



BUILDING ON EACH OTHER'S STRENGTHS.

Mentoring/Classroom Guide

Understanding Mental Illness

Content is based on material developed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.



Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “Recognizing and Changing Misconceptions”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Participant Instructions

Many of you have preconceived notions, thoughts, and beliefs about what mental illnesses are and what people who have mental illness act and look like. This lesson will explore some of these notions and provide accurate and factual information to address these misconceptions. You will do this two-part lesson individually.

Part One: You will decide how many participants in Idaho have a diagnosable mental illness or behavioral problem based on information provided by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. If you overestimate by 10%, please put a star next to the answer. We will discuss the reason for this after we complete the sheet with corrected answers.

Part Two: You will be given a list of misconceptions about mental illnesses and your task will be to determine what you think is the correct answer to this misconception by making your best guess.

Analysis Page 1

Your Best Guess for Mental Illness in Idaho

Your task is to put down the percentages of persons who are experiencing the following issues related to mental illness.

The percentage of children and adolescents who experience mental illness in Idaho. _____

The percentage of families in Idaho that are personally affected by mental illness in Idaho. _____

The percentage of youth with eating disorders in Idaho. _____

Percentage of Idaho participants who have reported feelings of sadness or hopelessness for at least two weeks over the past year which has affected doing usual activities. _____

Percentage of Idaho participants who have been diagnosed with depression. _____

Percentage of Idaho participants who seriously considered suicide. _____

Percentage of Idaho participants who have developed a plan to attempt suicide. _____

Percentage of Idaho participants who have attempted suicide in the last twelve months which resulted in injury, poisoning or overdose that was treated by a doctor or nurse. _____

How many questions did you overestimate? _____

Stigma Myths and Misconceptions Analysis Page:

Persons who have mental illness do not get better (they never recover).

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

More men than women experience depression.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Untreated mental illness does not affect your performance and grades.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

All movies present persons with a mental illness accurately.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Mental illness is a weakness—so you can “just get over it”!

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

You can always tell by looking if a person has a mental illness.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Persons who have a mental illness are treated fairly in housing or employment situations.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

People can get over depression by themselves and depression never reoccurs.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Only adults and older adults experience mental illnesses.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Only crazy people see shrinks.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

If you talk about suicide, you won't attempt it.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “Changing Misconceptions”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Facilitator/Mentor Information

Overview

This lesson explores the stigmas and the misconceptions related to mental illness and how these affect our attitudes and beliefs about mental illness. Based on research we know that mental illness is the only health area in which participants underestimate the prevalence within the general population.

Activity

Participants will fill out the analysis pages related to the norms and facts about mental illness as well as the misconceptions. In part one, they are to put down their best guess as to the percentages of the numbers of individuals who experience mental illnesses.

In part two, participants will be presented with the misconceptions, which they will analyze and then write an answer representing the facts.

Time

One class period/50 minutes.

Materials

Two analysis pages, writing instruments.

Information

Please give the Anti-Stigma Fact Sheet (DOs and DON'Ts) at the end of this lesson for use in the rest of the unit. Please use the answers that are provided in each analysis page to guide the class discussion.

Assessment Criteria

Answers will be scored on the following:

How well the participants complete the analysis pages and contribute to class discussion.

Sample Response

Analysis Page 1

Your Best Guess for Mental Illness in Idaho

Your task is to put down the percentages of persons who are experiencing the following related to mental illness.

1) The number of children and adolescents who experience mental illness in Idaho (5% according to Idaho Dept. of Health and Welfare).

2) The percentage of families in Idaho that are personally affected by mental illness in Idaho (20%).

3) The percentage of youth with eating disorders in Idaho (4%).

4) Percentage of Idaho participants who have reported feelings of sadness or hopelessness for at least two weeks over the past year which affected doing some usual activities. (28%)

5) Percentage of Idaho participants who have been diagnosed with depression. (6%)

6) Percentage of Idaho participants who seriously considered suicide in the last twelve months. (18% 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey)

7) Percentage of Idaho participants who have developed a plan to attempt suicide in the last twelve months. (15%, 2005 YRBS)

8) Percentage of Idaho participants who have attempted suicide in the last twelve months which resulted in injury, poisoning or overdose that was treated by a doctor or nurse. (2%, 2005 YRBS)

How many questions did you overestimate?

Stigma Myths and Misconceptions Analysis Page:

People who have a mental illness are more dangerous than the general population.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: The vast majority of people with mental illnesses are not violent. In the cases when violence does occur, the incidence typically results from the same reasons as with the general public, such as feeling threatened or excessive use of alcohol and/or drugs. The media often sensationalizes accounts of crime. Statistics do not show a connection between mental illness and violence.

Persons who have mental illness do not get better (they never recover).

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: People with mental illnesses can recover and resume normal activities. Most people lead productive lives, work, pursue education and religion, enjoy hobbies, recreational activities, and contribute actively due to treatments, a variety of support systems, programs, and/or medications. For example, spokespersons like Mike Wallace, newscaster; Terry Bradshaw, athlete; and Brooke Shields, actor, have had major depression, received treatment, and lead successful lives today.

More men than women experience depression.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: Men and women experience depression at different rates. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) says that 25% of women and 10% of men will have one or more episodes of major depression during their lifetimes. These numbers may reflect the greater willingness of women to admit their symptoms and seek treatment.

Untreated mental illness does not affect your academic performance and grades.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: Mental illnesses may interfere with functioning in different ways. Many illnesses may affect a student's ability to do certain things, such as thinking or

communicating with others. It is estimated that more than one in five youth in Wisconsin may experience a mental health disorder. Some of these disorders include: depression (mood disorders), anxiety disorders, conduct disorders, and eating disorders.

All movies and newspaper depict persons with a mental illness accurately.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: The media is responsible for many of the misconceptions which persist about people with mental illnesses. Newspapers, in particular, often stress a history of mental illness in the backgrounds of people who commit crimes of violence. Television news stories frequently sensationalize crimes where persons with mental illnesses are involved. Similarly, movie scripts often have plots that perpetuate myths about persons who have mental illness through distorted characterizations. National advertisers use stigmatizing images as promotional gimmicks to sell products. Moreover, comedians may make fun of people with mental illnesses, using their disabilities as a source of humor.

Mental illness is a weakness—so you can “just get over it”!

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: Some people believe “mental illness” is not a legitimate medical/health condition. Some believe that mental illness is a character flaw or weakness that a person “can just” get over. Mental illnesses are real, common, and treatable. Recovery is possible and often requires time and resources that are not necessarily in the person's direct control. When persons with mental illness receive treatment, medication, and support, they can recover.

You can always tell by looking if a person has a mental illness.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: Although there are many signs and symptoms when someone may be developing a mental illness, diagnosis is a difficult task best undertaken by mental health professionals. Quick judgments and stereotypes do not replace the need for a person to get help from a mental health professional.

Stigma Myths and Misconceptions Analysis Page (continued):

Persons who have a mental illness are treated fairly in housing or employment situations.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: Research suggests that employers are less likely to hire persons who are labeled mentally ill (Bordieri & Drehmer, 1987; Farina & Felner, 1973 & Link, 1987). At the employer level, some have false expectations related to the employment capabilities of persons with mental illness (Brown & Saura, 1996). Some people also believe that those with mental illness are less competent, unable to work, should be institutionalized, or will never get better.

Persons with mental illnesses may face many housing difficulties. They face problems looking for safe, decent, and affordable housing, and some may need assistance to live in their own residence. An example stigma is the NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) syndrome. It impedes the placement of supported housing for people with serious mental illnesses in certain neighborhoods.

People can get over depression by themselves and depression never reoccurs.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: It is important for people with depression to get treatment from a mental health professional or from their physician. Many people are not able to recognize depression in themselves or others. Clinical depression is very treatable, with improvement shown in 80% for those persons treated.

Only adults and older adults experience mental illnesses.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: Mental illnesses occur in persons of all ages, all ethnic, racial, educational, and religious groups. They do not discriminate. Mental illnesses appear in families of all backgrounds in every community across the country. Over 4 million youth experience a major mental illness that can result in significant problems at home, at school, and with peers. Among children and youth ages 9-17, there are one or two with serious emotional problems in virtually every classroom in the country. Over seven million older adults age 65 and older in the United States (20 percent of the older adult population) have a mental illness and that number is expected to double into 15 million people in the next three decades. Depression can occur along with other physical illnesses such as diabetes, cancer, and heart disease. Suicide rates are highest among Americans age 65 and older.

Only crazy people see shrinks.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: People of all ages and all walks of life seek help from a variety of mental health professionals, including psychiatrists. Seeking out and accepting help are signs of positively coping and of preventing situations from getting worse.

If you talk about suicide, you won't attempt it.

What is the misconception based on your best guess?

Fact: Suicidal comments have to always be taken seriously as they often lead to plans, attempts, or completions. If you are worried about yourself or another person, and do not know how serious the problem is, know where to get help. It's better to be safe than sorry.

Anti-stigma — Do you know the facts?

- Mental illnesses affect 5-9 percent of Idaho children and adolescents each year. That means, on average, that one or more students in every high school classroom could be affected.
- One in five families in Idaho is personally affected by mental illness.
- The impact of children's mental health on schools—teachers, classrooms, students, staff—can be significant.
- Mental illnesses are real, common, and treatable.
- Recovery is possible.
- A stigma is a cluster of negative attitudes and beliefs that motivate people to fear, reject, avoid, and discriminate against others with mental illnesses.
- A stigma is not just a matter of using the wrong word or action.
- Fortunately, everyone can do something to reduce stigma.
- Stigma is about disrespect.
- Fear of stigma and resulting discrimination discourages individuals and their families from getting the help they need.
- Untreated mental illness is associated with school absenteeism, below average or failing grades, and poor relationships.
- A stigma can cause discriminatory treatment toward youth and their families by their peers as well as by educators and community members.

DOs

DO use respectful language such as:
People first language

(e.g. person who has schizophrenia; person who has asthma; person who has an eating disorder NOT schizophrenic, OCD student, or diabetic, etc.).

DO emphasize abilities, not limitations.

DO tell someone if they express a stigmatizing attitude.

DON'Ts

DON'T portray successful persons with disabilities as super-human.

DON'T use a generic label such as retarded.

DON'T use terms like crazy, lunatic, manic-depressive, slow functioning, or normal.

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: "Follow the Mental Health Road"

Education Level: Middle or High School

Participant Instructions

In this lesson you will focus on developing an understanding of the mental health continuum and the signs and symptoms associated with the spectrum.

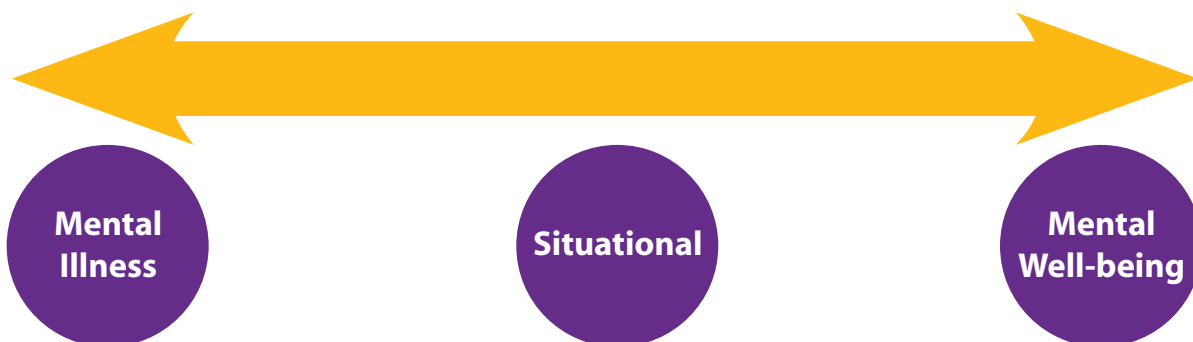
In groups of four or five you will be given a packet of signs, symptoms, key descriptive pictures, or key words that relate to mental well-being/illness.

Some of your answers will be placed in the middle because they may be situational or they may occur only once in a person's life.

Your task is to take three of the middle situational items and present three strategies that could move this behavior in either direction towards well-being or towards illness.

Example: The loss of a pet can be helped by a family funeral service and purchasing another pet. The loss of a pet can be made worse if the rest of the family repeatedly blames one person for the death of the animal.

You will present one of your middle items to the rest of the class with three strategies that could move the situation to well-being and three that might move it to mental illness.



Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “Follow the Mental Health Road”

Education Level: Middle or High School

Teacher/Mentor Information

Overview

This activity will focus on developing an understanding of the mental health continuum and the signs and symptoms associated with the spectrum.

Each group will be given a packet of signs, symptoms, key descriptive pictures or key words that relate to mental well-being and mental illness.

Some of the answers will be placed in the middle because they may be situational or they may occur only once in a person’s life.

The group’s task is to take three of the middle situational items and present three strategies that will move this behavior in either direction towards well-being or towards mental illness.

Example: The loss of a pet can be helped by a family funeral service and purchasing another pet. However, this situation could be made worse if the rest of the family repeatedly blames one person for the death of that animal.

Activity

Oral presentation on one of the “Middle of the Road” situations.

Time

One class period/50 minutes.

Materials

Need the given pictures and words and the continuum.

Information

Present a couple of examples of the situational events that could go in either direction depending on how the situation was handled.

Sample Response

Answers will vary from group to group.

Descriptors

Picture of alcohol
Picture of a person sad and crying
Picture of time management
Picture of person kicking computer
Picture with a symbol of ups and downs
Picture of person whispering in another's ear
Teacher helping student with art picture
Picture of family
Picture of risk-taker

Descriptors

Picture of talking about your feelings
Picture of bullying
Picture of guy with fist
Picture of person sleeping
Picture of surfing
Picture of I hate my life
Picture of support
Picture of declining grades
Picture of giving away belongings

Descriptors

Picture of talking about your feelings
Picture of bullying
Picture of guy with fist
Picture of person sleeping
Picture of surfing
Picture of I hate my life
Picture of support
Picture of declining grades
Picture of giving away belongings

Descriptors

Spend time with friends
Open communication with parents
Constantly being blamed by the rest of the family
Parents divorce
Sad for more than two weeks
Takes care of his/her physical health
Constantly has nightmares
Loss of Sleep
Respectable

Descriptors

Handles conflicts easy
Grades in school
Flashbacks
Hallucinating
Behaviors done in the same way, at the same time
such washing one's hands
Being happy all the time
Perfectionist
Abraham Lincoln
Edgar Allen Poe

Descriptors

Bottle & glass
Sad face
Hour Glass
Smash computer
Up and down arrow with face
Telling secrets
Drawing pictures together
Family
Rock climbing

Descriptors

Two faces blowing

Bully

Bully2

Sleeping

Surfing

Eye crying

People with chicken

Graded paper with arrow

Giving Away Possessions

Descriptors

Boys driving
Family fishing

YOU...
NEVER DO ANYTHING RIGHT!!!
MESS UP!!
ALWAYS YOUR FAULT!!
WHY CAN YOU EVER...
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS...
YOU...

Divorce

Sad for more than 2 weeks

Getting a shot

night after night after...

Yawning in bed

Respectable

Descriptors

HANDLES CONFLICT EASILY

A, B, C D, Uh oh... F

Flashbacks

Do not disturb hallucination in progress

Washing hands

HAPPY HAPPY HAPPY HAPPY HAPPY HAPPY HAPPY
HAPPY HAPPY HAPPY HAPPY

Perfection

Lincoln

The Raven ... Edgar Allen Poe

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly of Media Mental Illness”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Participant Instructions

In this activity, you and a partner will be given three descriptions of characters in a fictional television story related to mental illness. Your task is to evaluate the description based on the following criteria from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):

- 1) Violence by those with mental illness.
- 2) Ways treatment is portrayed.
- 3) Ways medications are treated.
- 4) Mixed messages such as mixing drugs, using tobacco to solve medical problems, etc.

Then, your group will decide if the description of the person on the program was good (accurate and realistic), bad (had a few problems), or ugly (loaded with stigma causing references).

After a discussion of the analysis your group puts together, your group will develop a public service announcement (PSA) designed to reduce stigma surrounding mental illness. PSAs are announcements for both television and radio that inform the public about health and safety information, community services, events and public affairs. Produced and programmed much like commercials, they are general not produced for a profit.

Character Descriptions

Three Programs with Mental Illness in the Plot

Title: They're Back:

The lead character in the story is Bobby Joe Smith who has just come out of an institution for treatment for an anxiety disorder. When he returns from the hospital, he is portrayed as a violent sort doing such things as drop-kicking a stuffed dog as a remembrance of what he did to the family pet years before. There is always background laughter whenever he does it in the plot. He always smiles and looks at the audience when he sees a knife and says, "I would like to use that again." The plot continuously has him going back to his young therapist and dreaming of an affair. There are always jokes about the meds he is taking and references to the fact that he needs monumental doses to make a difference. Alcohol becomes water for Bobby Joe, especially when he mixes it with the medications he is taking for his illness.

Title: Making a Difference:

The lead character is Ms. Jean Jones, a 27-year-old teacher working in an inner city school in the Bronx. She was diagnosed with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) when she was 13. She is very observant of the students in her language arts class and provides quality assignments that the students like to do. The students have a hard time understanding Ms. Jones' cleaning of the room after every class, and some of the students purposely leave candy wrappers and gum wrappers in strange locations to see if she finds them by the next day. The students find it very strange that she cleans the doorknob before entering the room. They call her "Ms. Clean Jeans." She has an incredible ability to pick up both verbal and non-verbal messages in class and the plot has her helping solve student problems related to relationships, home problems, and school issues in a creative, effective, and non-judgmental way.

Title: Ups and Downs:

The lead character in this sitcom is Dr. Raymond Goggins, a psychiatrist who over the past 25 years has developed a propensity to joke with patients and, therefore, makes jokes about the patient's behaviors or their treatment. Most of the program has a few light-hearted comments about the condition the patient is living with or jokes about the effectiveness of the medications that were prescribed. Example: "You might need a shipping crate of the antidepressant to help you plan for the wedding." He always finishes the comments with, "That's a poor joke."

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly of Media Mental Illness”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Facilitator/Mentor Information

Overview

Throughout the history of media, there have been some realistic and accurate portrayals of people living with mental illness. Television programs such as “Monk” are excellent examples. There are also some that make the mentally ill out to be violent criminals who cannot be helped in any way. This activity will explore the good, the bad, and the ugly of the media, and how it can help reduce or cause stigma depending on the script.

Activity

Pairs of students will analyze one of three descriptions of a role in a new television program. Their task is to decide if the description is realistic and if there are problems, they should identify them. After a brief class discussion, the pair will develop an anti-stigma Public Service Announcement (PSA).

Time

One class period/50 minutes.

Materials

Paper, writing instruments and a computer.

Information

Review how media is used to sell an image. Emphasize how famous examples such as Superman®, the Marlboro™ man, and MTV™ try to sell an image. Together, brainstorm people with mental illnesses that participants remember from TV programs or that are portrayed in the movies.

Optional Home Activity

A follow-up activity could include participants viewing “As Good As It Gets” with their parents to determine if they felt it was an accurate portrayal of mental illness.

Sample Response

Title: They're Back:

The lead character in the story is Bobby Joe Smith who has just come out of an institution for treatment for an anxiety disorder. When he returns from the hospital, he is portrayed as a violent sort doing such things as drop-kicking a stuffed dog as a remembrance of what he did to the family pet years before. There is always background laughter whenever he does it in the plot. He always smiles and looks at the audience when he sees a knife and says, "I would like to use that again." The plot always has him going back to his young therapist and dreaming of an affair. There are continuous jokes about the meds he is on and references to the fact that he needs monumental doses to make a difference. Alcohol becomes water for Bobby Joe, especially when he mixes it with the medications he is taking for his illness.

Analysis:

We think that this is an ugly portrayal of a person working to function as part of society. He is looked at as a bizarre and violent person who might like to hurt real animals and becomes relaxed when he sees knives. The mentally ill are many times the recipients of sexual assault and here he is portrayed as the perpetrator of sexual assault, not a victim. Drugs are portrayed in a casual sense, which could possibly scare the mentally ill from seeking proper mental health care. Even the title strains the "us versus them" stigma in terms of differences.

The other two are good and bad.

The PSA might have as an example:

Understanding, Respect and Love. People with mental illness need this URL everyday of their life. Please learn about mental illness, its causes, treatments, and misconceptions.

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “May ‘MONK*’ Be with You”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Participant Instructions

In this activity, we are going to look at three scenes from the USA channel’s television program called “Monk.” Many of you may have seen the program. Some of you may not have as it is aired on Friday nights when many of you are not home. The basic premise of the series is that Monk has obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and is a private investigator. He is extremely alert to the environment around him and portrays many of the behaviors associated with OCD.

Your task is to view the program and answer the five questions associated with it. The final question puts you into the scene and asks what you could do to work with Monk both as a person with OCD and as a fellow investigator.

Questions Surrounding the Monk Television Clips

- 1) In the first scene, what were three behaviors that told you Monk might have OCD?
- 2) In the second scene, what were three behaviors that told you Monk might have OCD?
- 3) In the third scene, what were three behaviors that told you Monk might have OCD?
- 4) Choose one of the clips and tell me how the people around Monk treated him because of this OCD and whether their behavior was good, bad, or ugly.
- 5) If you were in the cast of “Monk” for the scene you chose in number 4, who would you be? Present three ways you could assist Monk.

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “May ‘MONK’ Be with You”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Facilitator/Mentor Information

Overview

This lesson is going to explore the world of the modern media and how one television program, “Monk” portrays a person living with a mental illness and how significant others in his life help him live from day to day.

Activity

This lesson will use three DVD clips from the television program “Monk”:

- 1) Mr. Monk and the Astronaut**—Monk is in the classroom giving a lecture and the kids taunt him with a laser pointer. Monk flees in horror and Natalie comforts him.
- 2) Mr. Monk and Little Monk**—Monk is terrorized by a bully who gets chocolate frosting all over his shirt (this is the first time Monk asks for a wipe).
- 3) Mr. Monk Gets Jury Duty**—Everyone complains as Monk takes forever to fill out a secret ballot. They decide that they have to work together to make this decision the right one.

The participants will observe Monk’s behavior and how others around him act in good, bad, and ugly ways.

Time

One class period/50 minutes.

Materials

Worksheet and writing materials

Information

Focus on the different ways people can help someone with mental illness and how others can prevent stigma with respect to mental illness.

Bonus Activity

The previous lesson could discuss how others can intervene in these situations to produce either a mentally healthy outcome or one that may result in a mentally distressing outcome.

Sample Response

Answer for a person in the script on Mr. Monk and Little Monk: I would be an observer of Monk getting bullied and step in and report the bully to the school administration.

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “Can You Hear Me Now—Recognizing the Signs?”

Education Level: Middle—High School

Participant Instructions

You will be working in small groups of four or five on the following scenarios related to the signs of Mental Illness. Your group will be in charge of determining what signs are being described and which mental illness the scenario portrays. The four mental illnesses to choose from are Depression, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and a description of a healthy adolescent. Your group will complete the worksheet listing the warning signs and possible disorder.

Mental Illness Scenarios

Scenario: Stacy Norman, a 9/11 survivor.

Stacy was one of the lucky ones who came out of the 9/11 tragedy without any major injuries. This is not to say that the experience has been easily forgotten. Prior to 9/11, Stacy worked on the 18th floor of the Federal Reserve building as a Human Relations manager. She still is in the field of Human Relations, but no longer can be in a large, multi-level building. Stacy completely relocated back to her home state and city of Huntington, Long Island. It is very hard for Stacy to even talk about what she has been through even after many years. Lots of everyday luxuries for you and me are no longer ideal for Stacy, such as the use of elevators, escalators, stair wells, watching movies or TV shows with collapsed buildings or even being near loud working areas.

Scenario: Wanda, observations by her sister.

Wanda used to be one of the funniest people I have ever seen. That changed when she got into her senior year. Suddenly, she became quiet and stopped hanging out with us. She seemed sad all the time and rarely came out of her room after supper. We think the change came when she broke up with her boyfriend, Tommy. I am worried about her and do not know what to do.

Scenario: Tom, the four-year high school football letter winner.

At our high school, Tom Ross is known as the "All American" football star. Everyone knows Tom will be playing pro in years to come. No

matter where or when, you can find Tom watching old football tapes, going over football plays, or talking about football. If you were ever in Tom's room, you could find football memorabilia still in their original packaging and a huge sign stating "DO NOT TOUCH!" You will also find Tom cleaning all of his memorabilia with the number 2 Scotch Guard™ cleaning pad at precisely 6:20 AM everyday. Before and after cleaning his memorabilia, Tom will wash his hands for 10 minutes straight with Lava™ hand soap and dry his hands four times using four different towels.

Scenario: Michael's best friend Tony has written a poem about Michael.

His teachers don't understand him,
Sometimes neither do I.
From his friends to his parents,
They all ask why?

Michael will play the class clown,
Joking around all the time.
People will laugh or shake their head,
He didn't think it was such a crime.

He liked to keep a journal,
His inner thoughts only he knew.
His behavior was complex,
Every experience is oh so new.

I know people will think it's weird,
That Michael asks as he was.
But I still think the world of him,
And all the things he does.

Scenario: Young girl brings artwork home to her mom.

Lisa is a six-year-old kindergartener. She loves school and brings her creations home to show her mom whenever possible. One day, Lisa brings home a picture she made in class. When she shows it to her mom, her mom is overjoyed. She tells Lisa

it is the most wonderful picture and hangs it on the refrigerator. She tells Lisa it is the most wonderful thing she has ever seen, calls Grandma to tell her about it, and they take Lisa out for ice cream to celebrate. Lisa is so happy. Mom is fun, talkative, and full of energy. She never seems to get tired and is always doing a million things.

Several weeks later, Lisa's kindergarten teacher tells the class they will be able to make another picture to take home. Lisa decides to make this picture even better than the last. She loves to see her mother happy and busy, but lately she seems sad and tired. Little things seem to make her cry. Lisa works hard on her picture using lots of colors and designs. The teacher tells her she did a great job and Lisa hurries home to show it off to her mom.

When she gets home, the house is dark and the curtains are closed. Mom is in bed and doesn't greet Lisa when she comes into her room. Lisa jumps on the bed to show Mom the greatest picture ever. Mom hardly looks at it, tells Lisa she doesn't feel well and that she needs to be quiet and leave her alone. Lisa leaves the bedroom wondering what she did wrong.

Scenario Analysis

What were the signs of the possible mental illness?

What mental illness was being described in this scenario?

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “Can You Hear Me Now—Recognizing the Signs?”

Education Level: Middle—High School

Facilitator/Mentor Information

Overview

This lesson will explore the various warning signs of mental illness. Some of these warning signs can be physical, behavioral, and/or emotional in nature. Keep in mind that all are treatable.

Activity

This activity may be completed individually or as a group. The scenarios will be provided in this activity. Each individual or group will be in charge of determining what signs are being described and the mental illness the scenario portrays. The four mental illnesses are: Depression, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Bipolar, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and a description of a healthy adolescent. By changing the warning signs, you can make these scenarios usable for any mental disorder. The group will complete the worksheet listing the warning signs and possible disorder.

A follow-up discussion will take place as a large group.

Time

This activity will take one class period. You may want to discuss some basic mental illness signs prior to the activity.

Materials

Six scenarios of Mental Illnesses, Mental Illness worksheet.

Information

You may want to discuss some general signs of mental illnesses before this lesson. When behaviors are repeated and start to interfere with a person's daily life, this might be an indication of a possible mental illness.

Mental Illness Scenarios

Scenario: Stacy Norman, a 9/11 survivor.

Stacy was one of the lucky ones who came out of the 9/11 tragedy without any major injuries. This is not to say that the experience has been easily forgotten. Prior to 9/11, Stacy worked on the 18th floor of the Federal Reserve building as a Human Relations manager. She still is in the field of Human Relations, but no longer can be in a large, multi-level building. Stacy completely relocated back to her home state and city of Huntington, Long Island. It is very hard for Stacy to even talk about what she has been through even after many years. Lots of everyday luxuries for you and me are no longer ideal for Stacy, such as the use of elevators, escalators, stair wells, watching movies or TV shows with collapsed buildings or even being near loud working areas.

Scenario: Wanda, observations by her sister.

Wanda used to be one of the funniest people I have ever seen. That changed when she got into her senior year. Suddenly, she became quiet and stopped hanging out with us. She seemed sad all the time and rarely came out of her room after supper. We think the change came when she broke up with her boyfriend, Tommy. I am worried about her and do not know what to do.

Scenario: Tom, the four-year high school football letter winner.

At our high school, Tom Ross is known as the "All American" football star. Everyone knows Tom will be playing pro in years to come. No matter where or when, you can find Tom watching old football tapes, going over football plays, or talking about football. If you were ever in Tom's room, you could find football memorabilia still in their original packaging and a huge sign stating "DO NOT TOUCH!" You will also find

Tom cleaning all of his memorabilia with the number 2 Scotch Guard™ cleaning pad at precisely 6:20 AM everyday. Before and after cleaning his memorabilia, Tom will wash his hands for 10 minutes straight with Lava™ hand soap and dry his hands four times using four different towels.

Scenario: Michael's best friend Tony has written a poem about Michael.

His teachers don't understand him, Sometimes neither do I.
From his friends to his parents,
They all ask why?

Michael will play the class clown,
Joking around all the time.
People will laugh or shake their head,
He didn't think it was such a crime.

He liked to keep a journal,
His inner thoughts only he knew.
His behavior was complex,
Every experience is oh so new.

I know people will think it's weird,
That Michael asks as he was.
But I still think the world of him,
And all the things he does.

Scenario: Young girl brings artwork home to her mom.

Lisa is a six-year-old kindergartener. She loves school and brings her creations home to show her mom whenever possible. One day, Lisa brings home a picture she made in class. When she shows it to her mom, her mom is overjoyed. She tells Lisa it is the most wonderful picture and hangs it on the refrigerator. She tells Lisa it is the most wonderful thing she has ever seen, calls Grandma to tell her about it, and they take Lisa out for ice cream to celebrate. Lisa is so happy. Mom is fun, talkative, and full of energy. She never seems to get tired and is always doing a million things.

Several weeks later, Lisa's kindergarten teacher tells the class they will be able to make another

picture to take home. Lisa decides to make this picture even better than the last. She loves to see her mother happy and busy, but lately she seems sad and tired. Little things seem to make her cry. Lisa works hard on her picture using lots of colors and designs. The teacher tells her she did a great job and Lisa hurries home to show it off to her mom.

When she gets home, the house is dark and the curtains are closed. Mom is in bed and doesn't greet Lisa when she comes into her room. Lisa jumps on the bed to show Mom the greatest picture ever. Mom hardly looks at it, tells Lisa she doesn't feel well and that she needs to be quiet and leave her alone. Lisa leaves the bedroom wondering what she did wrong.

Sample Response

Scenario: Tom, the four-year high school football letter winner

At our High School, Tom Ross is known as the "All American" football star. Everyone knows Tom will be playing pro in years to come. No matter where or when, you can find Tom watching old football tapes, going over football plays, or talking about football. If you were ever in Tom's room, **you could find football memorabilia still in their original packaging and a HUGE sign stating "DO NOT TOUCH!" You will also find Tom cleaning all of his memorabilia with the number 2 Scotch Guard™ cleaning pad, at precisely 6:20 AM everyday. Before and after cleaning his memorabilia, Tom will wash his hands for 10 minutes straight with Lava™ hand soap and dry his hands four times using four different towels. (Bold sentences are the signs of a mental illness)**

We think that this is an example of OCD because the behaviors are planned, repetitive and rigid.

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “The Biggest Winner: Reducing Stigma”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Participant Instructions

Now that you have learned about mental illnesses and stigma, you will be asked to imagine the specific kinds of stigmatizing behaviors people are subjected to and their effects.

With the short scenario describing Juanita, a girl with bipolar disorder, you will be asked to do the following:

- 1) Review “Juanita’s Story” handout.
- 2) Discuss and record on poster paper your answers to the following questions:
 - From your experiences, what kinds of stigmatizing behaviors might Juanita be subjected to in the family? At school? In the community?
 - What impact might these stigmas have on Juanita on a daily basis?
- 3) Discuss how you (or someone your age) would feel if you had to experience such treatment.

Next you will have the opportunity to vote on your reaction to the stigmatizing behaviors discussed. You will be given a sheet of colored dots that you can utilize for this purpose.

Juanita's Story

Juanita ran into several difficulties in the latter part of elementary school, and her grades deteriorated when she transitioned into middle school. Her family was unsure about the ups and downs of Juanita's behaviors. She had always been bouncy, energetic, and creative, but at times she seemed unusually animated. Just before starting high school, Juanita's behavior was a tremendous concern for the family. She would stay up all night, rarely eat, and seemed to possess a ton of energy. Other times, she slept all day, hardly spoke to anyone, and locked herself in her room. She seemed to snap at people in a grumpy and even hostile tone. At first, the family thought she might be using drugs. Juanita eventually ran away for three days.

At school, Juanita's behavior also proved unpredictable. Some days, or parts of days, she was bubbly and animated—often to an exaggerated degree. On those days, she often dominated class discussion and conversations with friends. Other days, she isolated herself from other students, kept her eyes downcast, and often sat and ate alone. She would refuse to join in conversations and activities and communicated only argumentatively. In the community, Juanita was impatient, appeared annoyed at others as her behavior varied between very impulsive to rigid. Her dress could be bizarre and flamboyant, and she sometimes talked to herself. At times, she violated the personal space of others, while other times she would withdraw completely.

Modified from Eliminating Barriers to Learning:
Social and Emotional Factors that Enhance Secondary Education,
available through SAMHSA.

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “The Biggest Winner: Reducing Stigma”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Facilitator/Mentor Information

Overview

This activity can be utilized to identify the definition of stigma, recognize stigmatizing behaviors, and empathize with those who may experience such negative behaviors.

If needed, participants may be divided into cooperative groups of three to four participants. Each group will read Juanita’s story and use it to guide their discussion. Following the small group discussions, all participants will generate a list of personal feelings or reactions about stigmatizing behaviors. Everyone will be asked to select their two strongest feelings by placing the colored dots next to the appropriate feelings on the class list.

What is Stigma? (Definition)

Stigma is a cluster of negative attitudes and beliefs that motivate people to fear, reject, avoid, and discriminate against others with mental illness.

Anti-Stigma: Do You Know The Facts? (Facilitator/Mentor Handout)

How Stigma and Discrimination Keep Teens and Families From Getting Help (Handout)

Stigma, Discrimination, and Help-Seeking Behavior

What (Identification)

Why (Referral)

Where (Treatment)

The Facilitator/Mentor’s Role (Guide)

Activity

- Through the use of the Anti-Stigma Do You Know Handout, introduce the concept of stigma.
- Ask participants to create their own definition of stigma and share these. Look up stigma in the dictionary and share that definition with the you.
- Have a student look up stigma in the dictionary and share that definition with the class.
- Show overhead with the definition of stigma.
- Ask for examples of stigmatizing behavior.

- Divide class into cooperative groups of 3-4 participants.
- Have the participants read Juanita’s Story.
- Have participants answer the questions for Juanita’s Story.

Concluding Concept:

The connection of stigma and stereotyping and discrimination.

Time

One class period.

Materials

- Colored sticker dots (two dots per student)
- Masking tape
- Poster paper enough for one sheet per group of three to four students
- What We Can Do To Counter Stigma (Handout/Slide)
- Anti-Stigma: Do You Know The Facts? (Student Handout)
- Juanita’s Story (Student Handout)

You could enhance this lesson by using the following overheads from Eliminating Barriers for Learning (SAMHSA Curriculum):

What is Stigma?

How Stigma Keep Teens and Their Families from Getting Help

Stigma, Discrimination, and Help-Seeking Behavior

Information

The student will learn the definition of stigma and what prevents people with mental illness from getting help. This lesson will also utilize cooperative group problem-solving techniques to help develop strategies for eliminating stigma and deliver positive messages to counteract stigma.

Sample Response

Answers will vary from group to group.

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “Taking Action: Practicing the Skill of Helping Someone with Mental Illness”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Participant Instructions

You have been looking at issues surrounding mental illness in terms of misconceptions, stigmas surrounding mental illness, the mental health-illness continuum, and the impact of the media on stigma. In this activity you create an action plan script to assist individuals that have a mental illness through the use of the skill “ACT(T).”

Avoid labeling and use correct terminology

Care for people with mental illnesses

Treat people with mental illness with respect and dignity and when necessary

Tell someone who can help

Keeping this acronym in mind, your group of three or four will be given one of five scenarios describing young people who are in need of help. Your task is to write a script where you apply ACT to assist the individual presented in the scenario. You may utilize any previous handouts to aid you in your work (the misconception sheet; the anti-stigma handout, and the descriptor pages).

Scenarios

Scenario #1

Anxiety—Panic Disorder

Marquis has always been a rather nervous person, preferring to spend time alone or with his long-time next door friend. He rarely raises his hand to answer a question in class. When walking through the hallways at school, he focuses on the floor, never making eye contact. He is not involved in school activities, but has become quite a good chess player as a result of his nightly matches with his grandma. He also sorts donated food at his church food pantry, a job he can do alone.

Marquis' freshman English class includes a speech unit where each student must research, prepare, and present a speech on a topic of current interest. He has been worrying about this second semester assignment since school began. When thinking about it, Marquis feels nauseous and dizzy. Last week, he awoke in a cold sweat, heart racing, and had strong chest pains. He thought he was having a heart attack. The thought of going to school has begun to panic him. He is now afraid that if he goes to speech class, he will actually die.

When his friend from next door came to pick him up for school today, he found him hiding in his darkened room. Marquis' grandma had already left for work.

"How can I help him?" he thought.
"What can I say?"

Scenario #2

Teen Depression

Sam has been an active participant in class activities all the way till the eleventh grade. He loved drama and music, but also excelled in track. He was conference champion in the 800-meter run as a sophomore and had dreams of winning state in two years. That all changed over the summer before his junior year. Sam was seemingly nowhere to be found. He never came to the summer running club, did not try out for the summer community musical, or come to the junior class summer swim parties at Jessica Riley's pool. It seems like he fell off the face of the earth, and you become very worried because you have seen him in his yard sitting on a chair looking into space. You decide to go to Sam's house and have a talk with Sam.

As you enter his darkened room, you say, "Boy, do we miss you, Sam. I haven't seen you all summer."

Scenario #3

Bulimia

Yolanda was a popular eighth grader at Mitchum Middle School. She had a great future ahead of her because she was a gifted dancer and won the eighth grade talent contest with her singing and dancing performance. During May, practice and tryouts began for the cheerleading squads at the high school, and Yolanda thought she was a shoe-in to make the varsity team. As she was dressing for the final practice before tryouts, she overheard Stephanie and Tanya talking about how they thought Yolanda had gained weight and might have trouble making more than the freshman cheerleader's squad, a team that has a no cut policy.

She was shocked, and that night after the family meal she went upstairs into the bathroom and forced herself to throw up. This pattern continued to get worse and worse. In addition sores on the corners of her mouth are becoming larger and larger. Every time Yolanda went with her friends to get something to eat she went to the bathroom immediately after. You are noticing this behavior and decide to follow her after a night at the drive-in. The sounds were unmistakable. She was vomiting violently. You confront her.

"Yolanda, this scares me. I know you have been doing this for a long time and I am very worried."

Scenarios (continued)

Scenario #4

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Maria is 14 years old and an eighth grader. She is friendly, fun-loving, and outgoing with many friends. She loves science, has a lead in the school musical, and plays flute in band/jazz bands.

Lately, she has been showing some strange behaviors. At first, her friends all laughed, thinking she was being funny. Now she is acting more silly and saying odd things. She can be observed counting floor and ceiling tiles. At every doorway, she crosses through three times before entering or leaving rooms. She washes her hands constantly, talking about needing to clean off the germs. She has difficulty concentrating and is easily distracted. Lately, she arrives late to class, band, lunch, and play practice.

Maria has changed and she has not told her friends what is going on with her. They all like her and want to help in any way they can....

Scenario #5

Bipolar Disorder

Eric is a tenth grader at Storyville High School. He is a real puzzle to those who know him. His family, teachers, and few friends never know how to react to Eric. Eric can be a chatterbox at times. In fact, he often talks too much, too fast, changes topics too quickly, and often jumps from subject to subject. Eric's family is very concerned because he stays up very late and functions on very little or no sleep.

On some days, Eric cannot sit still. He often engages in risky behaviors or activities. He never thinks of his health or safety. On other days, he is very sad or irritable. He can hardly wake up and often falls asleep in class. He appears to have no energy at all. On these days, Eric tells others how worthless he is and how much he doesn't like himself. He often complains about headaches, muscle aches, stomachaches and is frequently absent from school.

Eric is a hard person to figure out.

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “Taking Action: Practicing the Skill of Helping Someone with Mental Illness”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Facilitator/Mentor Information

Overview

This activity is designed to get participants to practice the skill ACT that consists of the following components:

Avoid labeling and use correct terminology

Care for people with mental illnesses

Treat people with mental illness with respect and dignity and when necessary

Tell someone who can help

Participants can use any of the previous handouts as they go through this lesson.

Activity

In groups of three or four, participants will read the introductory scenarios assigned to them. They are then to develop a script that must include at least three references to issues and skills such as: not labeling, using correct terminology, showing care for the individual, treating a person with respect and dignity, and assisting a person in getting help. The group will then read their script or act it out where it is appropriate in the given activity time.

A follow-up question and answer session will take place after each presentation.

Time

One class period/50 minutes.

Materials

Scenarios that address five different mental illnesses, previous information sheets and descriptors, and writing instruments.

Information

Present the skill with the acronym ACT in an organized way. Remind participants that they have explored types of mental illness in previous lessons.

Sample Response

Sam has been an active participant in class activities all the way until the eleventh grade. He loved drama and music but also excelled in track. He was conference champion in the 800-meter run as a sophomore and had dreams of winning state in two years. That all changed over the summer before his junior year. Sam was seemingly nowhere to be found. He never came to the summer running club, did not try out for the summer community musical or come to the junior class summer swim parties at Jessica Riley's pool. It seems like he fell off the face of the earth, and you become very worried because you have seen him in his yard sitting on a chair looking into space. You decide to go to Sam's house and have a talk with Sam.

As you enter his darkened room, you say, "Boy, do we miss you, Sam. I haven't seen you all summer."

Sam: Ya, I just want to chill this summer.

You: But what about the things you liked to do so much? I haven't seen you at one club run or at any of Jessica's pool parties.

Sam: I just have been busy around the house this summer.

You: I am very concerned about you Sam and worried—you seem to be depressed. You didn't even look happy to see me, your best friend.

Sam: I am happy to see you, but I just don't show it.

You: As I said, I am very worried about you, Sam. You seem like you could be depressed or down in the dumps about something.

Sam: Just stay out of my business.

You: I asked Ms. Carroll about your change, and she is worried too. We both are going to help. There are lots of people with depression, and they are helped all the time. Ms. Carroll is contacting your parents today and I am going to be a part of your life the rest of the summer until you are back to your old self.

Sam: Well, what if I don't want help?

You: If you don't go to get the help we set up, I will go by myself because I care about you too much.

Scenarios

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Scenarios (continued)

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On some days, Eric cannot sit still. He often engages in risky behaviors or activities. He never thinks of his health or safety. On other days, he is very sad or irritable. He can hardly wake up and often falls asleep in class. He appears to have no energy at all. On these days, Eric tells others how worthless he is and how much he doesn't like himself. He often complains about headaches, muscle aches, stomachaches and is frequently absent from school.

Eric is a hard person to figure out.

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “Help Wanted”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Participant Instructions

You will be working together (you and your mentor) to create a three-column brochure that raises awareness and understanding of a certain mental illness. You will use a computer or handwrite/draw the brochure. Brochure requirements will include:

- A description of the mental illness
- The classification of the mental illness
- At least three signs/symptoms of the mental illness
- At least two other interesting facts/statistics
- At least three resources for help/treatment including:
 - Two local organizations with current phone numbers
 - One regional organization with the website
 - One national organization with the website
- Neatness and creativity

Content Area: Mental Illness

Performance Task: “Help Wanted”

Education Level: Middle–High School

Teacher Information

Overview

Participants working in pairs will create a three-column brochure that raises awareness and understanding of a certain mental illness.

Participants will use a computer or handwrite/draw the brochure.

Brochure requirements will include:

- A description of the mental illness
- The classification of the mental illness
- At least three signs/symptoms of the mental illness
- At least two other interesting facts/statistics
- At least three resources for help/treatment including:
 - Two local organizations with the phone numbers
 - One regional organization with the website
 - One national organization with the website
- Neatness and creativity

Activity

The students should have received lessons focusing on the world of mental illness, including accessing resources. Upon randomly selecting a mental illness with their assigned partner, students will search the provided websites and create a brochure based on the assessment criteria outlined in the rubric.

Time

One to two class periods.

Materials

Resources (phone books, list of resource options), access to a computer lab, list of mental illness options, access to brochure template (Microsoft Publisher, etc.), example of brochures.

Possible Mental Illness Options: **Possible List of Resources for Students:**

- Panic Disorder
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Phobias
- Hypochondria
- Anorexia Nervosa
- Bulimia
- Clinical Depression
- Bipolar Disorder
- Passive Aggressive Disorder
- Anti-social Personality Disorder
- Tourette’s Syndrome
- Autism
- Alzheimer’s
- Dementia
- Seasonal Affective Disorder
- Multiple Personality Disorder
- Binge Eating/Drinking Disorder

- National Institute of Mental Health
nimh.nih.gov
- American Psychiatric Association
www.psych.org
- National Depressive and Manic Depressive Association
www.ndmda.org
- Wisconsin United for Mental Health
www.wimentalhealth.org
- Wisconsin Council on Mental Health
www.mhc.state.wi.us
- National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
www.nami.org

Instructions

The participants should have received lessons focusing on the world of mental illness, including accessing resources. Upon randomly selecting a mental illness with their assigned partner, participants will search the provided websites and create a brochure based on the assessment criteria outlined in the rubric.

Sample Response

Brochures will vary from group to group.