

Module Subject: Mental Health and Mental Illness 101

Included in This Module:

1. Video recording of lecture
2. Activity guide for instructors
3. Suggested quiz questions
4. List of additional resources
5. NAMI “Ripple Effects of Mental Illness” PDF (separate PDF file)

Module Goals:

- a) Educate students about the prevalence and effects of mental health conditions.
- b) Bust common myths about people living with mental health conditions.
- c) Help students understand why it’s hard for patients and providers to talk about mental health issues.
- d) Demonstrate how accurate, sensitive communication can combat stigma against mental health issues.

Estimated Time to Complete Module: 30 minutes just lecture, 60 minutes with lecture and activity

Activity Guide for Instructors: Small-Group Research/Discussion

Note: This activity can be conducted before or after the corresponding lecture. It can be done with in-person classes OR online groups. If conducted as an in-person exercise, it helps if every student has a laptop or smartphone with access to the internet.

The **goal** of this exercise is to have students work together to learn more about common mental health diagnoses.

1. Divide students into groups of 3-6.
2. Within each team, there must be at least 1 Patient, 1 Medical Expert, and 1 Loved One. Ask students to divide their teams up according to those roles.
3. Hand out the Information Sheets; there are unique sheets for Patients, Medical Experts, and Loved Ones.
4. Announce to the class that each team will research a mental health issue that they will be randomly assigned. Each role (Patient, Medical Expert and Loved Ones) have different research questions.
 - Students should use the websites listed on the Sheets (as well as others they find) to answer their specific questions.
 - Within their groups, each student should work independently to answer as many questions on their sheets as possible, then share what they learned with the rest of their small group. This will save time, and allow groups to find more sources of information.
5. Give the class a time limit to research their condition and discuss it within their small groups. If this is an in-person exercise, perhaps 20 minutes; if this is an online exercise, it could be an asynchronous assignment with a 24-hour deadline.
6. After the allotted time for group work has passed, ask each group to give a short presentation (>4 minutes) to the rest of the students about the condition they researched. What are the three key pieces of information they believe are the most interesting or useful about this particular mental health condition?
7. If desired, instructors can assign a short reflection essay, answering the following prompts:
 - What is the most interesting or surprising piece of information your team found today, regarding the mental health condition you researched?
 - Based on the information your group found, what role do friends and family members play in the supporting someone diagnosed with a mental health condition?
 - Considering an individual's mental health diagnosis, who has the most "authority" over what that patient "should do," in terms of treatment or recovery: the patient, their family, or the medical expert?

This activity was adapted from the U.S. National Library of Medicine, <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/theliteratureofprescription>

Activity Handouts for Students

Instructor: Print out copies of the next three pages before class. The number of copies you need depends on how many students you have, and how many small groups you will break them into. Each group needs at least one Patient, one Medical Expert and one Loved One. Each student gets the sheet that corresponds with his or her chosen role.

Assign each group a specific mental health condition from the list below:

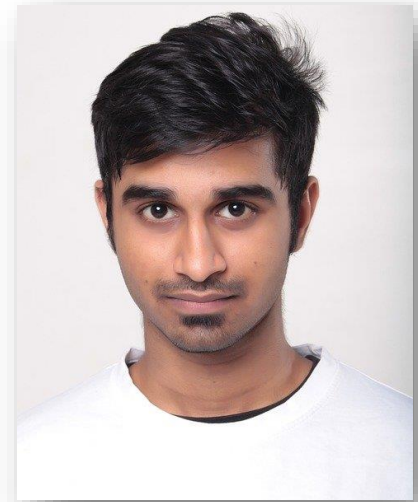
- Schizophrenia
- Bipolar Disorder
- Major Depression
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Borderline Personality Disorder
- Eating Disorders (including bulimia and anorexia nervosa)

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Patient

You are role-playing someone who has been diagnosed with this condition. Research symptoms associated with it, and consider how you might think, feel, and act when living with this condition.



Use the following websites (and others) to answer the research questions on this page.

- Mental Health and Behavior on the MedlinePlus® by the National Library of Medicine at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/mentalhealthandbehavior.html>
- National Institute of Mental Health, Mental Health Topics at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/index.shtml>
- National Alliance on Mental Illness at <http://www.nami.org/Hometemplate.cfm>
- Mental Health Services Locator at <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/databases>
- TeensHealth™ from Nemours Foundation at http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind

1. What are some common symptoms that patients experience when affected by the specific mental health condition your team has been assigned?
2. What are some known or possible causes of this condition?
3. How many people in the U.S. are diagnosed with this mental health issue? What are some other relevant statistics that might be helpful for patients?
4. What are some reasons someone might not seek help for this mental health condition?
5. What other information do you think will help people better understand this mental health condition and seek appropriate help?

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Family Member/Loved One

As a family member of a person diagnosed with a mental illness, you are responsible for researching resources in the community to help with the mental illness(s). Additionally, you are to research anything that relates to the community and stigma.



Use the following websites (and others) to answer the research questions on this page.

- Mental Health and Behavior on the MedlinePlus® by the National Library of Medicine at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/mentalhealthandbehavior.html>
- National Institute of Mental Health, Mental Health Topics at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/index.shtml>
- National Alliance on Mental Illness at <http://www.nami.org/Hometemplate.cfm>
- Mental Health Services Locator at <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/databases>
- TeensHealth™ from Nemours Foundation at http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind

1. What are some symptoms of this mental health condition that friends or family members might notice?
2. Are there any negative stereotypes about people affected by this mental health condition? Please describe.
3. List at least two local mental health resources/services available for helping and supporting people affected with this mental health issue and/or their family members.
4. List at least two online resources (other than those listed above) with reliable information about this mental health condition and explain why you consider them credible.
5. What other information do you think will help people better understand this mental health condition and seek appropriate help?

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Medical Expert

As the Medical expert, you are responsible for researching current treatments for this mental health condition and informing others about various medical resources.

Use the following websites (and others) to answer the research questions on this page.

- Mental Health and Behavior on the MedlinePlus® by the National Library of Medicine at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/mentalhealthandbehavior.html>
- National Institute of Mental Health, Mental Health Topics at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/index.shtml>
- National Alliance on Mental Illness at <http://www.nami.org/Hometemplate.cfm>
- Mental Health Services Locator at <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/databases>
- TeensHealth™ from Nemours Foundation at http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind



1. What are some risk factors in mental health condition?
2. What are general methods used to treat this mental health condition?
3. What are some medical science careers available in helping and researching mental health issues? (Hint: visit and explore science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/alpha.htm)
4. Locate 1 research study related to this mental health condition. In 1-2 sentences, summarize what the researchers found and why you think it's important.
5. What other questions do you want answered?

This activity was adapted from the U.S. National Library of Medicine. <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/theliteratureofprescription>



Suggested Quiz Questions:

Instructor: The correct answers are highlighted.

1. One out of every ___ American adults experience a mental health condition, and one in ___ lives with a serious mental illness.
 - a. 5,50
 - b. 100,200
 - c. 5,25
 - d. 10, 100

2. True or false: Less than half of American adults with mental health conditions receive treatment. **True; 43% receive treatment.**

3. What is one common reason (as noted in the lecture) that people and their healthcare providers avoid talking about mental health issues?
 - a. Patients can easily get treatment without doctor referral.
 - b. **Providers often lack knowledge of conditions and confidence to talk about them.**
 - c. Doctors can diagnose mental health conditions without asking patients about them.
 - d. Patients usually don't know the technical terms for their symptoms.

4. Stigma arises when two key ingredients are present: 1) a negative stereotype about a group of people or a condition, and 2):
 - a. one common slang label for the stigmatized group.
 - b. a group of at least 100 people.
 - c. a major, negative event that draws attention to that group of people.
 - d. **actions people take to distance themselves from being associated with that group or condition.**

5. The type of stigma in which "individuals believe that people with mental health issues are irresponsible and incapable, so their life decisions should be made by others" is called:
 - a. **authoritarianism**
 - b. benevolence
 - c. fear and exclusion
 - d. prejudice



Additional Resources:

- Mental Health America (mhanational.org): An advocacy group that provides education, tools for mental health promotion, updates on public policy, and ways to get involved.
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI; nami.org): This well-established grassroots organization offers video resources, online discussion groups, resources for loved ones, information on statistics and current research, and more.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (mentalhealth.gov): This robust site provides facts about mental health conditions, information for people seeking help, and guidance for educators, community leaders, friends, and loved ones who want to support someone experiencing mental health issues.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 (TALK)

