STIGMA AROUND MENTAL HEALTH

During the course of a year, more than 57 million Americans are affected by one or more mental disorders.

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MENTAL ILLNESS IS DANGEROUS

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES REGARDING MENTAL ILLNESS SUCH AS FEAR AND MISTREATMENT PREVENT PEOPLE FROM SEEKING TREATMENT AND SUPPORT

JOIN IN THE FIGHT TO END THE STIGMA AROUND MENTAL HEALTH
People with mental illness are 2.5 times more likely to be victims of violence than others.

Fear surrounding Mental Illness has allowed violence and against those with Mental Illness. Discrimination and mistreatment has varied negative consequences on the lives of others.

68% of Americans do not want someone with a mental illness marrying into their family and 58% do not want people with mental illness in their workplaces.

Mental Illness is seen as a “choice” and at times seen as either moral, spiritual, or physical weakness. Many people of all backgrounds hold these discriminatory beliefs. Stigma in our society has made disclosing mental illness at work, or school, or with those you love an extremely high risk.

An estimated 1 in 4 adults in the US have a diagnosable mental illness. This means approximately 76 million Americans live with the fear that others may find out about their disorder and think less of them or even keep them from getting jobs or promotion.

What are the myths that contribute to the Stigma?

**MYTH:** People with a mental illness are violent

**FACT:** Those with mental illness are no more likely to be violent than anyone else.

**MYTH:** People with mental illness can’t keep a job

**FACT:** People with mental illness are productive.

**MYTH:** Character flaws cause mental illness

**FACT:** Mental Illness can not be snapped out of or changed by personality.

**MYTH:** There’s nothing I can do for the mentally ill

**FACT:** Friends, family, and even strangers can make a difference.

**MYTH:** There is no hope for the mentally ill

**FACT:** People with mental illness get better and recover.

Stigma is Dangerous

Internalized + Structural + Cultural

Barriers to care or seeking treatment

Isolation, Misinformation, and Shame

Self-hatred and Hopelessness

All Types of Stigma Increase the Risk of Substance Abuse and Self-Harm
How You Can Begin to Combat Stigma

Stigma causes people to feel ashamed for something that is out of their control. Worst of all, stigma prevents people from seeking the help they need. For a group of people who already carry such a heavy burden, stigma is an unacceptable addition to their pain.

1. Talk Openly About Mental Health
   Everyone has Mental Health, share and be open about challenges and illnesses to connect with others and make them feel less alone.

2. Educate Yourself and Others
   Utilize signs of stigma, or discrimination as learning opportunities to teach others and yourself about the Mental Health. Break stereotypes and end misinformation.

3. Be Conscious of Language
   Remind yourself and others that words matter. It is easy to refrain from using mental illnesses as adjectives, insults, or jokes.

4. Show Compassion
   The simple act of showing affection can impact someone ostracized by their illness. Show others something so easily forgotten: the humanity of those who are suffering.

5. Choose Empowerment over Shame
   You own your life and how you live it, choose to refuse to allow others to dictate how you view or feel about yourself. And encourage others to do the same!

6. Be Honest About Treatment
   You own your life and how you live it, choose to refuse to allow others to dictate how you view or feel about yourself. And encourage others to do the same!

7. Stop Media Stigmatization
   Let major Media outlets, like television channels, or social media platforms know when what they portray is wrong and enforcing mental health stigma.

8. Do Not Harbor Self-Stigma
   Choose not to hide in shame because of a mental illness, accept yourself and live your truth. Seek treatment and support for your well-being and better quality of life.

9. Equality between Physical and Mental Illness
   Mental Health and Physical Health should be treated just as seriously, and those with illness should all be respected. Just as you would support someone with a chronic illness, like diabetes, seek treatment and care - support those with mental illness as they do the same.

Every day, in every possible way, we need to stand up and fight to live stigmafree

Learn more about NAMI’s Stigma Free Campaign and what you can do to join!
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www.mhageorgia.org

For Immediate Access to Routine or Crisis Services
Georgia Crisis & Access Line
1-800-715-4225
mygcal.com

This information was provided by the National Institute of Mental Health. For additional information, please visit www.nimh.gov