



Template Newsletter #4

It's OK to have a Mental Illness. Recovery is possible.

Mental illnesses are common, affecting nearly one in five people and they are medical conditions that can disrupt a person's thinking, feelings, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning. We also know that recovery is possible.

The sooner people get treatment and support, the greater their chances of recovery and living a full life. However, all too often people delay seeking help because of stigma. A mental illness is not something people can "just get over." Mental illnesses require individualized plans with a combination of treatment and support to help manage and reduce symptoms.

Most mental illnesses can be treated effectively with medications, therapy, nutrition and physical activity, other self-care and social support. Recovery is possible. Life can get better!

Medication

Taking a medication for a mental illness is not a sign of failure. Some illnesses require medication as best practice for treatment and for a high quality of life, just like other health conditions, such as high blood pressure.

Never stop taking medication without contacting your doctor, even if you're feeling better. There can be negative side effects from suddenly going off some medications.

Therapy

For many people, talking with a mental health professional is helpful. Several studies show participating in therapies for a brief period of time helps long after the sessions are over. This is because people learn new ways to think and cope.

Physical Activity, Nutrition and Other Self-Care

Including physical activity, good nutrition and other self-care as part of an individualized treatment plan can help in managing a mental illness. It's always important to talk to a health care provider first about how to incorporate physical activity and/or nutrition changes into your plan.

Some suggestions may include:

- Get some physical activity daily. Just 10-30 minutes daily of walking can boost your mood.
- Try to eat regular, healthy meals and snacks.
- Try to maintain a regular bedtime and wake-up time.
- Practice deep breathing and mindfulness activities.



Social Support

The most important way to support someone with a mental illness is simply by talking to them, being there for them and acknowledging their illness. The more we talk about it and normalize it like any other health condition, the closer we come to stopping the stigma and helping people get the treatment and support they deserve.

Resources

Many often feel uncomfortable or just don't know how to respond when people bring up their mental illness. The good news is that there are resources that can help you, like Make It OK. Visit makeitok.org for tools and resources to help you learn more about mental illnesses, tips on "what to say" and "what not to say," how to talk openly and help put an end to the stigma.

To find more mental illness resources and crisis line information, visit makeitok.org/resources. Additional resources can be found (INSERT LOCAL RESOURCE LINK).