



# Mental Health: Awareness and Support for You and Your Community

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# Our Mission



The Kennedy Forum's mission is to end stigma and discrimination against people with mental health and substance use disorders. Our aim is not just to change the conversation, but also to change the system.

# Goal of this webinar

**Goal:** Provide information to destigmatize mental health and substance use to recognize mental health is the same as physical or spiritual health.

Our agenda is:

- Set the Stage
- Overview of Mental Health
- Stigma
- Treatment & Recovery
- Communication & De-Escalation
- Stress Management
- Where to Receive Help
- Questions & Comments

# Setting the stage

- Please place yourself on mute (or mute all lines).
- Please use the chat/IM function if you have any questions.
- Take space and time during the call for yourself if you need it.
- This is safe and secure space.
- Keep an open mind about varying perspectives.
- Be present!

# We all have mental health

**Mental health** includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

# Mental Health Stigma

**Stigma** involves negative attitudes or discrimination against someone based on a distinguishing characteristic such as a mental illness, health condition, or disability. Social stigmas can also be related to other characteristics including gender, sexuality, race, religion, and culture.

## Stigmas include:

- Social Stigma
- Self Stigma
- Structural Stigma

# Barriers to Care



ACCESSIBILITY



INSURANCE



DENIAL



LACK OF MENTAL  
HEALTH LITERACY



DISTRUST IN THE  
MENTAL HEALTH  
PROFESSION



STIGMA

# Mental Health Factors

Many factors contribute to mental health, including:

- Biological factors, such as genes or brain chemistry
- Life experiences, such as trauma or abuse
- Family history of mental health disorders
- Environmental factors:
  - Covid-19; civil unrest; home or neighborhood environment; relationship status.

# Mental Health Responses

**Everyone reacts differently to the factors that contribute to mental health. Some of the most common responses include:**

- Fear & worry about health
- Changes in sleeping or eating patterns
- Difficulty concentrating
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

# Mental Health & Substance Use

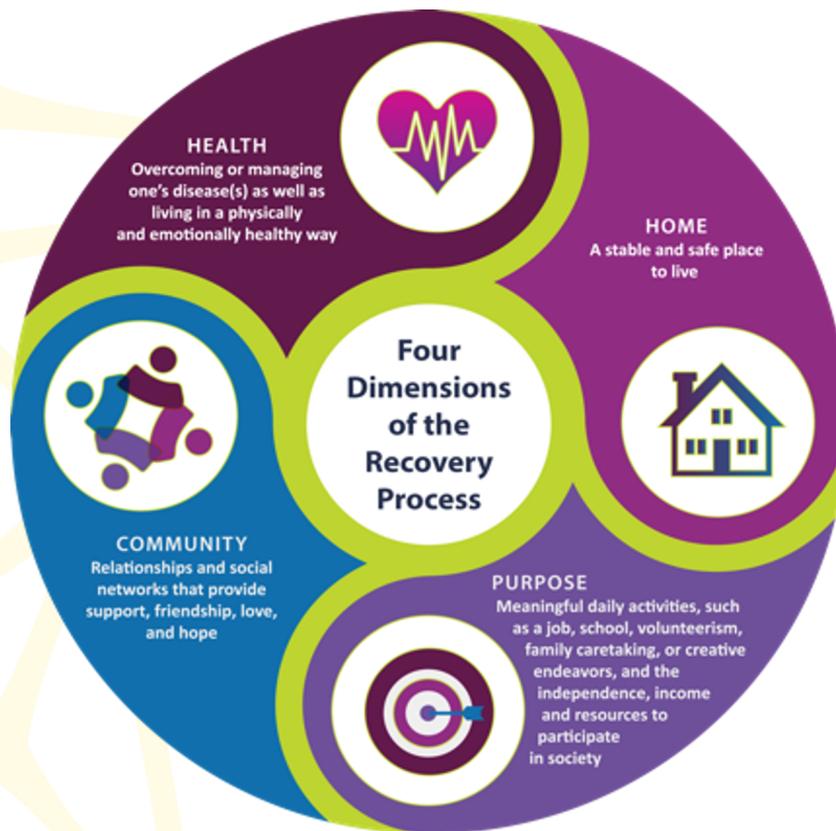
Mood disorders, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and personality disorders **often overlap with drug or alcohol addiction.**

- Co-occurring Disorders
- Drugs, alcohol and addictive behaviors are often used as dysfunctional coping mechanisms to help the individual live with the painful symptoms of mental disorders.

**Some of these symptoms include:**

- Intrusive thoughts
- Hopelessness
- A lack of motivation or a fear of public situations

# The Recovery Model



# Communication & De-Escalation

You are saying more than your words.

- Tone, volume, pitch, and body language all contribute to your communication.

If you want to help someone who is experiencing a mental health or substance use condition, you must practice **active listening & empathy.**

# Empathy



# Stress Management

- Understand that stress and anxiety are natural human responses.
- Recognize signs to help identify stress.
- Share your feelings with someone you trust.
- Release your thoughts.
- Know when to ask for help.



# De-Stress: Completing the Stress Cycle

- Physical Activity
- Breathing
- Social Interaction (casual works!)
- Laughter
- Hugs
- Crying
- Creative Expression

# Mental Health Crisis Response

- Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training is a 40-hour training that police officers complete to de-escalate and divert people with mental health conditions to support services.
- In Chicago, a CIT officer is deployed every watch at every district across the City.
- If you or anyone you know is in a mental health crisis situation, call 911 and explain the situation is mental health related.

# Resources

## Help Lines:

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention help line: 1-800-273-8255
- Crisis Text line: text HOME to 741741
- Call4Calm (in Illinois): text TALK to 552020; for service in Spanish: text HABLAR to 552020
- In Chicago, call 311 and explain you are dealing with what you believe to be a mental health situation.
- NAMI Chicago: 833-NAMI-CHI
- If you or anyone else feel threatened, call 911 and share that you are dealing with what you believe to be a mental health situation. Specially trained officers exist on every watch in every district to de-escalate a situation and help someone receive the support they need.

# Questions & comments

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THANK YOU!!!



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