

# Momentum

*Building mental health awareness*



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## Monitor each others well-being

- ☑ Be sensitive to behavioral health challenges that your family members may be facing such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, or alcohol or drug use.
- ☑ If you learn that someone in your life is dealing with mental health problems, treat them with respect and understanding—not ridicule. Remind them often that they deserve to feel better.
- ☑ Friends and loved ones can make a big difference. Reach out, be available, encourage treatment and help dispel negative stigmas.

## Mental health affects everyone

Although you might overlook it, your mental health is perhaps the key factor in your ability to enjoy life. It's important to be continually aware of your own mental well-being and that of the people around you.

Everyone should care about mental health. It affects how we think, feel and act. It strengthens our ability to form healthy relationships, make life choices, handle life's ups and downs, maintain physical health and reach our potential. It's vital to value!

- Mental health is important at every stage of life—from childhood and adolescence through adulthood and into the elder years.
- One in five American adults experiences a mental health problem in a given year.
- People from all walks of life suffer with mental disorders regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or economic status.
- Approximately 60 percent of adults with a mental illness do not receive needed mental health services.
- If you or a household member struggle with daily activities, call your program's toll-free number or visit the member website for information and confidential support.

It's not a character flaw or personal weakness! Mental health problems often stem from biological factors such as brain chemistry imbalances, painful life experiences like trauma or abuse, or family histories of mental illness.



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# Don't let stigma prevent treatment

Giving in to the fear of being labeled “crazy” can be an obstacle to getting needed treatment.

- Fear of stigma—or the prejudice, avoidance and/or rejection of those with mental health problems—often causes people to be reluctant to seek help.
- Mental disorders are serious medical illnesses, and those suffering with them should be treated with the same respect as those dealing with illnesses like diabetes, heart disease and cancer.
- Get the care you need. Treatment brings relief by identifying your cognitive, emotional and physical challenges. An active, multifaceted plan of care helps reduce the symptoms that may be getting in the way with your daily life.
- Don't self-isolate. Instead, educate yourself about your condition and connect with others who have similar struggles. Reach out to them for the compassion, support and understanding you deserve.
- In turn, educate people in your life and share your personal struggles so that others will feel similarly empowered to seek treatment when they need it.

## Types of mental health services



### Talk psychotherapy

A trained mental health professional such as a psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker or other licensed counselor will work with you to identify and address the thoughts and emotions that have hindered your functioning. The goal is to replace self-defeating thoughts with more positive cognitions or thoughts and coping strategies.



### Medications

A psychiatrist or other physician may prescribe an FDA-approved drug to positively impact brain chemistry. This could be an antidepressant, antipsychotic, anti-anxiety agent, mood stabilizer or stimulant. The doctor's close monitoring of your medication regimen is important. Combining psychotherapy and medication is an effective path to recovery for many people.



### Online therapy

Digital, interactive cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) programs provide convenient and confidential support. For example, online depression programs help you understand depression symptoms, challenge negative thoughts, learn how to feel better and manage relapses. Online programs for anxiety can help you learn to cope with panic, phobias and generalized anxiety.

*Additional sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Mental Health, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Mayo Clinic, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*



**Webinar**—On Wednesday, May 9, join us for an insightful wellness webinar: *Mental Health Awareness: What You Need to Know*. Register [here](#).