



THE MAZE OF MENTAL ILLNESS

A mental illness is a condition that affects a person's thinking, feeling, or mood. Although many people have mental health concerns from time to time, a mental health concern becomes a mental illness when ongoing signs and symptoms cause frequent stress and affect the ability to function.

How common are mental illnesses?

Mental illnesses are more common than many people think. In fact, approximately 1 in 5 adults in the U.S. (43.8 million) experience some form of mental illness in a given year. Mental disorders usually live and grow in fear, shame, and solitude, leading the sufferer to an increasingly worse state.

Raising awareness about the prevalence of mental illness can help empower individuals to recognize that they are not alone in their suffering and that trained professionals are available to help.

What is the cause of mental illness?

A mental illness does not typically develop as the result of a single event. Research has suggested multiple causes influence the development of a mental illness. These influential factors include: genetics, environment, and lifestyle.

Understanding mental illness:

Mental illness can be a touchy topic to address. These conditions are difficult to understand because they require a shift of thought. Many times, thoughts and feelings that follow mental illnesses are irrational. It is important to respond with empathy and understand that someone suffering from a mental illness may perceive the world entirely different than you do.

How you can help:

If you or a loved one are struggling with a mental illness, get help from a trained professional.

When speaking to a loved one with a mental illness, remind them that although you may not understand what they are going through, you are there for them and will help them to get through it. After suggesting professional help, being a compassionate listening ear is the most helpful and effective thing to do.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Call 1-800-273-8255

<https://www.nami.org/>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mental-illness/symptoms-causes/syc-20374968>