

What is Mental Health?

Mental Health is made up of things like – how you feel about yourself, the way that you handle stress and your ability to form meaningful relationships. While these things affect your mental health, no one thing about your feelings or behaviors causes you to be mentally healthy or unhealthy. Mental health happens on a continuum, just like how you may feel about yourself some days you may feel better than others.

Stress plays an important role in mental health

When you feel stressed because there is too much to do, you haven't gotten enough sleep, you have been eating poorly or you have been sick, you may be experiencing physical stress. When you feel stressed because of an emotionally challenging event – like a parents divorce or taking a final exam, you may be experiencing mental stress. Most of our stress comes from everyday life and we may feel physical or mental stress without knowing it. If we don't know how to properly handle stress it can cause physical, mental and behavioral problems.

What is Mental Illness?

A mental illness is an illness that changes the way you act, feel and behave. You may have heard of the more common types of mental illnesses, like depression, anxiety disorders, eating disorders and schizophrenia. Mental illness affects more than 54 million people each year. Mental health problems can affect anyone regardless of their age, gender, wealth, race or religion.

For more information, visit Mental Health America of Wisconsin's web site at www.mhawisconsin.org or call (414) 276-3122.

Mental Health America is a United Way of Greater Milwaukee Agency.



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