

A STORY OF HURTS, HEALING, AND HOPE ENLIGHTEN WORKSHOP NOTES

Carol and I have a story of hope to share with those who deal with some form of emotional or mental pain. I (Curtis) have faced the confusion and frustration of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) along with clinical depression. Although diagnosed and treated 40 years ago, I continue to monitor the symptoms of these illnesses so that I can maintain a solid basis for mental health. Carol has experienced symptoms of Bi-polar Disease (also known as manic-depressive illness) since 1987, and in 2002 was hospitalized with severe symptoms of this mental illness. Throughout all of our 33 years of marriage and pastoral ministry, we have experienced God's help in the many times of emotional and mental confusion. Today, both of us are experiencing good health and a joyful work in the ministry as a pastoral couple. We desire to share the hope of renewed health for those who personally face depression and other forms of mental illness, or have loved ones who are caught in their pain and confusion. Through personal stories along with the practical steps we have taken, we will present a positive testimony that seeks to offer encouragement for a better tomorrow, only made possible with God's help through Jesus Christ,

Thank you for attending today's seminar and workshop. Whether you are personally facing issues of mental illness, or you know someone who is, it is our desire that God encourages and helps you to have some practical steps you can take from here to find hope and help to work through these painful ordeals. We especially hope that you will be encouraged in your spiritual life in spite of and maybe even because of the trials you face. We have both experienced God's grace in the midst of the pain of depression and mental illness, and we believe the Lord loves us all and will bring His power and grace upon us as we look to Him.

There is always hope for those who will seek the Lord. Even David, a man who loved God deeply, experienced deep and troubling mental grief:

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart?

Psalm 13:1-2ⁱ

1. OUR STORIES OF TIME OF HURT, CONFUSION AND FEAR.

Curtis' Story

Carol's Story

“Depression is the view of the world through a dark glass and Mania is a view that seen through a kaleidoscope – often brilliant but fractured”ⁱⁱ

2. WHAT WE CAN DO TO SURVIVE AND FIND HEALING:

FIRST - GAIN UNDERSTANDING

Question: **What is mental health?**

Answer: *Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.*

Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Over the course of your life, if you experience mental health problems, your thinking, mood, and behavior will be affected. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including:

- *Biological factors, such as genes or brain chemistry*
- *Life experiences, such as trauma or abuse*
- *Family history of mental health problemsⁱⁱⁱ*

Question: **What is mental illness?**

Answer: Mental illness is a **brain disorder** that causes mild to significant disturbances in thinking, behavior, and/or emotion resulting in an inability to cope with ordinary life challenges and routines. According to the Mental Health American there are more than 200 classified forms of mental illness. Some of the more common disorders are depression, bi-polar disorder, dementia, schizophrenia, and anxiety disorder.^{iv}

Question: **What are brain disorders?**

Answer: *Brain disorders* are health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination thereof), that are all mediated by the brain and associated with distress and/or impaired functioning. They are biologically based physical disorders that can be chronic and disabling, often lasting through a person's adult life.

Question: **Can brain disorders be healed?**

Answer: Thanks to scientific advances, brain disorders can usually be diagnosed and effectively treated. Also, current research shows how the brain can be made healthy and healthier. In our cases, healing has come through counsel and wisdom of family and friends, therapy, and medication. Ongoing health requires us to stay committed to these disciplines.

Question. **How many people suffer from mental illnesses?**

Answer. See handouts: By The Numbers from NAMI

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: "OCD" is an anxiety and personality disorder. OCD is manifested in a variety of forms, but is most commonly characterized by a subject's obsessive drive to perform a particular task or set of tasks, compulsions commonly termed rituals. **Obsessions are repetitive, persistent ideas, thoughts, images, or impulses** that are not experienced as subject to the will but intrude unwanted into the consciousness. **Compulsions are repetitive behaviors** that also intrude unwillingly into the life of the sufferer. Often, the compulsions are direct responses to the obsessions. For example, I would think that I was passing germs to others and they might get sick because of me (obsession), therefore I would constantly wash my hands (compulsion) to relieve the anxiety.

One of many Personality Disorders: 9% of adults^v
2.3% of adults will have occurrence of OCD in their lifetime^{vi}

Depression: Everyone experiences depression from time to time and for various lengths of time. When the following symptoms manifest themselves in groups of 3 or more, and with a definite change of behavior, the sufferer should seek counsel to see if they may be experience more than the "the blues."

9.1% of adults have at least one major depressive episode^{vii}
8.1% of adolescents experience depression in a year.^{viii}

According to NAMI, to be diagnosed with depression, a person must have experienced a major depressive episode that has lasted longer than 2 weeks.

- Frequent feelings of overwhelming sadness, crying, hopelessness, or seeming inability to feel emotion
- marked decrease of interest in pleasurable activities
- changing appetite and marked weight gain or weight loss
- disturbed sleep patterns, either insomnia or sleeping more than normal
- changes in activity levels, restless or moving significantly slower than normal
- fatigue, both mental and physical; low energy
- feelings of guilt, helplessness, anxiety, and/or fear
- lowered self-esteem
- decreased ability to concentrate or make decisions
- extreme sensitivity to rejection or failure
- thinking about death or suicide^{ix}

As with other health conditions, mental illnesses are often physical as well emotional and psychological. They may be caused by reaction to environmental stresses, genetic factors, biochemical imbalances, or a combination of these. **With proper care and treatment, many people learn to cope with their illness and continue functioning in their daily lives. Mental illness is real and highly treatable.**^x

SECOND – BECOME “STIGMA FREE”

What is Stigma? Why is it a Problem?

In Greek and Latin, a stigma was a mark or brand, especially one that marked a slave, so a stigma marked a person as inferior. Merriam-Webster Dictionary

Stigma is when someone views a person (even themselves) in a negative way just because they have a mental health condition. Some people describe stigma as a feeling of shame or judgment from someone else. Stigma can even come from an internal place, confusing feeling bad with being bad.

Navigating life with a mental health condition can be tough, and the isolation, blame and secrecy that is often encouraged by stigma can create huge challenges to reaching out, getting needed support and living well. Learning how to avoid and address stigma are important for all of us, especially when you realize stigma's effects:

People experiencing mental health conditions often face rejection, bullying and discrimination. This can make their journey to recovery longer and more difficult. Mental health conditions are the leading cause of disability across the United States. Even though most people can be successfully treated, less than half of the adults in the U.S. who need services and treatment get the help they need.^{xi}

How we faced it and have, for the most part, overcome it:

9 Ways to Fight Mental Health Stigma

1. Talk Openly About Mental Health
2. Educate Yourself And Others
3. Be Conscious Of Language
4. Encourage Equality Between Physical And Mental Illness
5. Show Compassion For Those With Mental Illness
6. Choose Empowerment Over Shame
7. Be Honest About Treatment
8. Let The Media Know When They're Being Stigmatizing
9. Don't Harbor Self-Stigma^{xii}

What it means: ***I will not be afraid to face mental illness, mine or someone else's. I will not define myself or others by mental health concerns. I will have empathy and gain wisdom. It means I am gaining strength, healing, understanding and compassion for myself and others***

THIRD - GROW THROUGH MY ACTIONS AND RESPONSES

NAMI: STAGES OF EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

What you can expect to go through as a family member:

1. DEALING WITH CATASTROPHIC EVENTS

- Crisis/Chaos/Shock
- Denial; "normalizing" (*trying to bring or return to a normal condition or state*)
- Hope Against Hope

Our needs: *Support *Comfort *Empathy for confusion *Help finding resources
*Crisis intervention *Prognosis *Empathy for pain *Support/Advocacy Group

2. LEARNING TO COPE

- Anger/Guilt/Resentment
- Recognition
- Grief

Our needs: *Vent feelings *Keep hope *Education *Self-care *Networking *Skill training *Letting go *Support/Advocacy Group .

3. MOVING INTO ADVOCACY

- Understanding
- Acceptance
- Advocacy/Action

Our needs: *Activism *Restoring balance in life *Responsiveness from the system *Support/Advocacy Group^{xiii}

3. **HOW DID WE SEE GOD IN ALL THIS “MESS” AND FIND HOPE?**

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness. Lamentations 3:22-23

Let love and faithfulness never leave you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart. Proverbs 3:3

“Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland. Isaiah 43:18-19

DEPRESSION IN THE BIBLE

Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. **"I have had enough, Lord,"** he said. **"Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."** 1 Kings 19:3-4

I [Jeremiah] remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my **soul is downcast within me.** Lamentations 3:19-20

My spirit is broken, my days are cut short, the grave awaits me. Job 17:1

We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. In fact, we expected to die. 2 Corinthians 1:8^{xiv}

*How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? ... **But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, for he has been good to me.*** Psalm 13:1-2,5-6

No one gets better alone! No family should walk through a mental health crisis alone. We all need a support system of family, friends, mental health professionals, support groups, and a faith community in challenging times.^{xv}

HOW CAN I HELP A FRIEND WHO HAS A MENTAL HEALTH CONCERN?

HOW CAN I GAIN HOPE TO GIVE HOPE?

1. **Be present** and available at least as often as you have been in the past. *Some of my friends either ignored me or stayed away from me. I know I was not any fun to be with, but I really needed their friendship.*
2. **Listen without a judgmental attitude. Try to imagine yourself in their place.**
3. **Don't** spiritualize the problem or the answer. *Don't imply that maybe they sinned or God is trying to teach them something. Don't imply that they would be better if they just had "a little more faith."*
4. **Never say** "Snap out of it!"
5. Let them know you **believe** in him or her. *You believe they will find their way out of the pain.*
6. **Ask** what you can do to make a difference. Ask, **"What can I do to help?"**
7. If it seems indicated, refer him or her to persons specially trained to help with mental illness issues. If necessary, make the appointment and/or provide transportation. Offer to go with them.
8. If **medication** has been prescribed, reassure him or her that it is almost always necessary for those with a serious mental illness and that it can enable one to function very well. Encourage them when they are taking their medication regularly.
9. Reassure your friend that **God is constantly with him or her**, even if he or she can't sense it at that moment.
10. **Follow through** and come back to see your friend when he or she is feeling well.
11. **Pray** with your friend if possible; and let them know you are praying for them.
12. **Don't talk negatively** about them with others.
13. **Learn what you** can about the disease or disorder you/they are facing.
14. **Join a support group.**

NAMI – PRINCIPLES OF SUPPORT

1. We will see the individual first, not the illness.
2. We recognize mental illnesses are brain disorders that may have environmental triggers.
3. We aim for better coping skills.
4. We find strength in sharing experiences.
5. We reject stigma in ourselves and others.
6. We won't judge anyone's pain as less than our own.
7. We forgive ourselves and reject guilt.
8. We embrace humor as healthy.
9. We accept that we cannot resolve all problems.
10. We expect a better future in a realistic way.
11. We will never give up hope!^{xvi}

Q/A

Disclaimer: What we have shared in this workshop are stories of our own experiences with mental illness and how we have sought mental health; and not meant in any way be prescriptions or diagnostic. If you believe you or someone you love is facing a serious mental health condition it is vital that you seek professional help.

ⁱ All Scriptures are New International Version, unless noted

ⁱⁱ *Scientific American*, February 1995

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/what-is-mental-health>

^{iv} Mental Health Resource Guide, Saddleback Resources, 2015, p. 8

^v Ibid, (from National Institute of Health (NIH))

^{vi} www.nimh.nih.gov

^{vii} Ibid. (from SAMHSA. "Mental Disorders")

^{viii} Ibid.

^{ix} <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Conditions/Depression>

^x Ibid. (from www2.Nami.org)

^{xi} <https://www.nami.org/stigmfree>

^{xii} <https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/October-2017/9-Ways-to-Fight-Mental-Health-Stigma>

^{xiii} https://namica.org/webdocs/program_documents/BasicsProgram/Program%20Materials/Basics%20Charts%20&%20Myths%20Handout/Stages_of_Emotional_Reactions_Chart.pdf

^{xiv} New Living Translation

^{xv} Mental Health Resource Guide, p. 3

^{xvi} <https://namilakecountyohio.org/principles-of-support/>

Mental Health Facts IN AMERICA

Fact: 43.8 million adults experience mental illness in a given year.



1 in 5 adults in America experience a mental illness.

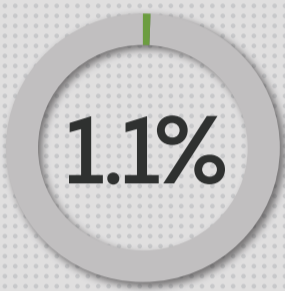


Nearly 1 in 25 (10 million) adults in America live with a serious mental illness.

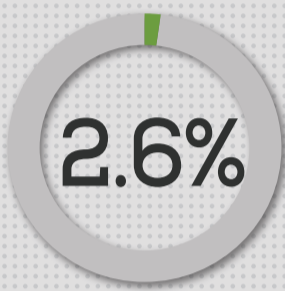


One-half of all chronic mental illness begins by the age of 14; three-quarters by the age of 24.

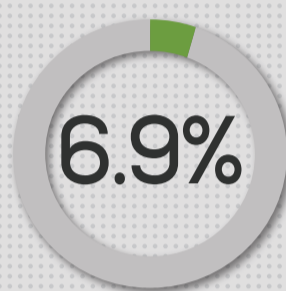
Prevalence of Mental Illness by Diagnosis



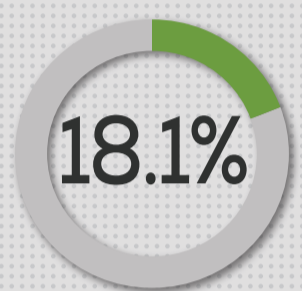
1 in 100 (2.4 million) American adults live with schizophrenia.¹



2.6% (6.1 million) of American adults live with bipolar disorder.¹



6.9% (16 million) of American adults live with major depression.¹



18.1% (42 million) of American adults live with anxiety disorders.¹

Consequences



10.2m

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



26%

Approximately 26% of **homeless** adults staying in shelters live with serious mental illness.¹



24%

Approximately 24% of **state prisoners** have "a recent history of a mental health condition".²

Impact



1st

Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, and is a major contributor to the global burden of disease.¹



-\$193b

Serious mental illness costs America \$193.2 billion in lost earning every year.³



90%

90% of those who die by suicide have an underlying mental illness. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S.³

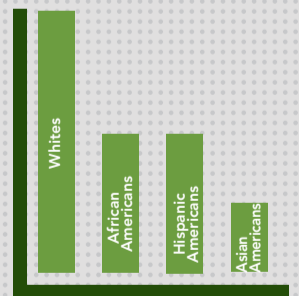
Treatment in America



Nearly 60% of adults with a mental illness didn't receive mental health services in the previous year.⁴



Nearly 50% of youth aged 8-15 didn't receive mental health services in the previous year.¹



African American & Hispanic Americans used mental health services at about 1/2 the rate of whites in the past year and Asian Americans at about 1/3 the rate.¹

Ways to Get Help



Talk with your doctor



Connect with other individuals and families



Learn more about mental illness



Visit NAMI.org

¹ This document cites statistics provided by the National Institute of Mental Health. www.nimh.nih.gov
² Statistics provided by Department of Justice.
³ American Journal of Psychiatry and U.S. Surgeon General's Report, 1999.
⁴ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

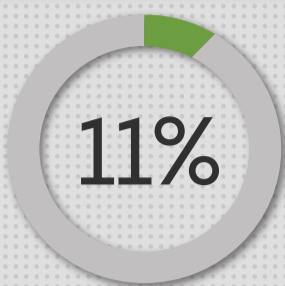
Mental Health Facts

CHILDREN & TEENS

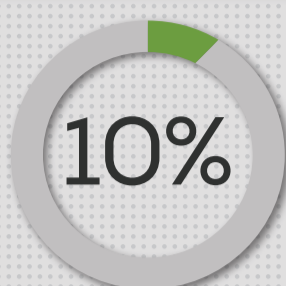
Fact: 1 in 5 children ages 13-18 have, or will have a serious mental illness.¹



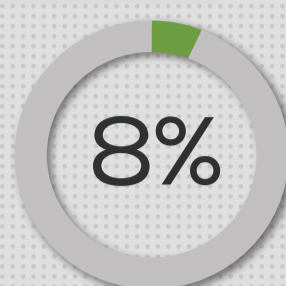
20% of youth ages 13-18 live with a mental health condition¹



11% of youth have a mood disorder¹



10% of youth have a behavior or conduct disorder¹



8% of youth have an anxiety disorder¹

Impact



50%

50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24.¹



10 yrs

The average delay between onset of symptoms and intervention is 8-10 years.¹

37%



37% of students with a mental health condition age 14 and older drop out of school—the highest dropout rate of any disability group.¹

70%



70% of youth in state and local juvenile justice systems have a mental illness.¹

Suicide

3rd



Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in youth ages 10 - 24.¹



90%

90% of those who died by suicide had an underlying mental illness.¹

Warning Signs

- Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks (e.g., crying regularly, feeling fatigued, feeling unmotivated).
- Trying to harm or kill oneself or making plans to do so.
- Out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors that can cause harm to self or others.
- Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or fast breathing.
- Not eating, throwing up or using laxatives to lose weight; significant weight loss or gain.
- Severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships.
- Repeated use of drugs or alcohol.
- Drastic changes in behavior, personality or sleeping habits (e.g., waking up early and acting agitated).
- Extreme difficulty in concentrating or staying still that can lead to failure in school.
- Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities like hanging out with friends or going to classes.

4 Things Parents Can Do



Talk with your pediatrician



Get a referral to a mental health specialist



Work with the school



Connect with other families

¹ This document cites statistics provided by the National Institute of Mental Health. www.nimh.nih.gov

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Mental Health Facts

MULTICULTURAL

Fact: Mental health affects everyone regardless of culture, race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.



1 in every 5 adults in America experience a mental illness.

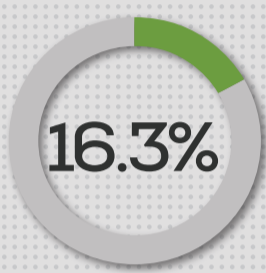


Nearly 1 in 25 (10 million) adults in America live with a serious mental illness.

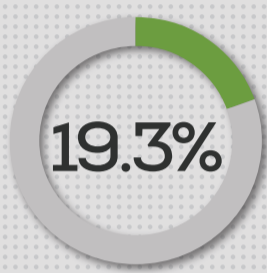


One-half of all chronic mental illness begins by the age of 14; three-quarters by the age of 24.

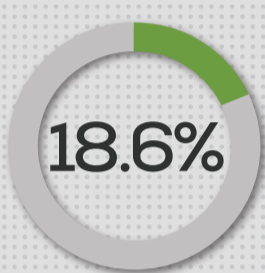
Prevalence of Adult Mental Illness by Race



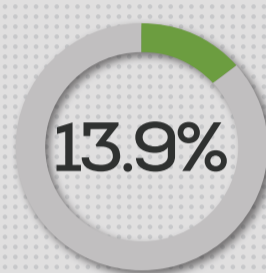
Hispanic adults living with a mental health condition.



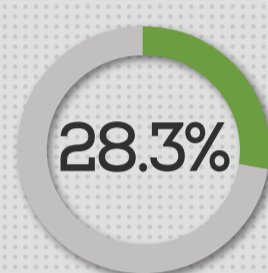
White adults living with a mental health condition.



Black adults living with a mental health condition.



Asian adults living with a mental health condition.



AI/AN* adults living with a mental health condition.

*American Indian/Alaska Native

LGBTQ Community

2X



LGBTQ individuals are 2 or more times more likely as straight individuals to have a mental health condition.

11%



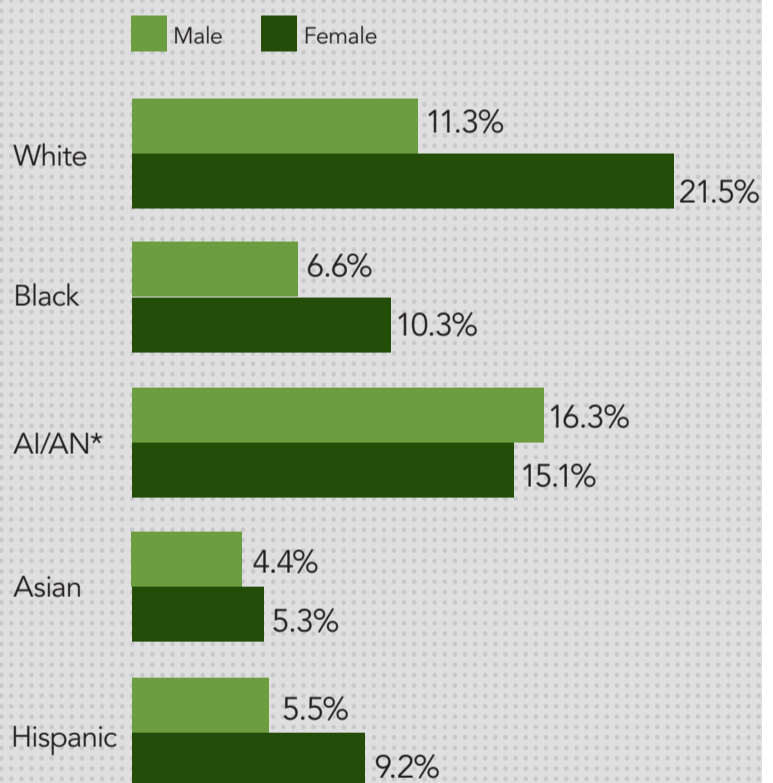
11% of transgender individuals reported being denied care by mental health clinics due to bias or discrimination.

2-3X



Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth are 2 to 3 times more likely to attempt suicide than straight youth.

Use of Mental Health Services among Adults (2008-2012)



*American Indian/Alaska Native

Critical Issues Faced by Multicultural Communities

- ✓ Less access to treatment
- ✓ Less likely to receive treatment
- ✓ Poorer quality of care
- ✓ Higher levels of stigma
- ✓ Culturally insensitive health care system
- ✓ Racism, bias, homophobia or discrimination in treatment settings
- ✓ Language barriers
- ✓ Lower rates of health insurance

Ways to Get Help



Talk with your doctor



Connect with other individuals and families



Learn more about mental illness



Visit NAMI.org

¹ This document cites statistics provided by the National Institute of Mental Health, www.nimh.nih.gov, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, New Evidence Regarding Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Mental Health and Injustice at every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey.

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