and education.

[Kennedy Forum](#)

The Kennedy Forum is working toward lasting change in the way mental health and addictions are treated in our healthcare system.

Visit www.DontDenyMe.org to enforce the Mental Health Parity Act.

[American Counseling Association Government Affairs: Voter Voice](#)



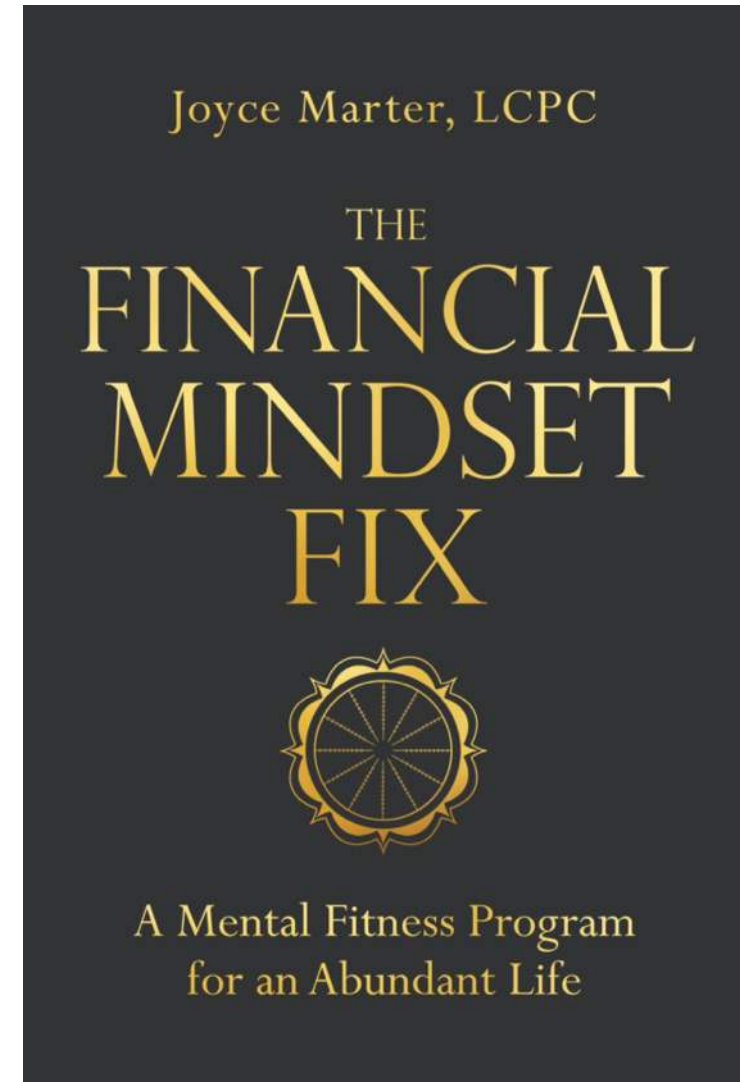
Upcoming Resource

Published by [Sounds True](#)

[Available for pre-order on Amazon](#)

Available in bookstores July of 2021

Mental Health & Financial Health Corporate Wellness Program



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What are you going to do now?

KEEP (doing)	START (doing)	STOP (doing)

Q&A



Thank
You!



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