

MIND Your Health

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Did you know?

- 57.7 million adults suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder each year;
- Major depression affects 14.8 million adults and is the leading cause of disability for people ages 15-44;
- 30,000 Americans commit suicide annually; an additional 500,000 Americans attempt suicide annually;
- Anxiety disorders are the most common mental disorders. Approximately 40 million adults suffer from anxiety disorders including, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and phobias

Did you know that nearly two thirds of all people with a diagnosable mental disorder do not seek treatment?

Can you imagine if only one out of every three of your friends sought help for a broken arm?

Stigma is what keeps many people from seeking the help they need. The negativity and ignorance that often surrounds mental illnesses can create fear and cause shame, which in turn causes unnecessary pain and confusion. Stereotypes are attached to people who are suffering from a mental illness. The simple fact is that no one fully understands how the brain works and why, at times, it works differently in different people. Our society tends to not think of brain disorders as we do other organ disorders like heart disease. The stigma surrounding these misunderstandings increases feelings of loneliness and isolation. Everyone with a mental disorder should know that it is not his/her fault, or weakness or character flaw, and that it is OK to ask for help.

What can we do?

If you know someone that seems extremely upset, maybe someone who displays extreme mood changes, or maybe even you yourself feel emotionally out of place at times ... the time is now to act, help, assist, notify, inform and get better. Start with a medical check-up, and tell your doctor about the feelings you are having. He/she will help you get the help you need. If you are looking out for a friend or relative experiencing mental illness, you will want to provide encouragement to seek medical help from a doctor, but also provide your own friendly support, encouragement and prayer during their recovery journey. Please do not add to their distress by staying away when their need for your support is greatest. You just might be surprised at how much you can help through understanding, hope, friendship and prayer.