

Face Your Mind: Break the Silence

Teenagers' booklet
in plain language



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How do you feel?

There are happy moments:

- You got the training you wanted.
- Your friends threw you a birthday party.
- You've met a great person.



And there are difficult moments:

- You've had a heartbreak.
- You've lost a loved one.
- You don't like school.



And sometimes it's too much to bear:

- You have anxiety attacks before going to school.
- You can't sleep at night.
- You want to disappear.



Mental health

Mental health is essential to our well-being.

Mental health concerns three aspects of our life:

- our emotions,
- our social life
- and our psychology.

Mental health **changes** all the time. Sometimes we feel good, sometimes we feel low.

Our **experiences** influence our mental health. How we feel, depends on our mental state and our resources at a given moment. People around us can help us to feel better.



This guide gives you **information** on mental health. Talking about mental health is **important**. This guide breaks **stereotypes** on mental health.

What are stereotypes?

Stereotypes are **ideas** and **beliefs** of people about groups, but they are **not true**.

They are based on **how someone looks** or **where they are from**, and **what habits they have**.



But here is the thing:
stereotypes are **not fair**,
and they can **hurt people**.

It is super important to **question stereotypes**, so everyone gets treated with kindness and understanding, **including you!**

Now,
let's talk about **one example of stereotypes** together.

Ever heard someone say,

"Only crazy people go to therapy"?

This is a **stereotype** and **not the truth**.

Here is the truth:

Therapy is for **anyone** who finds it helpful.
Therapy is **not** just for **certain kinds** of people.
Seeing a **therapist** does not mean to be crazy.
We can go on therapy to discover more about ourselves,
or to **find support** to face life's ups and downs.

Why it is important to talk about mental health problems?

Talking about mental health **helps** you get **support**.
It shows you are not alone.
Asking for help is a good thing.

Sharing your feelings helps others understand and support you better.
Speaking up can help you get the right treatments and support you need to feel better.



What are we talking about?

What is **anxiety**?

Anxiety is a **normal** emotion that **everyone feels**. Anxiety is that **uneasy, worried feeling** you get in some situations.

It can make you

- feel tense,
- think too much,
- and even make your body sweat
- or your heart beats faster.

Anxiety is how your **body reacts to stress** or when it feels **threatened**.



Sometimes, it is because you are scared of being judged or always worrying about what might happen next.

It is your body getting ready to **either fight the danger** or **run away from it**, even when things are not really dangerous.

What are **eating disorders**?

Eating disorders concern the relationship of a person

- with food,
- with their weight,
- or with their physical appearance.

Eating disorders are a **disease**.

People can suffer from serious problems or even die.

There are three forms of eating disorders:

- **anorexia**,
- **bulimia**,
- **binge-eating disorder**.

We can **cure** eating disorders, but the healing is a long path.

What is **self-harm**?

Self-harm means hurting yourself on purpose, without wanting to die.

People do it to deal with strong emotions like

- sadness
- stress.

They might

- cut,
- burn,
- or hit themselves.

But self-harm **isn't a good way to solve problems**. It's just a way to cope with them.



What is **depression**?

Depression isn't just feeling sad;
it is a **lasting emotional state**.
Depression that **affects** your daily life.

Depression **brings**

- deep despair,
- hopelessness,
- and a loss of interest or joy in activities
you used to enjoy.

Depression **impacts**

- your thoughts,
- your emotions,
- and your physical health.



What is **psychological trauma**?

Trauma is a **deep** and **lasting** emotional pain.
The **pain** is caused by **intense experiences** and **dramatic events**.
Traumas can be caused by various factors:

- war,
- a tragic event during childhood,
- a sexual, physical or psychological assault.

It often means having **flashbacks**.
Flashbacks gives you the feeling to go through tough times again.

You are not alone!

Many celebrities and public figures have **openly shared** their experiences.

They share mental health challenges to reduce stigma and raise awareness.

These stories show that **mental health problems can happen to anyone**.
Famous or not.

Sharing personal experiences helps
reduce shame.
It tells others it's **okay to ask for help**.

Remember,
mental health struggles are common.
Getting support is a strong thing to do.

Selena Gomez



Selena Gomez is a famous actress and singer.
She talks openly about her own experiences.
She wants to make it easier for people to talk about mental health
without feeling embarrassed.

Selena dealt with anxiety
and feeling depressed.

She also shared that she has **lupus**.
Lupus is a disease that affects her body and mind.

I want to help

Sometimes,
your friends or relatives face mental health challenges.

It is **normal** to feel uncertain.
You **are not a professional**.
But you can still **help** them.

Here are some tips:

- Do not make promises you cannot keep.
The person may feel abandoned.
- Do not keep secrets if the person is in **danger**.

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An example of danger is:
A person talking about committing suicide.
.....

- Listen actively,
don't interrupt the person with your personal stories.
- Encourage your friend to seek help from
a mental health professional.
A professional can be therapist or counsellor.
- Respect the **privacy**
Your friend may not be ready to share the struggles.
Your friend can be worried to talk about their problems.



Methods to help yourself

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Are you feeling worse than usual?
Have you lived a difficult situation recently?
.....

Sometimes things are not going
as well as usual.
But **you are not alone**.
You can use some tips to get back
to your inner balance.



For instance:

Interests:

Hobbies allow you to take your mind off your troubles.

Meeting with positive people:

Positive people give you a dose of energy.
They can distract you from sad thoughts
and improve your mood.
Friends allow you to express your pain.

Never ever be afraid or ashamed to contact a specialist!
They can help you understand how to face your problem
and how to deal with it.

WHERE CAN I FIND HELP?

112 (emergency phone number)

Where can I find further resources?

If you would like to know more on the topic of mental health, you can check our website:

<https://breaking-taboos.eu/>

You will find:

- Interactive comics.
- Posters.
- Infographics.