

Common Stigmas & Stereotypes Associated with Mental Health

There are two main types of stigma that occur with mental health problems, social stigma and self-stigma. Social stigma (or Public Stigma), refers to negative stereotypes of those with a mental health problem. These stereotypes come to define the person, mark them out as different and prevent them being seen as an individual. Self-stigma occurs when a person internalizes negative stereotypes. This can cause low self-esteem, shame and hopelessness.

Examples of Stigmas:

Social Stigma Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public View of the Person, as being different 	Self-Stigma Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feelings of hopelessness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public View of the Person, as being labeled 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feelings of helplessness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns with confidentiality 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feelings of Guilt
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Shaming 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Viewed as a ‘label’
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Viewed as dangerous, blamed for their disorder, unpredictable, crazy 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View myself as dangerous, blame myself for the disorder, or crazy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listing that person, to what their symptoms make them out to be 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative Self-Talk – “This is my fault”, “I really am crazy”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BH, MH Services are viewed as negative, only for “Addicts or Crazy People” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative Thoughts – “I always fail, even how hard I try”, “I’m not good enough”. 		

Stigma can affect the way individual’s progress with their disorders, based on the two stigma types. Some of the affects are related to delays in receiving treatment or continued treatment, ‘living up to the label’, increased difficulty with present symptoms, reduced feelings of hope, social isolation, increase difficulties with work, relationships or daily functioning, or lowered self-esteem, motivation or self-image.

What can we do to combat stigma and stereotypes? 4 ways to de-stigmatize Mental Health...

Increase our own education efforts around Mental Health and Addictions	Get to know what a Mental Health Disorder is, Education on certain types of disorders, Education on symptoms a person may be experiencing, Education on signs to look out for, Educate others-pass on the information, Gather information related to Mental Health, Sign-up for Trainings/Seminars
Talk openly about Mental Health	Talk with a person who is living with a disorder, support groups, in public, post on social media
Support those living with Mental Health Disorders	Understand what is helpful for that person, Encourage connection with others, Provide practical help, Encourage on-going treatment
Use of Proper Language	Talk in person first language ex. John Doe lives with schizophrenia, not, John Doe is schizophrenic. Choice of words is everything, use supportive language.