5 Symptoms Someone Suffers From Poor Mental Health (+How You Can Help Them)

Mental health is a very complex topic that's rarely discussed.

Mental health issues occur amongst humans more frequently than we realize. It is estimated that a total of forty-four million Americans face mental health issues yearly.

A majority of individuals are not trained to deal with mental health issues, regardless of whether it affects them personally, or it affects their loved ones. To best understand and cope with this common illness, we need to understand what mental illness is all about.

Mental illness is a condition that affects a person's thinking, mood/emotions, perceptions, and behavior. This condition affects each individual differently; it can be challenging to deal with, especially being open to the judgment of others.

The people living with mental health issues want to be productive in their daily lives, be it at work, school, society, or any other activity. The WHO (World Health Organization) released a report that one trillion US dollars are lost to the global economy yearly from depression and anxiety. This is a huge amount when we consider how much of this loss is preventable if we take steps to understand, recognize, and help anyone suffering from this illness.

What is Considered a Mental Health Condition?

The known mental health conditions include Anxiety disorders, ADHD(attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), Bipolar

disorder, Autism, Dissociative disorders, Borderline personality disorder, Depression, Early Psychosis and Psychosis, Obsessive-compulsive disorder, Eating disorder, Posttraumatic stress disorder, Schizoaffective Disorder, and Schizophrenia.

- **Anxiety Disorder** is a persistent feeling of anxiety, fear, worry, and apprehension. It can involve visible symptoms such as palpitations and sweating.
- **ADHD(Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)** is a severe condition that involves the inability to concentrate, impulsiveness, and hyperactivity. This condition begins in childhood and continues into adulthood.
- **Bipolar Disorder** is a diagnosis that’s given to a person that experiences excessive mood swings, which involve episodes consisting of extreme highs in a person’s mood, otherwise known as Mania and extreme lows in a person’s mood.

There are a lot of factors that contribute to the diagnosis of a person with bipolar disorder condition, including genetic, environmental, and altered brain chemistry/structure.

- **Autism** is a serious mental disorder that interferes with a person’s ability to communicate, socialize, and interact with others.
- **Dissociative Disorders** involve a range of disorders that alter a person’s perception, emotion, memory, sense of self, and identity.
- **Borderline Personality Disorder** is quite a common disorder, with over three million cases reported in the US each year. It is a condition characterized by chronic and severe mood swings, poor self-image, instability, impulsivity, and unstable relationships.
- **Depression** is a diagnosis given to a person that experiences a sticky feeling of sadness and loss of interest in daily activities. This is a relatively

common mental illness that can be caused by a variety of factors. There are over three(3) million reported cases of this illness in the US each year, with an estimated nineteen(19) million Americans suffering from depression.

- **Psychosis** is a severe mental illness characterized by impairment to a person's thoughts and perceptions. It's difficult for a person with Psychosis to differentiate what is real from what is not.
- **Obsessive-compulsive Disorder** this mental illness is a diagnosis given to someone who has repetitive, compulsive, and obsessive behaviors and thoughts. This condition has over two-hundred thousand cases in the US each year.
- **Eating Disorder** with the most common of this illness being binge eating disorder, anorexia nervosa, and bulimia nervosa is a diagnosis given to a person that is excessively preoccupied with weight and food, which affects every other aspect of your life.
- **Post-traumatic Stress Disorder** is a mental illness that results from experience with a traumatic event. It's widespread among the military. It is characterized by high levels of persistent emotional and mental stress. This prevalent mental illness boasts of over three million cases in the US each year. People with this condition have frequent and graphic recalls of the incident/accident they were involved in. This condition affects other aspects of such individuals' life.
- **Schizophrenia** is a mental disorder that is characterized by a person's inability to stay in touch with reality. It is often associated with delusions and hallucinations.

From each definition, you can get a glimpse as to how mental health issues affect daily and general productivity with regard to each individual. Below is a list of five(5) facts detailing how mental health issues affect productivity

WAYS TO CALM DOWN YOUR MIND

1. BREATHE SLOWLY.

2. TRY GUIDED MEDITATION OR VISUALIZATION.

3. DO MINDFULNESS EXCERCISES.

4. REFRAME NEGATIVE THOUGHTS.

5. GO OUTSIDE.

6. TAKE A WARM SHOWER OR BATH.

7. ACCEPT THE DISTRESS.

8. WRITE IT ALL DOWN.

9. SET UP YOUR WORRY/ANGER/ FEAR TIME.

10. TALK TO SOMEONE YOU LOVE.

11. REMIND YOURSELF THAT DISTRESS IS TEMPORARY.

12. DISTRACT YOUR MIND.

13. LISTEN TO AN UPLIFTING PODCAST.

14. DOWNLOAD A CALMING APP.

15. GIVE YOURSELF SOME TIME.

Fact 1: Difficulty Concentrating

Concentration is the ability to focus your thought process or attention on something. The inability to concentrate is quite a common phenomenon among a lot of individuals, especially those suffering from one form of mental illness or the other.

There are a lot of minor things that can impair your ability to concentrate, such as hunger or tiredness; However, this ability is more prevalent and persistent with people suffering from ADHD, PTSD, Anxiety disorder, and Bipolar disorder.

The inability to concentrate makes it very difficult to focus on tasks, which obviously will affect how you perform on such tasks. Let’s take, for example; you have a software code to write for your company; the inability to focus on the tasks at hand will make it almost impossible to finish the tasks. An individual will also not be able to perform optimally on any tasks.

A person who can’t concentrate will also find it very difficult to learn new skills, remember/recall information and slow such an individual down, which adversely affects an individual’s ability to be productive in any aspect of life.

Fact 2: Inability to Communicate or Relate With Others Properly

Humans are social animals; the ability to communicate and relate well with other humans is paramount to success and being productive in every aspect of life.

Communication is the exchange of information between two or more individuals. This exchange can be achieved either through symbols, signs, or behaviors. Effective Communication and productivity are intertwined and can not be separated from each other.

People with mental health issues such as Autism, Dissociative disorders, Psychosis, etc. find it very difficult to communicate and associate normally with other individuals. This makes it difficult for people that suffer from such illnesses to function and be productive in a healthy environment not tailored to compensate for their illness.

Fact 3: Inability to Multitasks

The ability to multitask is essential in different aspects of life. For example, If you are an airline pilot, this job involves being able to multitask in order to fly the plane and keep all your passengers safe.

Multitasking is the ability to juggle tasks. To carry out more than one task at a given time, you will need a presence of mind. People suffering from various types of mental health issues find it difficult to juggle between tasks, which affects productivity in certain aspects of life.

Fact 4: Staying Unmotivated

The ability to stay motivated is very important for productivity. Without motivation, a person can find it hard to finish mundane and uninteresting tasks. The feeling of motivation makes it easier for a person to stay productive.

Motivation is the desire or willingness to carry out a set goal or task. A person suffering from any particular form of mental illness might find it difficult to become/stay motivated. People that suffer from mental illnesses such as depression or bipolar experience times when they don’t feel motivated to achieve any task or carry out any goal, thereby affecting productivity.

Fact 5: Mood Swings or Emotional Instability

Mood swings are frequent and can affect any individual at any time. It can be a result of stress, tiredness, and so many other factors. However, if you experience consistent and erratic mood swings, it is advised that you see a medical professional.

Mood swings are a rapid and intense change in mood. This is very common with mental illnesses and is especially prevalent among people suffering from bipolar disorder and borderline personality disorder. People that suffer from mood swings have problems with being productive because they can’t stay motivated enough to complete any task.

How To Help Others Deal With Mental Illness

With a lot of stigmatization surrounding mental illness from society, the last thing a loved one needs is being subjected to this stigmatized feeling from friends or family. People suffering from any form of mental illness need all the love, understanding, and support they can get.

If you take the time and patience to keep the line of communication open with a loved one living with mental illness, then you will be able to understand what they are going through in the smallest degree.

It also helps that you recognize and listen when someone going through a rough time is opening up to talk to you. Shutting them down or pretending to understand what it feels like to live with a mental health condition can be quite dangerous rather than helpful.

To help you understand what to do and how to help anyone you know living with mental illness, below are a few suggestions:

1. Be understanding and reassuring. This goes a long way to prove to your family/friend that you care.
2. Be proactive about helping them stick to their medical treatments and medications.
3. Help educate others about the effects of mental illness and how it affects sufferers and those close to them.
4. Help those affected by this illness with everyday tasks.
5. Be empathic. Listen carefully and ask questions when you communicate with anyone suffering from mental health issues.

6. Educate yourself. Education on mental health issues can never be a waste. Educating yourself and those around you goes a long way in removing the stigma associated with mental health issues.
7. Be kind and respectful. Being helpful and courteous goes a long way in helping sufferers of this illness feel accepted and welcome.

Final Thoughts

One thing is clear, mental illness is not like flimsy surface wounds that can be treated with band-aids. Mental illness is a serious health condition that a lot of people do not understand. This is not just about the people living with mental illness, as it also concerns the people who deal with them daily.

As already mentioned, there are several factors that can affect the level of productivity at the workplace and at home. So, the more you are educated on what mental health condition you have, the better you can learn to manage it. Unfortunately, there is no permanent cure yet for mental illness, however, with the right steps, it can be managed.

More On Dealing With Mental Health Conditions

Message to Therapists – If you are a therapist who has to work constantly with those managing mental illness, it’s a great advantage to read and update your knowledge on the various facts on mental illness. Patience and emotional intelligence are also virtues to possess before going into such a profession.

Message to Writers – It is one thing to share your personal journey on blogs or give speeches about how you manage your type of mental illness. However, if you are dedicated to helping those living or suffering from one mental illness or another, remember that you can reach a much broader audience

if you translate your work into other languages. A ton of online translation tools like The Word Point are readily available to reach as many readers as possible.

Message to Employers – While a lot of people consider mental illness a taboo topic, it’s always nice to understand the current state of your staff’s health conditions – physical or mental. This will help you avoid overworking your employees and working hand-in-hand with them to optimize productivity within your organization.

Message to Others – This category would include all those not living with any form of serious mental illness. Arguably, everyone undergoes some degree of mental illness at various stages of life, which is why it’s essential that you do not stigmatize those going through it right now. Think of it as a way you’d love to be treated if you were in their shoes.