

Facts Not Stigma



Because of media biases, we all have assumptions about what someone with a mental illness looks like, which may be an **inaccurate perspective**.

What mental illness looks like...

Fifty percent of people will have a **mental illness at some point before the age of 40**. Mental illness can look like all of us, and we can see the wide variation mental illness has.



False

People with mental illness are...

- **Lazy**
- **Weak**

True

Individuals who struggle with a mental illness are often **very strong**; they are navigating the hardships that come with mental illness.

Causes of Mental Illness

There is **not one specific cause for mental illness**, but some factors can increase your chances.

These include:

- **Genetics**- Family history of mental illness
- **Biology**- Certain illness and other biological factors
- **Environment**- Stressful Home life, etc...
- **Lifestyle**- Unhealthy habits (smoking) and poor relationships



Reach out to us!
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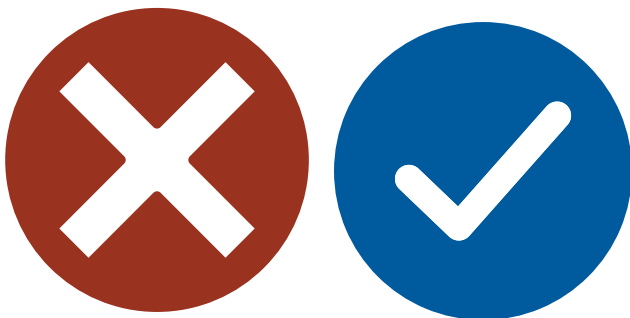


Mental illness has been used as a **scapegoat** to avoid having conversations around **why violence happens**, which is a much more complex conversation than a simple diagnosis; poverty, social environment, personal history of violence, situational factors, etc.

Mental Illness & Violence

- **People with mental illness** are, on average **ten times more likely to be victims of violence**, than those without a mental illness.
- **Most people** who experience a mental illness are **kind and compassionate** individuals who do not want others to go through the same struggles.

Don't Label People



Stigmatizing Language

Crazy...Insane...Nuts

These **words can be harmful** for individuals who struggle with mental illness. These are used as **shaming words and create a negative** way of viewing people with mental illness.



Labeling people is **never compassionate** and reduces a person to their diagnosis.

Practice: Instead of saying "they are a mentally ill person," try saying "**this person is experiencing a mental illness.**"



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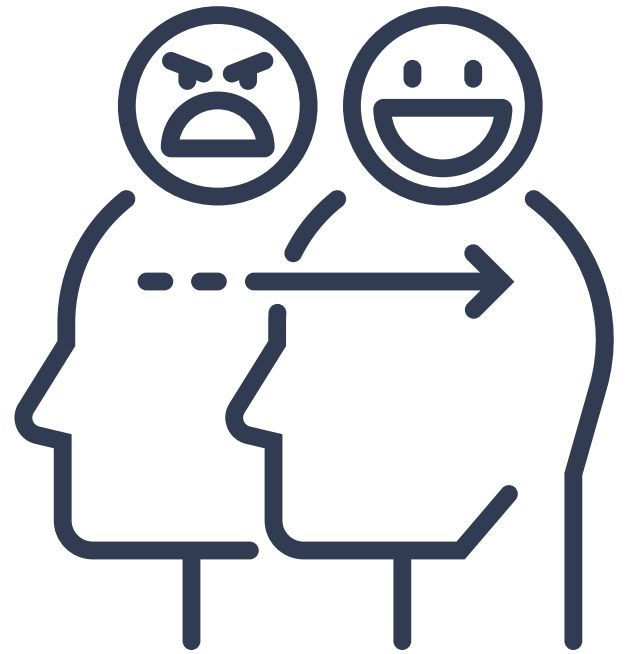
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Mental Illness In The Body

Many people think that mental illness is the result of only psychology or personal beliefs, but **mental illness has many different biological roots.**

- **Mental illnesses can physically change the structure of your brain.** For example, with depression, certain areas of the brain shrink in size.
- **Anxiety is deeply rooted in our bodies' stress response,** also known as **fight or flight response.** This causes cortisol (the stress hormone) to flood the blood stream, which causes many biological changes.



Diagnosis Aren't Adjectives

Avoid using mental health diagnosis as an adjective, like **"they are being bipolar"**.

Practice: Instead, describe the situation by saying, **"they seem to be experiencing many different emotions."**



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