HOW CAN ONE MANAGE MENTAL ILLNESS?

Persons suffering from a mental illness often believe that trying to get better is hopeless, but in actuality there are many ways to treat mental illness and get better. The simplest way of doing this involves **speaking with a professional therapist** that can diagnose a person who is suffering and can provide that person with treatment. However, in our society, having a mental illness carries an incredible stigma, and many persons are ashamed to admit that they are suffering. This is where we must step in and encourage them to get help, reassure them that they are not alone and most importantly that they must **NEVER GIVE UP HOPE**.

This brochure was made by the Fatima College Form 4 Young Leaders of 2019 to raise awareness about mental illness and how to help people who are suffering.
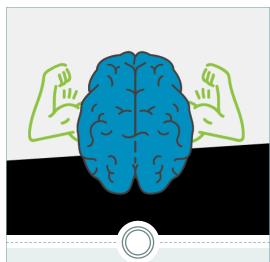
Mental Health Matters

By the Fatima College Form 4 Young Leaders of 2019

What is mental health?

Mental health involves our emotional, psychological and social well-being. Our mental health affects the way we think, feel and act, no matter where we are whether it be school, work or at home. However, as life goes on, we may experience things like stress or trauma that may cause us to develop problems with our mental health which change our way of thinking and behavior. This is known as mental illness. That is why it is important to keep ourselves mentally healthy in order to cope with stress and work productively within our community. It is also important to know that anyone can experience mental illness no matter their race, gender, culture, age, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

Common Types of Mental Illness

There are many types of mental illnesses that are caused by many different factors whether it be stress, trauma and even genes. Some of the most common illnesses are as follows:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Eating Disorders such as anorexia
- Schizophrenia (losing touch with reality)
- Bipolar Disorder
- PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder)

Common Misconceptions about Mental Illness

A number of misconceptions about mental illness exist which cause the topic to be deemed too "controversial" for discussion, such as:

- The mentally ill are violent
- Mental illness lasts forever
- Mental illness is a sign of weakness
- People are faking it for attention
- Different races are more prone to mental illness

However, if we are able to overcome these misconceptions and open the topic up for discussion, we can provide an opportunity for people suffering from a mental illness to acknowledge their symptoms and encourage them to find the help and treatment they need.

What are some red flags of mental illness?

There are many signs that show if a person is mentally ill. Knowing these signs or red flags is important so that we can identify when our friends and loved ones are mentally ill and give them the help they need to overcome their illness. Some such red flags to look out for are:

- Drastic sleep or appetite changes
- Difficulty recalling information/ Forgetfulness
- Self-harm
- Insomnia
- Frequent outbursts of tears or anger
- Steep drop in performance in school/ work
- Withdrawal from social interactions/ Self isolation
- Sense of hopelessness
- Substance use/abuse