

# **Stigma in Mental Health...**

## **The Lost the Lonely the Broken**



**By: Shalonda Knox, RN, BSN**

# What is a stigma

- Stigma is the rejection, avoidance or fear people direct toward those they perceive as being "different."
- Stigma comes from ignorance and fear; people often have a hard time grasping anything they do not understand or cannot predict.

# Mental Health Related Stigma

- Public Stigma- Attitudes and feelings expressed by the general public.
- Institutional Stigma- negative attitudes and behaviors about mental illness become part of policies and practices.
- *Self Stigma*- Internalized attitudes that keep an individual from seeking treatment.



- Stigma is the largest obstacle to recovery, treatment

## FACT

- *Self-stigma* prevents up to 60% of those with mental illness from seeking treatment.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention, people who suffer from chronic, untreated depression may die up to 25 years earlier than someone in the general population.

# Steps Towards Reducing Stigma:

- Eliminating societal level stereotypes of mental illness is an enormous goal-

YET...

- *Become More Knowledgeable*: When we don't know the facts, it is easier to rely on a stereotype or false belief.
- *Watch your Language*: What people are not



# What people are not:

- Mentally ill people are **NOT**...nuts, crazy, wacko
- Mentally ill people are **NOT** morally bad
- Mentally ill people are **NOT** all dangerous and should be locked
- **NOT** all Mentally ill people need somebody to take care of them

# Steps Towards Reducing Stigma:

- Eliminating societal level stereotypes of mental illness is an enormous goal-

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- *Become More Knowledgeable:* When we don't know the facts, it is easier to rely on a stereotype or false belief.
- *Watch your Language:* *Mental illness does not discriminate. But sometimes people do.*



## Labels hurt.

Stigmas hurt ...We are surrounded by them and we even use them ourselves sometimes without thinking about it.

# Steps Towards Reducing Stigma:

- Keep in mind the best way to stop others from promoting stigma is to educate them about mental health and to let them know how their words and actions hurt others.





Who people around the world often face stigma and discrimination from the:

- a) Family
- b) Friends
- c) Health Care providers
- d) This is made up only in their heads



## C. Health workers' stigmatizing

attitudes and discriminatory behaviors are often not a reflection of ill will, but rather of such factors as lack of information beyond a health worker's immediate control.

## What are some of the harmful effects of stigma?

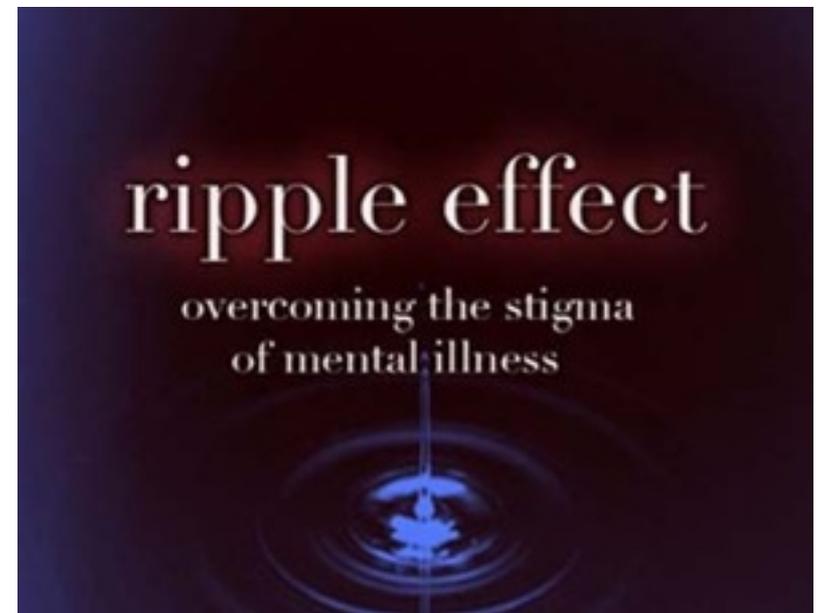
- Pretending that nothing is wrong
- Refusal to seek treatment
- Rejection by family and friends
- Problems or discrimination at work or school
- Difficulty finding housing
- Being subjected to physical violence or harassment
- Inadequate health insurance coverage of mental illnesses

# What are some ways to cope with stigma?

- 1) **Learning to accept your condition.**
- 2) **Get treatment.** Recognize the need for support by seeking treatment. Don't let the fear of being "labeled" with a mental illness
- 3) **Don't let stigma create self-doubt and shame.** One of the most important ways to minimize the stigma of mental illness is to come to terms with your illness.
- 4) **Seek support.** If you have a mental illness, it can be hard to decide who to tell, if anyone, and how much to tell. You may not be comfortable telling anyone anything about your condition

# What are some ways to cope with stigma?

- 5) **Don't equate yourself with your illness.** You are not an illness
- 6) **Use your resources.** Stigma can have effects on your education, career, housing and other areas of your life
- 7) **Join an advocacy group**



# DID you know:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, people who suffer from chronic, untreated depression may die up to 25 years earlier than someone in the general population.

## WHY?

Self-stigma prevents up to 60% of those with mental illness from seeking treatment.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**8** out of 100 teens report having serious depression.

That's 2 out of every 25 teens.



**8%** of all teens have an anxiety disorder.

**5%** HAVE ADD.  
Attention Deficit Disorder



**3%** HAVE ODD  
Oppositional  
Defiance Disorder

**1%** HAVE OCD  
Obsessive Compulsive  
Disorder

OVER **20%** OF YOUNG  
ADULTS HAVE A  
**MENTAL ILLNESS**

**35%** of teenaged girls have an eating disorder.

That's 7 out of every 25 teen girls.

**10%** of all teens suffering from an eating disorder are male.



**4000**

young Canadian teens  
commit suicide every year.

**1 in 5**  
will get the help  
they need.



Ontario's Rising Star  
**York Region**

only **38%** with mood disorders receive help.

only **15%** with substance abuse problems get the help they need.

only **13%** of Eating Disorder sufferers get help.

# 12 THINGS HAPPY PEOPLE do differently

by Marc

## #1

### Express gratitude

- ◊ When you appreciate what you have, what you have appreciates in value
- ◊ If we aren't thankful for what we already have, we will have a hard time ever being happy.

## #2

### Cultivate optimism

- ◊ People who think optimistically see the world as a place packed with endless opportunities, especially in trying times.

## #3

### Avoid over-thinking and social comparison

- ◊ Comparing yourself to someone else can be poisonous
- ◊ The only person you should compare to is yourself before now.

## #4

### Practice acts of kindness

- ◊ Selflessly helping someone is a super powerful way to feel good inside.

## #5

### Nurture social relationships

- ◊ The happiest people on the planet are the ones who have deep, meaningful relationships

## #6

### Develop strategies for coping

- ◊ It helps to have healthy strategies for coping pre-rehearsed, on-call, and in your arsenal at your disposal

## #7

### Learn to forgive

- ◊ Harboring feelings of hatred is horrible for your well-being.

## #8

### Increase flow experiences

- ◊ Flow is a state in which it feels like time stands still.
- ◊ It's when you're so focused on what you're doing that you become one with the task.
- ◊ Nothing is distracting you or competing for your focus.

## #9

### Savor life's joys

- ◊ Deep happiness cannot exist without slowing down to enjoy the joy.

## #10

### Commit to your goals

- ◊ Magical things start happening when we commit ourselves to doing whatever it takes to get somewhere.

## #11

### Practice spirituality

- ◊ When we practice spirituality or religion, we recognize that life is bigger than us.
- ◊ We surrender the silly idea that we are the mightiest thing ever.

## #12

### Take care of your body

- ◊ Taking care of your body is crucial to being the happiest person you can be.

# National Resources

- [National Institute of Mental Health](#)
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)