

UNIT 8 MENTAL HEALTH

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Mental health is not just the absence of mental disorder. It is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

In most countries, particularly low- and middle-income countries, mental health services are severely short of resources - both human and financial. Of the health care resources available, most are currently spent on the specialized treatment and care of the people with mental illness, and to a lesser extent on an integrated mental health system. Instead of providing care in large psychiatric hospitals, countries should integrate mental health into primary health care, provide mental health care in general hospitals and develop community-based mental health services.

Even less funding is available for mental health promotion, an umbrella term that covers a variety of strategies, all aimed at having a positive effect on mental health well-being in general. The encouragement of individual resources and skills, and improvements in the socio-economic environment are among the strategies used.

Mental health promotion requires multi-sectoral action, involving a number of government sectors and non-governmental or community-based organizations. The focus should be on promoting mental health throughout the lifespan to ensure a healthy start in life for children and to prevent mental disorders in adulthood and old age.

Mental health improvements are central to nations' development.

Positive mental health is linked to a range of development outcomes and is fundamental to coping with adversity. On the other hand, poor mental health impedes an individual's capacity to realize their potential, work productively, and make a contribution to their community. In order to improve population mental health, WHO MIND supports countries to implement programmes to ensure that effective treatment, prevention, and promotion programs are made available to all people who need them.

World Health Organisation

<http://www.who.int/features/qa/62/en/index.html>

GLOSSARY

disorder = disturbo, malattia
well-being = benessere
to cope with = affrontare
fruitfully = fruttuosamente, con successo
to be short of = essere a corto di
illness = malattia
lesser = minore
extent = misura
umbrella term = termine generico

skill = abilità, capacità
focus = punto centrale
lifespan = durata della vita
adulthood = età adulta
linked = connesso
outcome = risultato, esito
adversity = avversità, disgrazia
to realize = realizzare
to make available = mettere qualcosa a disposizione, rendere disponibile

LANGUAGE NOTES

Wellness is a relatively new word that is generally used to mean healthy balance of the mind, body and spirit that results in an overall feeling of well-being.

The verb *to realise* can mean “to make real” (realizzare): *He realised his ambition*. It can also mean “to know” (rendersi conto): *He realises he has serious health issues*.

COMPREHENSION

Say whether the following statements are True or False.

1. The article discusses mental health in the EU.
2. The definition of mental health includes being able to deal with everyday pressures.
3. More psychiatric hospitals should be provided.
4. More money is spent on integrated health systems than on mental illness.
5. Mental health is vital for a country’s progress.

VOCABULARY

Exercise 1 Find words in text that mean the following:

1. illness
2. financial support
3. therapy
4. avoidance
5. well

Exercise 2 Complete the sentences using the adjective related to the noun in each sentence.

1. A person suffering from anxiety is _____
2. A person suffering from depression is _____
3. A person suffering from anger is _____
4. A person suffering from fear is _____
5. A person suffering from stress is _____

Exercise 3 Morphology. The suffix *-ity* can be added to adjectives to form nouns: *adversity, community*. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the word in brackets.

1. Mental health issues often involve much _____. (*complex*)
2. The _____ of mental illness is often genetic. (*probable*)
3. The most likely _____ is that depression has multiple causes. (*possible*)
4. We have the _____ to help you recover. (*able*)
5. Some patients need _____ as much as care. (*secure*)

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

Q: How can the human rights of people with mental disorders be promoted and protected?

A: People with mental disorders around the world are exposed to a wide range of human rights violations. The stigma they face means they are often ostracized from society and fail to receive the care they require. In some communities, people with mental disorders are banished to the edge of town where they are left semi-naked or in rags, tied up, beaten and left to go hungry.

Patients in many mental hospitals fare little better. People are restrained with metal shackles, confined in caged beds, deprived of clothing, decent bedding, clean water or proper toilet facilities and are subject to abuse and neglect.

People with mental disorders also face discrimination on a daily basis including in the fields of education, employment and housing. Some countries even prohibit people from voting, marrying or having children.

How can these violations be prevented?

- **Change attitudes and raise awareness.** Ministries of Health, mental health service user and family groups, health professionals, NGOs, academic institutions, professional organizations and other stakeholders should unify their efforts in educating and changing public attitudes towards mental illness and in advocating for the rights of people with mental disorders.
- **Improve human rights in mental health facilities.** Mechanisms to monitor human rights should be established to protect against inhuman and degrading treatment, poor living conditions and inappropriate and arbitrary involuntary admission and treatment. People should also have access to complaints mechanisms in cases of human rights violations.
- **Empower mental health service users and families.** Governments should support the creation and/or strengthening of mental health service user and families organizations. Such groups are in the best position to highlight problems, specify their needs, and help find solutions to improving mental health in countries and have a crucial role to play in the design and implementation of policies, plans, laws and services.
- **Replace psychiatric institutions with community care.** Large institutions, which are so often associated with human rights violations, should be replaced by community mental health care facilities, backed by psychiatric beds in general hospital and home care support.
- **Increase investment in mental health.** Governments need to dedicate more of their health budget to mental health. In addition the mental health workforce needs to be developed and trained to ensure that all people have access to good quality mental health services at each level of the health care system.
- **Adopt policies, laws and services that promote human rights.** Countries should put in place mental health policies, laws and services that promote the rights of people with mental disorders, empower them to make

choices about their lives, provide them with legal protections, and ensure their full integration and participation into the community.

WHO has initiated a global action programme to assist countries to create and implement coherent and comprehensive mental health policies, plans and legislation, and to ensure adequate mental health care is available at the community level. This includes development of human resources for mental health.

World Health Organisation

<http://www.who.int/features/qa/43/en/index.html>

GLOSSARY

range = gamma	stakeholder = interessato
ostracised = escluso	effort = sforzo
rags = stracci	to advocate for = difendere
beaten = pestato	to improve = migliorare
to fare little better = avere condizioni poco migliori	to establish = stabilire, determinare
shackles = manette	to empower = dare più potere a
caged = ingabbiato	to strengthen = rafforzare
clothing = indumenti	to replace = sostituire
bedding = biancheria	backed = appoggiato
neglect = trascuratezza	bed = posto letto
to marry = sposarsi	budget = bilancio
attitude = atteggiamento	trained = formato
	to provide = fornire, organizzare

LANGUAGE NOTES

In English, words can be combined to form compounds. They have three main forms:

1. two words that appear together as one: *grandmother, stakeholder*
2. two or more words connected by a hyphen: *well-being, decision-maker*
3. combinations of longer words: *community care, home care, human rights violations*

These compounds can sometimes be very long:

mental health service user and family groups

The verb *to marry* is used without a preposition: *I married John three years ago*. The expression *to get married* describes the change in state: *They want*

to get married soon. The expression *to be married* refers to the state: *They have been married for years.*

COMPREHENSION

1. What happens to people with mental disorders around the world?
2. Why are these people often excluded from society?
3. Why should the users of mental health services be encouraged to participate in the planning of services?
4. Why should large institutions be substituted for smaller ones?
5. Are the current policies and legislation adequate for promoting the rights of people with mental disorders?

VOCABULARY

Exercise 4 Find words in text that mean the following:

1. shame
2. mistreatment
3. check
4. essential
5. supported

Exercise 5 Care. Complete the sentences with the most appropriate word.

child	foster	health	home	hospice
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1. _____ care is better for the elderly than an institution.
2. People generally rely on their employers to sponsor their _____ care coverage.
3. Placements of teenagers in _____ care have dramatically increased over the past 10 years.
4. Many companies have a _____ care centre for their employees.
5. _____ care aims to optimize the quality of a terminally ill patient's life.

Exercise 6 Complete the sentences with the appropriate word.

depression	eating disorders	obsessive compulsive disorder
schizophrenia	self-harming behaviour	

1. People who can't stop washing their hands may be suffering from an _____.
2. Anorexia and bulimia are serious _____.
3. _____ may be described as feeling sad, blue, unhappy, or miserable.
4. Cutting yourself is an example of _____.
5. _____ is a mental disorder that makes it difficult to tell the difference between real and unreal experiences.

DISCUSSION

THE STRESS SCALE

Score each item according to how much of the time each statement applies to you on a scale from 1 (always) 2 (often) 3 (sometimes) 4 (rarely) 5 (never).

Then discuss your results with a partner

I eat well-balanced, nutritious meals each day.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy my work.	1	2	3	4	5
I organize and manage my time effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
I like myself.	1	2	3	4	5
I exercise on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
I am the appropriate weight for my height and body-type.	1	2	3	4	5
I have two or less alcoholic drinks per day.	1	2	3	4	5
I abstain from smoking cigarettes.	1	2	3	4	5

I drink fewer than three cups of coffee a day.	1	2	3	4	5
I get sufficient sleep and wake up each morning feeling refreshed and relaxed.	1	2	3	4	5
I am flexible and am able to maintain a healthy balance between work and family.	1	2	3	4	5
I have an adequate income.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a support system of friends, family, and/or other love interests.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel in control, take on new challenges and seek solutions to problems.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to speak openly about my feelings when angry or worried.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to say " No " without feeling guilty.	1	2	3	4	5
I am free of physical symptoms such as headaches, back pain, or teeth grinding.	1	2	3	4	5
I am free of emotional symptoms such as depression, anxiety, fatigue, or fear.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that my life has meaning and purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
I am compassionate, able to relax, and see the humorous side of life.	1	2	3	4	5

1-30

You are a good stress manager. You know what your stress triggers are and you are able to handle them when they arise.

31-50

You are managing stress to a considerable extent. There is still room for improvement. Try rehearsing situations that are stressful for you and imagine yourself handling them more confidently. Avoiding situations that you find stressful only works up to a point. Take on achievable projects at home or at work that will build your sense of confidence and achievement and develop your problem solving and goal setting skills.

51-100

You tend to bottle things up until you reach exploding point. Try talking about your worries before they get too big to handle. Make more time in your life for relaxation and develop some strategies to let off steam constructively.

UNIT 9 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OXFAM INTERNATIONAL

Oxfam is an international confederation of 14 organizations working together in 98 countries and with partners and allies around the world to find lasting solutions to poverty and injustice.

We work directly with communities and we seek to influence the powerful to ensure that poor people can improve their lives and livelihoods and have a say in decisions that affect them.

History of Oxfam International

Oxfam International was formed in 1995 by a group of independent non-governmental organizations. Their aim was to work together for greater impact on the international stage to reduce poverty and injustice.

The name “Oxfam” comes from the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, founded in Britain in 1942. The group campaigned for food supplies to be sent through an allied naval blockade to starving women and children in enemy-occupied Greece during the Second World War.

As well as becoming a world leader in the delivery of emergency relief, Oxfam International implements long-term development programs in vulnerable communities. We are also part of a global movement, campaigning with others, for instance, to end unfair trade rules, demand better health and education services for all, and to combat climate change.

Today, there are 14 member organizations of the Oxfam International confederation. They are based in: Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong, Ireland, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Quebec, Spain and the United States.

The Oxfam International Secretariat is based in Oxford, UK. The Secretariat runs advocacy offices in Brussels, Geneva, New York, Washington DC and Brasilia

What we do

With local partner organizations, we work with people living in poverty striving to exercise their human rights, assert their dignity as full citizens and take control of their lives.

We focus our efforts in these areas: