

Grey Highlands Public Library

MENTAL HEALTH

as prepared by
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Why Mental Health?

Due to the added stresses currently around us it is important now more than ever to discuss mental health and how you can strengthen yours or talk to someone who may need help with theirs.

What is Mental Health?

The emotional and spiritual **resilience** that enables us to enjoy life and **survive pain, disappointment and sadness**. It is a **positive sense of wellbeing** and an **underlying belief in our own and others' self worth** that respects the importance of equity, interconnections and personal dignity.

(Health Education Authority/Public Health Organization of Canada)

Who's got Mental Health?

Everyone!

We all have mental health just like we all have physical health. To maintain good self-compassion and mindfulness, remember to:

- Like you for you
- Have friends that like you for you
- Talk about your feelings
- Smile, laugh and have fun everyday

What are Mental Health Problems?

Mental health problems refer to common struggles and adjustment difficulties that affect everybody from time to time, including:

- A relationship ending
- The death of someone close
- Stress at home/school/work

These tend to be **short-term reactions** to specific stressors and are **normal**.

What is a Mental Illness?

Mental illness is a term that describes a variety of emotional, thinking and behavioral problems that **vary in intensity** and **duration**, and **may recur from time to time**.

Mental illnesses are **diagnosable conditions** that require medical treatment as well as other supports.

Ten Common Thinking Distortions

1. Black and white thinking
2. Setting unrealistic expectations
3. Selective thinking
4. Turning positives into negatives
5. Overgeneralizing
6. Exaggerating unpleasantness
7. Catastrophizing
8. Personalizing
9. Mistaking feelings for facts
10. Jumping to negative conclusions

Important Things to Keep in Mind

- Many people are **not well informed** about mental health problems, thus **don't know how to respond**
- There are often **stigmas** attached to the subject
- People often **don't realize they need help** so they **don't seek treatment**
- Professional help is **not always readily available**

Listening to Others is a Skill

When talking with others about mental health, it is important to practice **non-judgmental listening**:

- Avoid derogatory words like "nutcase" or glib advise like "it could be worse"
- Do not dismiss or trivialize another's feelings or situation
- Let them talk at their own pace
- Respond, ask questions and rephrase

Even if you're not a counselor, you can still listen and offer to connect people with one.

Personal Support Methods

Communication: Talk to friends, family, counselors, ministers

Relaxation Techniques: Meditation, hot baths, massages, soothing music, creating a calm area in your house/room, artistic expression (drawing, writing, acting etc.)

Portable Comfort Bag: Squeeze-ball, paper & pen, music player, list of people to contact, snacks, magazines/books, photos of friends, family and pets

Resources

Canadian Mental Health Association:
1-877-888-5855 (24hrs)

Grey and Bruce Mental Health Crisis Line:
1-877-470-5200 (24hrs)

Kids Helpline:
1-800-668-6868 (24hrs; or text 686868)

VON Grey Bruce Support Groups:
519-371-5331 (8:30-4:30 Mon-Fri)

Resources Continued

Drug and Alcohol Helpline
1-800-565-8603 (24hrs)

Sexual Assault & Abuse Centre
519-376-2121 ext 2458 (24hrs)

Everything Else
211 (24hrs)

Check out the Grey Highlands Public Library [eResource](#)
page and our [Mental Health](#) post for additional resources!