

# Mental Health Stigma Associated With Culture

## Difficult-Discussions Inc.

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### Goals and Objectives:

- Explore key terms such as mental health, culture, and marginalization.
- Understand the intersectionality between mental health and culture.
- Learn about mental health stigma and the role marginalization plays on it.
- Discuss gender, sexuality, and mental health.
- Identify best practices to dismantle the stigma associated with mental health.

### Overview of topics covered:

- **Identity:** The distinguishing character or personality of an individual (Merriam-Webster).
- **Culture:** The customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group (Merriam-Webster).
- **Marginalize:** To assign to a place of insignificance or of oblivion/put out of sight or mind to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group (Merriam-Webster).
- **Culture-bound syndromes:** Sets of symptoms much more common in some societies than in others. More often, culture bears on whether people even seek help in the first place, what types of help they seek, what types of coping styles and social supports they have, and how much stigma they attach to mental illness. Culture also influences the meanings that people impart to their illness. (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK44249/>).
- **How can you end the cycle?**
  - Stop using stigmatized terms such as “Crazy”, “Psychopath”, “Nutjob”, “Weirdos”, “Worthless”, “Attention Seekers”, “Emo/Goth”, “Mad”, “Looney Bin”, etc. to reference people with mental health disorders, you can find a more detailed list using this link- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1925070/>
  - Encourage your friends to stop using such terms and if they do put an end to it by educating them about the effect their words have to add to the stigma on mental health.
  - Check your conscious and unconscious biases and don't assume that all people with mental health disorders act the same way.
  - Educate yourself on the history and issues of marginalized communities and learn how to be an ally and hopefully a leader in moving towards an anti-racist community.

- o Understand that it's okay not to be okay! We are all human and we all need resources to thrive!
- o If a friend or family member is talking to you about their mental health or marginalization, LISTEN! Don't immediately bombard them with questions and suggestions, talking about it is an important part to the healing process.
- o For a more detailed list visit:  
<https://www.nami.org/blogs/nami-blog/october-2017/9-ways-to-fight-mental-health-stigma>

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