



RESEARCH SOLUTIONS

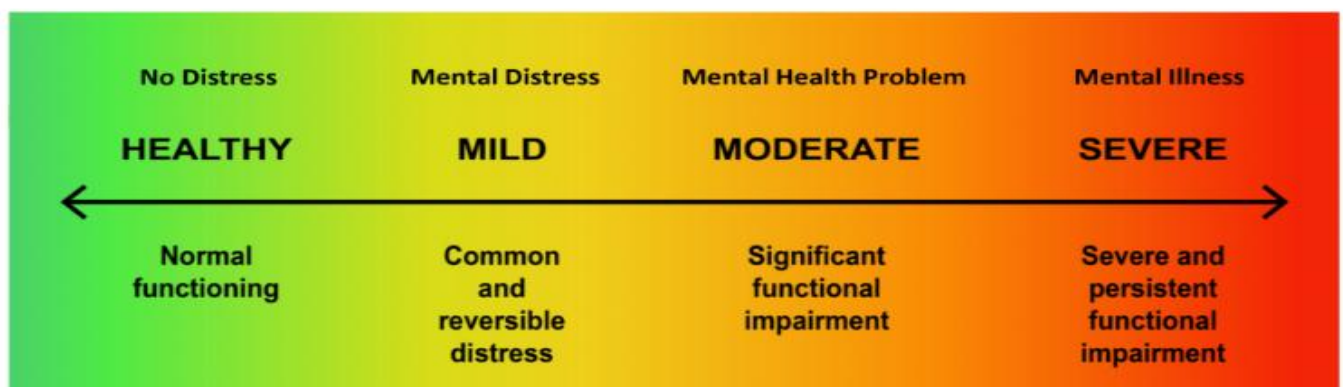
It All Starts with the Mind

May is Mental Health Awareness Month — a time dedicated to raising awareness, reducing stigma, and encouraging open conversations about mental well-being. At its core, everything begins with the mind. Our thoughts shape our feelings, behaviors, actions, and decisions, ultimately influencing how we navigate everyday life. Research suggests that the average person has around 6,500 thoughts per day (Raypole, 2022), and many of those thoughts can carry some level of stress or concern. This makes it especially important to pause, reflect, and be intentional about how we care for our mental well-being.

In today's world, those stressors can feel even more overwhelming. Many individuals and families are faced with difficult, everyday decisions—whether to request an extension on overdue bills, how to stretch groceries for the week, or how much gas they can afford just to make it to work. While these situations are common, they can create a significant emotional burden, and if left unaddressed, may take a toll on overall mental health.

Measuring Mental Health

At any given time, we all experience some level of stress. Mental health exists on a spectrum, ranging from positive well-being on one end to crisis on the other. (NeuroLaunch, n.d.). Many of the stressors mentioned earlier may place someone in a mild or manageable range. However, when stress becomes prolonged and begins to interfere with daily functioning, it may signal a mental health concern or challenge—and in some cases, a developing crisis.





You may be experiencing a mental health challenge if coping with stress feels increasingly difficult. For example, a recent breakup may lead to ongoing sadness and a decline in daily routines, such as personal hygiene. Similarly, feeling overwhelmed at work can lead to burnout, where exhaustion persists but responsibilities remain unavoidable. In these moments, some individuals may turn to substances—such as alcohol, nicotine, marijuana, or other drugs—as a way to cope. While this may provide temporary relief, it can also increase the risk of developing a substance use disorder (SUD). Seeking healthy and supportive alternatives is essential.

Getting Help

When mental health concerns move into a moderate or severe range, reaching out for help is an important step. One immediate resource is the **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**, which provides free, confidential support 24/7. By calling or texting 988, individuals can connect with trained professionals who are ready to listen without judgment.

Building a support system is also a powerful protective factor. Consider the people in your life you can turn to—a parent, sibling, friend, coworker, or neighbor—even if it's just for a conversation. Connecting with a mental health professional can also provide valuable guidance and support.

If reaching out feels difficult, starting with a self-care plan can make a meaningful difference. This may include getting adequate rest, taking a break from social media, spending time outdoors, listening to music, enjoying a favorite meal, or connecting with loved ones. These small, intentional actions can help restore balance and reduce the impact of daily stressors.

Taking care of your mental health is not a luxury—it's essential. Small steps taken today can lead to stronger, healthier tomorrows.

Stay Connected & Updated

Stay connected with Research Solutions Inc. as we continue working to support healthier communities across Region 4. We're excited to also invite you to join us for the upcoming Beloved Women's Conference on May 9th in Bay, Arkansas—a powerful opportunity for connection, empowerment, and community engagement.

To learn more about our programs, upcoming events, and available resources, visit our website at <https://researchsolutionsinc.org/> You can also stay informed and engaged by following us on social media, where we share prevention efforts, outreach activities, and important awareness initiatives. Connect with us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61581523717148> and on Instagram at https://www.instagram.com/research_solutions_inc/ to stay updated and be part of the conversation.

References

NeuroLaunch. (n.d.). *Mental illness spectrum: Understanding the continuum of mental health*.
<https://neurolaunch.com/mental-illness-spectrum/>

Raypole, C. (2022, February 28). *How many thoughts do you have per day? And other FAQs*.
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