

Understanding Mental Health

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According to MentalHealth.gov mental health involves our emotional, psychological and social well-being. Mental health affects our thinking, behavior, and feelings. It helps us deal with life – stress, relationships, choices, and decisions. It is important in every stage of life – from childhood through adulthood.

Of course, sometimes we can struggle with mental health – situations, events, trauma can impact our thinking, behavior, mood, emotions. Healing is possible but healing mentally is just like healing physically – it is a process and it varies from person to person and depends on many factors, such as having resources, information, support, culture and beliefs around healing.

There are many different types of [mental health conditions](#) and when people experience these conditions they can range from mild to severe. It is important to seek treatment for these conditions with professionals that are able to listen and respect our concerns, questions and decisions regarding treatment.

There are many approaches for treatment of mental health conditions and as more information is being discovered about the brain and how it works new treatments are being created. Early intervention is the most effective approach and identifying [early warning signs](#) is very important.

The stigma of mental illness

Glenn Close co-founded an organization to help bring the end to the stigma of mental illness as she came to learn that her sister was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and her nephew with schizophrenia. Support is essential in the healing process for people struggling with a mental illness and the more we know about mental illness the easier it is to talk to family members, friends, co-workers and neighbors about how to help. This is a short video where people share about their own challenges with mental illness and how the stigma of mental illness has impacted their lives.

<http://bringchange2mind.org/about-us/our-mission/>

Famous people with mental illness

Mental illness doesn't mean a person is unable to have dreams, create goals and live rich, full lives. Many people throughout the centuries have struggled with mental health issues but have been outstanding leaders, inventors, artists, writers, entertainers, etc. This website offers a list and short biographies of many men and women who rose above the stigma and challenges of mental illness to accomplish great things in their lives: <http://gsappweb.rutgers.edu/centers/stigma/people.php>