MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health issues are **real** (impacting how we think, feel, and act), **common** (affecting nearly 1 in 5 American adults), and **treatable** (early detection and appropriate care can prevent worsening/promote recovery), but there's often a stigma in talking about them. What if we *did* talk about mental health? We could better understand how mental health relates to overall well-being, and how we can take care of it.

Mental health disorder fast facts:

- A mental health disorder is a disabling illness that causes thinking, mood, or behavior changes that disrupt daily living.
- **Anxiety** (feeling frightened, distressed and uneasy for no apparent reason) and **depression** (severe sadness and/or loss of interest that decreases an ability to function) are the most common mental health disorders (especially among women). Learn more about disorders at the **National Alliance on Mental Illness (nami.org)**.
- Mental health disorders can affect anyone, and no two people will experience a mental health disorder in the same way.

Warning signs of a mental health disorder (screening.mhanational.org):

- Thinking of harming yourself or others*
- Eating or sleeping too much/too little
- Withdrawing from people and activities
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Abusing drugs, alcohol, tobacco
- Yelling or fighting with family/friends
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, upset, worried
- Experiencing severe mood swings
- Having thoughts you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing untrue things
- Inability to perform daily tasks

Reach out to a healthcare provider if experiencing any of these symptoms for two or more weeks. ***Feelings of wanting to harm yourself/others is a medical emergency! Call 9-1-1, or visit the nearest ER.***

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

Protecting mental health:

Stress management
Helps reduce the symptoms of mental illness and promotes resilience (protection from future problems). Find time every day to do something that brings you joy.

Building strong support systems:
People to talk to, get advice from and share experiences with help ease stress, boost mood, and decrease loneliness. Anyone who is trustworthy and makes you feel comfortable and valued is a support person. Join a new group or volunteer to build your system.

Physical health:
Enough sleep, Vitamin D, regular health visits, physical activity, and eating well have benefits for mental health too!

Seeking help:
It's OK to reach out for help to be at your mental best. Connect with your primary provider, a psychiatrist, psychologist, therapist or counselor.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Mental Health America: www.mentalhealthamerica.net

National Alliance on Mental Illness www.nami.org