

MODULE 1

The stigma of mental illness.

Presented by Soaring Minds Inc.



Resources from teen mental health were used in the making of this module.



Activity #1 Confessions of a Depressed Comic



Activity 1.2: Defining Stigma

**What does the word
stigma mean?**



Definition of Stigma

Oxford Dictionary

“A mark or sign of disgrace or discredit; a visible sign or characteristic of disease.”



1963



E. Stigma & Goffman

“An attribute which is deeply discrediting”

1990

2020



Current Definition

“Negative attitudes that motivate discrimination against those with mental illnesses”

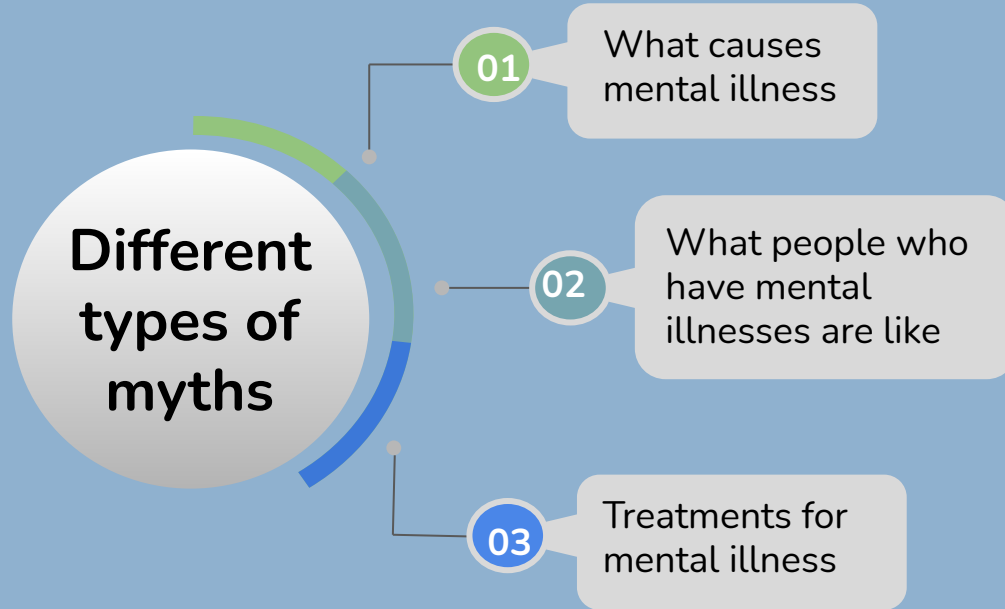


Myths and Stigmas

- Stigma is created from myths
- Looking at science can be helpful
- “Myth Busting”



Mental Illness Myths: Categories



Myths vs. Realities About Causes



- Are caused by food that we commonly eat
- Are the result of “moral failure” or laziness
- Are caused by usual stresses of everyday life
- Are the result of a poor upbringing



- Not caused by food, rare instance is vitamin deficiency
- The illness causes fatigue or lack of interest, not the other way around
- Are not caused by usual stresses of everyday life
- Are not the result of a poor upbringing



Myths vs. Realities About People



- violent
- should not have same rights as rest of society
- cannot be good friends
- cannot achieve anything
- Mental illness is a sign of personal weakness
- Are at fault for their own problems
- Can snap out of it if they wanted to

- victims rather than perpetrators
- are equals
- a good a friend as anyone
- though challenging to work, can overcome
- disorder of an organ, the brain
- “self-stigma” exacerbated by myths
- people get better



Myths vs. Realities About Treatment



- will never get better
- too difficult to treat
- Not as good as treatments for physical illnesses
- Treatments are general knowledge/ “common sense”



- do get better, though some treatments are not effective
- can be complex, because involves brain, but not impossible
- same as treatments for physical illnesses
- based on scientific evidence



Bust Myths —Speaking Realities

BUST
MYTHS

Everyone can BUST MYTHS when they SPEAK REALITIES

Problem: people don't know realities of mental illness and so continue believing in myths

Solution: learn the realities and help by letting others know



Activity 1.3 (refer to handout)

- Listen to your assigned video and then discuss



So what can I do about stigma?

1. Keep learning about the scientifically understood causes and evidence-based treatments of mental illnesses
2. Start talking about it - mental illness touches us all in some way, directly, through a friend, family member, or colleague.
3. Words have power
4. Silence is NOT neutral
5. Listen more than you speak



Quiz (True or False)

1. Stigma can be a significant impediment to seeking mental health care, like seeking help for treatment for Cancer, HIV/AIDS and some other diseases.
2. Identifying myths related to mental illness and contrasting those to facts may help reduce the stigma of mental illness.
3. Stigma exists in ALL of the following: causes of mental illness, treatments of mental illness, and people who have mental illness.



QUESTIONS?

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