



National Alliance on Mental Illness

nami

New Hampshire

How to Approach Someone Having a Mental Health Challenge

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NAMI NH

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What Is a Mental Health Disorder?

A mental disorder or mental illness is a diagnosable illness that:

- Affects a person's thinking, emotional state, and behavior
 - Disrupts the person's ability to
 - Work
 - Carry out daily activities
 - Engage in satisfying relationships

What Is a Mental Health Disorder?

A Diagnosable and Treatable Disorder of the Brain.

What is mental illness like?



Mental illness is a physical condition just like asthma or arthritis.

But still society believes that a person who is mentally ill needs to show more willpower - to be able to pull themselves out it.

In Other Words...

Impacts a persons ability to:

Live,

Laugh,

Love,

And Learn

What a Mental Illness or Disorder is NOT

- A Character Flaw
- A sign of weakness
- An excuse for bad behavior
- Untreatable or Hopeless
- A reason to believe that people with mental health problems are violent and unpredictable

What Isn't Helpful

- Do not just tell the person to “snap out of it”
- Do not be hostile or sarcastic
- Do not adopt an overinvolved or overprotective attitude
- Do not nag the person to do what he or she normally would do
- Do not trivialize the person's experiences
- Do not belittle or dismiss the person's feelings
- Avoid speaking with a patronizing tone
- Resist the urge to try to “cure” the person

Did you know?

- ❑ Approximately 1 in 5 adults in the U.S.—43.8 million, or 18.5%—experiences mental illness in a given year.
- ❑ Approximately 1 in 25 adults in the U.S.—10 million, or 4.2%—experiences a serious mental illness in a given year that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities.
- ❑ Approximately 1 in 5 youth aged 13–18 (21.4%) experiences a severe mental disorder at some point during their life. For children aged 8–15, the estimate is 13%.
- ❑ 1.1% of adults in the U.S. live with schizophrenia. 2.6% of adults in the U.S. live with bipolar disorder.⁵ 6.9% of adults in the U.S.—16 million—had at least one major depressive episode in the past year. 18.1% of adults in the U.S. experienced an anxiety disorder such as posttraumatic stress disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder and specific phobias. Among the 20.2 million adults in the U.S. who experienced a substance use disorder, 50.5%—10.2 million adults—had a co-occurring mental illness.

- See more at: <http://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers#sthash.9tc4XbcW.dpuf>

True or False?

People with mental health problems are violent and unpredictable.

Fact: The vast majority of people with mental health problems are no more likely to be violent than anyone else. Most people with mental illness are not violent and only 3%-5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with a serious mental illness. In fact, people with severe mental illnesses are over 10 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than the general population. You probably know someone with a mental health problem and don't even realize it, because many people with mental health problems are highly active and productive members of our communities.

Changes in Mental Health

Studies have presented a more complex image concerning mental illness and violence. The studies suggest that violence on the parts of people with forms of mental illnesses, such as aggression in the general population, stems from multiple overlapping factors interacting in ways that are complex. These include:

- Substance Use
- Family history...is there a history of family violence
- Personal stressors such as divorce or bereavement
- Socioeconomic factors such as poverty and homelessness



REPRESENTATIONS OF MENTAL ILLNESS --- IN THE MEDIA

How Times Have Change?

Hmmmm

The Trentonian

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ROASTED NUTS

General-alarm fire at Trenton Psychiatric

By TOM BALDWIN
& JEAN LEVINE
Staff Writers

A welder's torch sparked a general-alarm blaze that gutted offices and a chapel at Trenton Psychiatric Hospital yesterday as it bursted out of control for more than two hours.

Authorities said no TPH employees or patients were hurt in the morning blaze. But several of the 100 firemen who responded to the scene collapsed from heat exhaustion.

Battalion Chief Graham Smith of the Trenton Fire Division said the blaze broke out in the Haines Building shortly before 8 a.m.

In minutes, as the flames shot across the roof of the L-shaped, three-story structure, firemen were calling for more help from Trenton's fire force as well as the volunteer firemen of Ewing, Hamilton and Lawrence.

Before it was declared under control at 10:19 a.m., the blaze would go to three alarms, then general alarm status.

Firemen initially charged into the building in the effort to beat down the flames. Fearful of a collapse, however, supervisors pulled firefighters back out to fight strictly from outside with aerial ladders.

Officials said it was perhaps the second time in three years that the

Trenton Photo: Tim Lafferty
Smoke blows skyward behind a building on the grounds of the Trenton Psychiatric Hospital.



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Is this what Mental Illness Looks Like?



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Or...Is This What Mental Illness Looks Like?

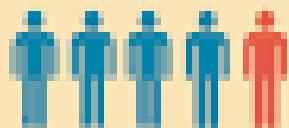


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4 IN 5

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ONE

IN

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PSYCHO

+

NUTS

+

MENTALLY ILL

+

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MENTAL

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What This Does?

- ☐ Makes people believe that they are something that they aren't (ex. Criminals, violent, look different, childish)
- ☐ Offends people with an actual mental illness.
 - ☐ Mental illness doesn't define someone or a character in a movie or a show.

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Behaviors that worry us VS Behaviors that frighten us

Especially if its someone you know, you might be concerned or worried if you noticed a change in behavior or personal appearance. You might be frightened for the person.

The things that scare us are things we don't understand.

What behaviors might really concern you?

What behaviors might really frighten you?

What You Might Notice...Friends, Family, Colleagues or Yourself...

Some Warning Signs:

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks like taking care of your kids or getting to work or school

How would you respond...

- Relax and stay calm.
- Express Concern, state what you've observed
- Don't make promises that you aren't able to keep
- Offer Reassurance
- Minimize distractions; ask if you can turn off the TV for example.
- Listen, make eye-contact (unless this is threatening)
- Simplify. One topic at a time. Short concise sentences
- Use "I-statements" not "you-statements".
- Acknowledge what the other person says and how they feel, even if you don't agree.

And....

- • Engage the person in the process by asking for opinions and suggestions. •
Watch out for contradictory messages between verbal and non-verbal messages.
- Do not threaten as that may increase fear and aggression
- Don't block access to exit or restrict the person's movement.
- Call emergency services, crisis intervention, 911

So what behaviors would frighten you?

- Stating beliefs in things that you know are not true or make no sense.
- Talking to themselves or talking to or arguing with someone who isn't there
- Acting Agitated
- Speaking Loudly
- Making threats to harm themselves or someone else

If that person becomes aggressive or violent :

- Avoid a confrontation, don't argue, don't raise your voice – sometimes it can be best just to leave the person alone until they calm down and become reasonable again. (*never leave a person alone that is expressing suicidal thoughts*)
- Speak firmly – a very firm 'please stop' can sometimes help the person to regain control.
- Have a plan – know who you are going to call if the aggressive behavior persists or you feel there is a risk of harm to the person, yourself or others – for example, a mental health crisis team or the police.

What if its someone you don't know or know well?

- All of the above
- Stay Calm
- Ask if there is someone you can call
- Do not touch the person, you don't know that person's history.
- Keep yourself safe, call for help if you feel unsafe



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Who you gonna call?

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We often feel discomfort if someone is acting unusual

“If there were an individual trying to cross the boulevard in a wheelchair, we’d run to help them, but if that person seemed to have a mental illness, we wouldn’t.”

Mental Health First Aid Instructor/Trainer Gina Ehlert