



ST. DAMIAN'S R.C SCIENCE COLLEGE

Time to Talk!
Time to Change!

Let's talk about
Mental Health

MYTHS AND FACTS

There are lots of myths about mental health. Knowing a few facts can help us to challenge any negative thoughts and actions.

Here are some to think about:

- **Myth:** Mental health problems are very rare
- **Fact:** 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in any given year

- **Myth:** People with mental illness aren't able to work
- **Fact:** We probably all work with someone experiencing a mental health problem

- **Myth:** Young people just through ups and downs as part of puberty, it's nothing.
- **Fact:** 1 in 10 young people will experience a mental health problem.

- **Myth:** People with mental health illnesses are usually violent and unpredictable.
- **Fact:** People with a mental illness are more likely to be a victim of violence.

- **Myth:** People with mental health problems don't experience discrimination.
- **Fact:** 9 out of 10 people with mental health problems experience stigma and discrimination.

- **Myth:** It's easy for young people to talk to friends about their feelings.
- **Fact:** Nearly 3 in 4 young people fear the reactions of friends when they talk about their mental health problems

STIGMA AROUND MENTAL HEALTH

People with mental health problems say that the stigma and discrimination surrounding their mental health problem can be one of the hardest parts of their day to day experience. As a result of the stigma, we might shy away from supporting a friend, family member or colleague. And the consequences can be huge. People with mental health problems can lose friendships, feel isolated, withdraw from the world and not get the help they need.

It doesn't have to be this way. Talking about mental health shows someone you care about them. It aids recover, friendships are often strengthened in the process.

Mental health problems are common, but nearly nine in ten people who experience them say they face stigma and discrimination as a result.

The stigma and discrimination can be one of the hardest parts of the overall experience because it might mean exclusion from activities, difficulties in getting and keeping a job, not finding help and a slower recovery. Equally, stigma can cause us to shy away from the people around us who might need our support.

It doesn't have to be this way.

It's Time To Talk.

It's Time to Change!

How we think and act

It's too easy to dismiss mental health problems as something that happens to other people. It can happen to any of us, and the way we all think and act makes a real difference.

Too many people can be left in situations where they feel isolated, ashamed and worthless. Without our support, they can lose what they care about most: their family and friends, their job, their home, their energy for life.

When you're going through a mental health problem, you need your friends, loved ones and colleagues more than ever.

You can be the difference.

The way you act around someone with a mental health problem could change their life.

Wherever you are, whatever the time, your conversations about mental health changes lives.

Conversations changes lives.

Being open to mental health problems is good for all of us.

GUIDANCE FOR ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH MOOD AND EMOTIONAL DISORDERS

Recognising and dealing with ALL difficulties

- Talk to the young person – ask them how they are feeling, what is happening for them in their lives right now?
- Take their concerns seriously, listen and be empathic
- Tackle triggers e.g. bullying
- Normalise issues when appropriate
- Set up specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time limited goals
- Try to increase motivation with rewards
- Involved others for support – friends/family/school staff
- Signpost and offer support to access self-help resources online, apps, books, groups within the local area

Building resilience

- Manage life stresses and support the young person to problem-solve
- Encourage reconnection with past sources of support/interest and support to develop new techniques
- Encourage good 'life habits' – eating, sleeping, physical exercise, try to tackle alcohol/drugs
- Increase opportunities for positive experiences (pleasure and /or achievement)

LOW MOOD: advice re: sleep hygiene, balanced diet, exercise, increase pleasurable activities and those offering a sense of achievement.

ANXIETY: advice re: normalizing and understanding symptoms of anxiety and fight/flight response, gradually face fears and reduce avoidance.

Learning a few things about mental health problems might help you to feel more confident about talking and listening.

TYPES OF PROBLEMS

Anxiety

Anxiety disorders happen when someone has feelings of anxiety that are very strong or last for a long time.

Anxiety is something we all experience from time to time. Most of us would recognise feelings of tension, uncertainty, worry or fear. But if you experience anxiety symptoms at higher levels than usual, or they stay at high levels for long periods, this can be very uncomfortable and interfere with everyday life.

Anxiety disorders are some of the most common mental health problems, affecting 16% of people in the UK. Still, they can be misunderstood and this can cause stigma and discrimination, which can make it much harder for people to speak openly about what they're going through and seek the help they need.

Anxiety can be present continuously or triggered by specific situations. Overwhelming feelings might also result in panic attacks.

What is Anxiety?

For some people, anxiety becomes so overwhelming that it takes over their lives. Anxiety symptoms include persistent irritability or worry, a sense of dread, and difficulties concentrating and sleeping. There might be physical symptoms, like heart palpitations, sweating, tensions and pain, heavy and rapid breathing, dizziness, fainting, indigestion, stomach aches, sickness and diarrhea. Some people withdraw from contact with other people or develop phobias, obsessive thoughts or compulsive behaviour.

Panic attacks are an exaggeration of the body's normal response to fear, stress or excitement. It is the rapid build-up of overwhelming sensations, which might include a pounding heart, feeling faint, sweating, shaky limbs, nausea, chest pains, breathing discomfort and feelings of losing control.

Physical changes

Physical changes include symptoms of the fight/flight response to danger such as headache, heart racing, 'butterflies', sweating, breathlessness, tight chest, muscle tension, dizziness etc.

Emotional and behaviour changes:

- Withdrawn in class and/or playground, quiet
- Avoidance or dread of feared situations, refusal or unwillingness to join in things
- Irritable, stubbornness, angry and/or aggressive when pressed to do things
- Freezing / running away
- Tearfulness, clingyness

Bipolar

Bipolar disorder is characterized by the experience of swings between low mood and high, manic mood, usually with more normal phases in between.

Mood changes are part of everyday life for us all. If you have bipolar disorder, though, you are likely to experience extreme swings, from low mood (depression) to periods of overactive behaviour (mania) – usually with more ‘normal’ phases in-between.

It is thought that around one in a hundred of us are affected by bipolar disorder. Even so, it is often misunderstood as a mental health problem. This can result in stigma and discrimination, which might make it harder for people to speak only about what they are going through, as well as seek the help they need.

What is Bipolar Disorder?

Bipolar disorder (formerly known as manic depression) is a severe mood disorder. Individuals experience low moods, which might be characterised by depression, feelings of hopelessness, a lack of energy and social withdrawal. At other times, high, manic moods can bring confidence, energy and optimism, as well as a loss of inhibition.

Bipolar disorder can have a significant impact on someone’s life, but it’s important to note that many people who live with it lead productive, creative lives.

The way you act around someone with a mental health problem could change their life.

Depression

Depression is characterised by the persistence of feelings of sadness or misery.

We all experience variations in mood – a general low frame of mind, or in response to specific things that happen. It's also common to hear people say they are depressed if they feel sad or miserable. But depression is a serious mental health problem. It can interfere with everyday life – over long periods of time or in regular bursts.

As depression can be an 'invisible' illness, some people find it difficult to understand the effect it can have. They might see depression as trivial or dismiss it altogether. And this can make it harder for those experiencing it to speak openly and seek the help they need.

What is Depression?

Depression is the most common mental health disorder in Britain. It is a very real illness, and debilitating symptoms might include feelings of helplessness, crying, anxiety, low self-esteem, a lack of energy, sleeping difficulties, physical aches and pains, and a bleak view of the future.

Wherever you are, whatever the time, your conversations about mental health changes lives.

Eating Disorders

Eating disorders can occur when someone has a relationship with food that they find difficult.

Eating disorders can come about when there's a serious disturbance in eating behaviour, like an unhealthy reduction in the amount you eat, or an extreme concern about your weight or body shape.

Eating disorders are real, treatable medical illnesses, but they can be difficult to understand for someone who hasn't experienced something similar. This can result in stigma and discrimination, which can make it harder for people to speak only about what they're going through and seek the help they need.

What are Eating Disorders?

Types of eating disorders include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder and compulsive overeating. They frequently exist alongside depression and anxiety disorders, and can be complicit in a wide range of physical health complications that include serious heart conditions and kidney failure.

It's important to note that eating disorders are not just about food and eating. Often, they relate to painful feelings that are hard for the individual to express, face or resolve. Focusing on food can be a way of disguising these difficulties. Food might become more and more important to everyday life, or, in extreme cases, the sole focus.

Being open to mental health problems is good for all of us.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) is an anxiety disorder where unwanted thoughts, urges and repetitive activities become an obstacle to living life as someone wants to.

Minor obsessions and compulsions are common. We all worry occasionally about whether we've locked the door or left the iron on at home, and you might hear people describes as being 'obsessed' with work or sport. But you wouldn't usually describe these thoughts as unwanted, and they don't interfere significantly with everyday life.

Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) is an anxiety disorder where unwanted thoughts, urges and repetitive activities become an obstacle to living life as you want to. People who experience OCD often try to cope until they can't hide the symptoms any longer. This can make them feel very alone and make overcoming the OCD more difficult.

What is OCD?

Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) typically has two parts: obsessions and compulsions.

Obsessions are unwelcome thoughts, ideas or urges that appear repeatedly in the mind and interrupt everyday thinking. Compulsions are repetitive activities you feel you have to do, usually to 'put right' the anxiety and distress caused by the obsessive thoughts.

It's thought that 1 to 2 per cent of the population have OCD that is sever enough to disrupt their normal life. It can affect people of all ages and from all backgrounds.

Time to Talk. Time to Change.

Personality Disorders

Someone might have a personality disorder if their personality trait causes regular, long-term problems in the way they cope with life.

We all have different ways of thinking, feeling and behaving, and this tends to shape the way we view the world and how we interact with others. You might be described as having a 'personality disorder' if your personality traits cause regular, long term problems in the way you cope with life, interact with other people and respond emotionally. There is varied opinion around borderline personality disorder (BPD) though, as well as misunderstanding, stigma and discrimination – even among professionals. This can make it harder for people to get the support they might need.

What is borderline personality disorder?

Borderline personality disorder (BPD) is one of the most widely recognized personality disorders, though it is still thought to affect less than one per cent of the population.

BPD symptoms might include strong emotions, rapid changes in feelings and moods, difficulties in controlling certain impulses, poor self-image, feelings of not fitting or belonging, and a deep sense of emptiness and isolation. All of these things can make social relationships challenging.

Someone with BPD might go to extreme lengths to prevent feelings of abandonment. They might feel tempted to harm themselves if emotions become hard to cope with or express, and might also experience delusions and hallucinations.

Conversations changes lives.

Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a mental illness that occurs when the parts of the brain that are responsible for emotion and sensation stop working properly.

There are many misconceptions about schizophrenia. One common mistake is the belief that it results from a 'split personality'. This isn't true. Neither does it relate to 'multiple' personality disorder or any other personality disorder.

Actually, one in every hundred people will experience schizophrenia during their lifetime. It can be treated, and the majority of people who experience it will lead ordinary lives. Still, misunderstandings can result in stigma and discrimination, which might make it much harder for people to speak openly about it and seek the help they need.

What is schizophrenia?

Schizophrenia is a mental illness that occurs when the parts of the brain that are responsible for emotion and sensation stop working properly. As a result, an individual might stop living their normal life; they might withdraw from people, feel confused, lose interest in things and be prone to angry outbursts.

Schizophrenia symptoms can include slower thinking, talking and movement, jumbled thoughts, emotional flatness or a lack of thought processes, reduced motivation, changes in sleeping patterns and body language, and an indifference to social contact. Symptoms might also include hallucinations (seeing, hearing and smelling others don't) and delusions (strong beliefs or experiences that are not in line with generally accepted reality).

You can be the difference.

MENTAL HEALTH HELP AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Samaritans

Telephone: 116 123 (24 hours a day, free to call)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Website: www.samaritans.org

Provides confidential, non-judgmental emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those that could lead to suicide. You can phone, email, write a letter or in most cases talk to someone face to face.

Mind Infoline

Telephone: 0300 123 3393 (9am – 6pm Monday to Friday)

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Website: www.mind.org.uk/help/advice_lines

Mind provides confidential mental health information services.

With support and understanding, Mind enable people to make informed choices. The Infoline gives information on types of mental distress, where to get help, drug treatments, alternative therapies and advocacy. Mind has around 140 local Minds providing local mental health services.

Rethink Mental Illness Advice Line

Telephone: 0300 5000 927 (10am – 2pm Monday to Friday)

Email: info@rethink.org

Website: www.rethink.org/about-us/our-mental-health-advice

Provides expert advice and information to people with mental health problems and those who care for them, as well as giving help to health professionals, employers and staff. Rethink also runs **Rethink services and groups** across England and Northern Ireland

Saneline

Telephone: 0300 304 7000 (6pm – 11pm)

Website: www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/helpine

Saneline is a national mental health helpline providing information and support to people with mental health problems and those who support them.

Childline

Telephone: 0800 1111

Email: <http://www.childline.org.uk/Talk/Pages/Email.aspx>

Website: www.childline.org.uk

Childline is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of nineteen. You can contact a Childline counsellor for free about anything – no problem is too big or too small.

Elefriends

Website: www.elfriends.org.uk/

Elefriends is a supportive online community where you can be yourself. Elefriends is run by **Mind**.

SELF-HELP WEBSITES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Headscape is a 'one-stop', self-help website for young people with a range of mental health issues developed by Healthy Young Minds in London. Designed for young people, by young people, to give them a trusted website to use for information, to check how they feel and even take a test to find out if they need help with their emotions. It also offers young people opportunity to independently undertake a mental health screening questionnaire, which when completed, provides individually tailored advice and information about coping with anxiety and low mood.

headscapegreenwich.co.uk

Stem4 is a basic informational website for adolescents who think they may have issues related to depression, anxiety and other conditions. Stem4 is also designed for friends, family, and teachers of adolescents with these problems. While it does not provide any direct service or interventions, and relies heavily on links to outside resources, Stem4 may be a good starting place for individuals who are interested in learning more about these disorders and where to begin looking for help.

stem4.org.uk

Kooth is a free online counselling service. You can have a 'drop-in' chat with a counsellor or therapist or book a one to one sessions. You can also talk to other young people anonymously on the forums. Evidence suggests that Kooth can help children and young people with a range of different problems, including family problems, eating disorders, loneliness, bullying, anxiety and depression. Kooth is suitable for children and young people aged 11 to 19.

www.kooth.com

Big White Wall is an online community guided by trained mental health professionals that supports young people 16 and over experiencing common mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety. It's available around the clock and you can talk anonymously to other members or join a guided support course with people experiencing similar problems. In some areas, Big White Wall also offers live therapy involving one to one online therapy with experienced counsellors and therapists via webcam, audio or instant messaging. Big white Wall is also available as an app. There is some evidence that it can improve well-being and reduce depressive symptoms and uses NHS accredited out-come measures.

There are dozens of mental health apps that are potentially helpful to young people, and many are available at low or no cost to try out. There are many mental health apps on the market but most of them lack an underlying evidence base.

Anxiety and Low Mood

MoodGYM is an internet-based therapy program designed to prevent depression in young people although people who are older may also find it helpful. It includes assessments of anxiety and depression, thought patterns, life-event stress, parental relationships, and pleasant event scheduling. It is a free, fun, interactive program to help young people based on cognitive-behavioural and interpersonal therapy, it consists of five modules, which help you to explore:

- Why you feel the way you do
- Changing the way you think
- Knowing what makes you upset
- Assertiveness and interpersonal skills training

www.moodgym.anu.au/welcome

SuperBetter is a free web and app based program created by game designers. Playing SuperBetter helps build personal resilience: the ability to stay strong, motivated, and optimistic even in the face of difficult challenge. Resilience has a powerful effect on health by boosting physical and emotional well-being. SuperBetter is for young people over the age of 13 who want to feel happier and less anxious.

www.superbetter.com/how_it_works

Anxiety

Mindshift is a free app designed to help teens and young adults cope with anxiety. It can help you make an important shift and try to face it. The resource lists symptoms of anxiety and offers strategies to manage worry, panic, conflict, ordinary anxiety, and three specialised categories of anxiety: test anxiety, social anxiety and perfectionism. It also contains relaxation exercises.

www.anxiety.bc.com/resources/mindshift-app

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Live OCD Free is a free interactive application designed to guide users through the only evidence-based treatment, Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP), for Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. The app functions as your personal pocket therapist, available to coach you through your battle with OCD.

www.liveocdfree.com

Sleep Problems

Sleepio is a sleep improvement program of proven Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) techniques. Over a number of tailored sessions, the app will teach you a range of cognitive and behavioural techniques, designed to get your sleep schedule, thoughts and lifestyle into shape.

www.sleepio.com

Relaxation and Mindfulness

SmilingMind is modern meditation for young people. It is a free web and app-based program, designed to help bring balance to young lives. SmilingMind was created in Australia and is aimed at helping young people de-stress and stay calm. There are tailored programs for different age groups.

www.smilingmind.com.au

Online and Telephone Support Services for Parents

YoungMind's Parents' Helpline is a free, confidential helpline for any adult who is concerned about the emotional problems, behaviour or mental health of a child or young person up to the age of 25. The helpline is:

0808 802 5544

www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/parent_helpine

Papyrus run a national helpline, HOPELine UK, including text and email services, staffed by a team of mental health professionals who provide practical help and advice to vulnerable young people (under the age of 35) and to those concerned about any young person who may be a risk of suicide.

www.papyrus-uk.org/

MIND is a national charity that provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

www.mind.org.uk

MindED is a portal that provides free, completely open access online bite sized chunks of 'e-learning' available on tablets, phones and computers to help adults to identify, understand and support children and young people with mental health issues. The learning materials are written and edited by experts from the UK and around the world. Different learning pathways can be followed according to professional or other interests. The e-learning is applicable to a wide range of learners across the health, social care, education, criminal justice and community settings, and for parents and carers too.

MindED for Families has been co-written by parents with a lived experience of child and teen mental health issues and clinical experts. MindEd for Families provides accessible and useful information for parents and carers of children and teens struggling with mental health issues. Covering topics such as:

- What to do in a crisis?
- Parenting difficult children
- Everyday parenting
- Keeping ourselves strong

The new content is available at www.minded.org.uk/families

NHS self-help guides

www.nts.nhs.uk/pic/selfhelp

The guides lists below are available to download in several formats – these include: - A4, A5, large print and easy read. You can also listen to the guides as well as download MP3 audio copies of the guides.

Anxiety / Depression and Low Mood / Sleeping Problems / Panic / Stress / Controlling Anger / Shyness and Social Anxiety / Obsessions and Compulsions / Bereavement

Handsonscotland is a website designed to help you make a difference to children and young people's lives, by giving you tools to respond helpfully when they are troubled. It is a one-stop shop for parents for practical information and techniques on how to respond helpfully to children and young people's mood and emotional difficulties.

www.handsonscotland.co.uk