

# WHY fight stigma?

**Stigma** is one of the main reasons people do not seek treatment. If you have a family member or a friend with a mental illness, or if you have a mental illness, please remember recovery is possible! You can play a big role in fighting the stigma of mental illness by encouraging your friends and family to seek help. By being supportive and accepting, you can make a difference.



## Ways to fight stigma:

- ⚙️ Learn about mental illness.
- ⚙️ Speak up if you hear or read information that is not true about mental health.
- ⚙️ Don't label people with mental health problems by using terms like "crazy," "wacko," "schizo," "loony," "psycho," or "nuts."
- ⚙️ Treat people with mental health needs with the dignity and respect they deserve, just like anyone else.

# HOW to HELP!

**E**xpress your concern. Ask for more details about how your friend or family member is managing. Really listen to the answers and continue the conversation. Make sure they understand you honestly care.

## Don't think you can't do anything.

You can make a difference by accepting the person and not treating them differently. Encourage your friend or family member to get help. Remember, mental illness is no different from a physical illness!

If you are someone you know needs help, contact the Mississippi Department of Mental Health's Helpline at 1-877-210-8513.

If you or someone you know is talking, writing or thinking about suicide, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK.

For more information visit [www.dmh.ms.gov](http://www.dmh.ms.gov) or [www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov).

Supporting a Better Tomorrow...Today



# Think you know about mental illness?



# What IS a mental illness?

A mental illness is a health condition that causes changes in a person's thinking, mood or behavior. It is a health condition just like diabetes or asthma is a health condition.

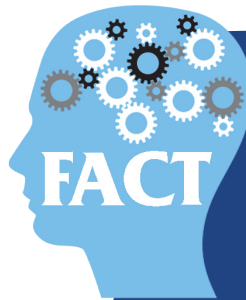
Mental illness is more common than heart disease and cancer combined. A few examples of a mental illness are depression, anxiety, eating disorders, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia.

Being supportive of your friends and family who have a mental illness can make a world of difference in their recovery.

By being a friend who is understanding, accepting and compassionate, you **can** make a difference!



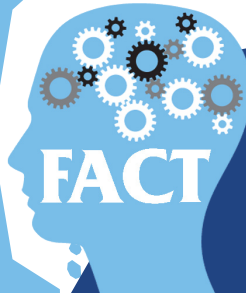
# FACTS About Mental Illness



## FACT

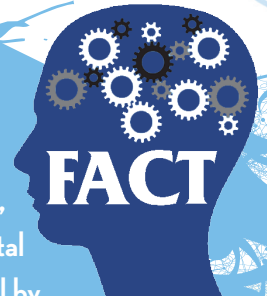
There is hope for people with mental illness. There are more treatments, services and community support systems than ever before for those with mental illnesses and more are in the works.

People with mental illnesses can lead active, productive lives.



## FACT

People who have a mental illness can graduate high school or have a successful job just like anyone else. A number of political leaders, artists, musicians and professional have achieved greatness despite their mental illness. Just look at all of the famous people who have had a mental illness: Jim Carey, Brooke Shields, Britney Spears, Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, Isaac Newton, and Ernest Hemingway.



## FACT

Mental illness can happen to anyone. No one is immune regardless of age, race, income, or education. People with a mental illness do not look different. You can't tell by looking on the outside, just like you can't tell a person has diabetes by looking on the outside.

