

# STUDENT HANDOUT GRADE 7-8

## TALKING ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS

### Day 1 (Mental Health/Illness)

#### What is Mental Health?

- Mental Health is a state of well-being.
- It refers to how one is able to cope with the demands and stress of day to day living.
- It is normal to have changes in feeling states.

#### Facts of Mental Health

- 6 million (1 in 5) experience diagnosable mental illness (20% Canadian population)
- Mental illness does not discriminate, regardless of your age, gender, economic status or ethnicity.

#### What is Mental Illness?

- Mental illness is a disturbance in thoughts and emotions that decrease a person's capability to cope with the challenges of every day life.

#### Stigma

- Negative, disrespectful and untrue judgments about you based on what people *think* they know about you – and your situation.
- Stigma continues to be a huge problem for people living with mental illness.
- Creates a barrier between “we” and “them” and can make it hard for someone to get the help they need it.
- People with mental illness say that stigma can be worse than the illness itself.

### Day 2 (Types of Disorders)

#### Mood Disorder

- This includes disorders like bipolar disorder, depression and seasonal affective disorder.

#### Anxiety Disorder

- This includes disorders like generalized anxiety, OCD, post-traumatic stress disorder, social phobia, specific phobia etc.....

#### OCD- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

- This is a condition in which people suffer from persistent unwanted thoughts (obsessions) and / or rituals (compulsions) which they find impossible to control.

#### Risk Factor

- Genetic/Hereditary
- Chemical Imbalance
- Traumatic Life Events
- Substance Use

#### Signs and Symptoms

- \*Any change that is out of the ordinary
- \*Causes distress, disability or impairment

- Changes in Emotions
- Physical Changes
- Changes in Thinking
- Changes in Behaviour

There are **effective treatments** available. The most important thing is **to get help**.



Recovery is possible  
Change the way you  
think !

### Resources

- **211**  
When you don't know where to turn  
(free, confidential, 24/7)
- **Child, Youth & Family Crisis Line**  
1-877-377-7775
- **Kids Help Phone**  
1-800-668-6868



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
Champlain East

Association canadienne  
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1-800-493-8271

***“Life isn’t about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself”***

***Bernard Shaw***



***“Know me as a person, NOT by my mental illness. It doesn’t define me as a person”!***

***Mental Health problem can affect anyone***

## **Day 3 (Self-Esteem)**

### **Self-Talk**

- Much of this talk is negative – we frequently criticize ourselves or put ourselves down.
- It is important to become aware of self-talk and try to pull ourselves up and to be our own best friend.
- Self-talk is habit forming and predicts much of our behaviour.
- We have control over our self-talk
- We believe our self-talk and it affects how we feel about ourselves.

### **Self-Esteem**

- Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself and it is the value we put on ourselves.
- Self-esteem can be positive or negative.

### **Youth Self-Esteem**

- During the transition years between childhood and adolescents, self-esteem becomes a critical dimension in the process of human development.
- Self-esteem is essential to everyone.
- We are not born with it - it is not inherited, we form and create how we feel about ourselves.

## **Day 4 – Stress Management**

### **What is Stress?**

- Stress can be defined as one of the body’s responses to the ever-changing environment.
- It is the physical, mental, and emotional response people experience when under pressure.
- When stressful situations overwhelm us on a continual basis, stress can become harmful.

### **Signs**

- Headaches and stomach aches; heart pounding, physical pain, eating problems, sleeping problems, general feeling of tiredness, unable to sit still and feeling overwhelmed.

### **Tips To Manage Your Stress**

- Put your health first
- Recognize your limits and be realistic
- Forget about the small stuff
- Enjoy hobbies
- Do one thing at a time
- Talk to someone
- Think positive!



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