

# Mental Health



**WOMEN'S HEALTH: A PUBLIC HEALTH PERSPECTIVE**



**Trigger Warning**

<http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22>

## Objectives



- Define mental health and mental illness.
- Understand the factors that contribute to mental health and mental illness.
- Explore the gender differences in patterns of mental illness.
- Discuss the role that stress plays in mental health.

**good mental health**



## Defining Mental Health

- A state of *well-being* that allows a person to be **productive**, have fulfilling **relationships**, adapt to **changes**, and **cope** with difficult circumstances.



## What is Mental Health?

The World Health Organization defines ***mental health*** as “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

## Quiz = Fill in the Blank

- ***Mental health*** is “a state of \_\_\_\_\_ A \_\_\_\_\_ in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can \_\_\_\_\_ B \_\_\_\_\_ with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her \_\_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_\_.”

- Answer A: well-being
- Answer B: cope
- Answer C: community

## Defining Mental Health Disorders

- Conditions marked by changes or abnormalities in mood, thinking, or behavior (or any combination) that produce distress or impair daily functioning.



## How Do We Diagnose Mental Health Issues?

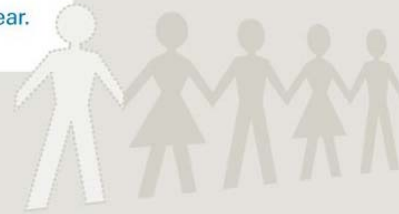
- American Psychological Association (APA)
  - The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV)



## Epidemiology of Mental Health

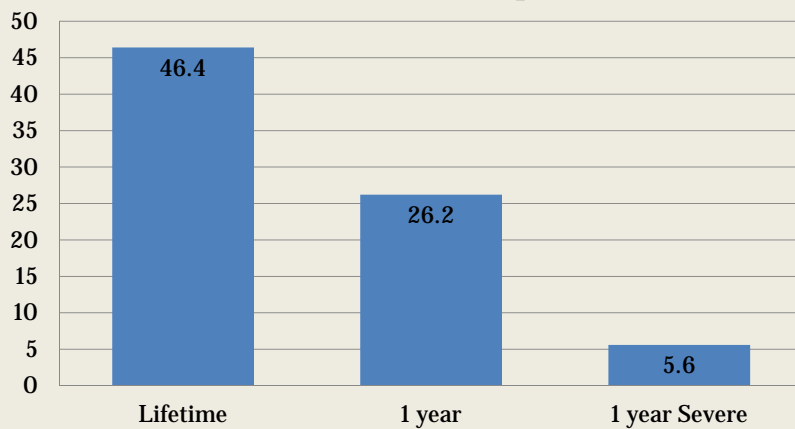
## Who Has Mental Illness?

**A** **1 in 5** people suffer from mental illness; approximately **57.7 million Americans** every year.



## Prevalence of Mental Health Issues

**Percent of US Adult Population**



## Prevalence of Mental Health Issues

Mental illness affects everyone across age, sex, and race.



## Mental Health Issues are VERY common



## Factors That Contribute to Mental Illness

- **Biological Factors**

- Genetic predisposition
- Abnormal brain structure
- Irregular hormonal or brain activity
- Head or brain injuries
- Prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol



## Factors That Contribute to Mental Illness

- **Social and Psychological Factors**

- Socio-Economic Status
- Multiple Roles/Role Strain
- Undervalued Roles
- Gender Roles
- Sexual Violence
- Discrimination
  - ✦ Ethnic, sexual, gender, or physical





## Quiz – True/False

- True or False. Women have a higher prevalence of severe mental health issues compared to men.
- Answer: True

## Gender Differences

## Gender Differences



- Men and women suffer from mental illness in approximately the same numbers, but frequencies of specific disorders vary.

## Gender Differences in Mental Illness

- Women have:
  - **2x** the rate of clinical depression
  - **4x** the incidence of seasonal affective disorder
  - **9x** more likely to suffer from disordered eating
  - **2x** more likely to suffer from panic disorder
  - More rapid cycling and experience more depression in bipolar disorder
  - More likely to have phobias and experience severe symptoms
  - Attempt suicide more often
    - ✦ Men are more likely to die from their attempts

Apart from clinical mental illness, what mental health issue affects the health and well-being of women the most?



## Stress

- Stress
  - The physical, mental, or emotional response that a person experiences when subjected to any type of situation that produces tension or requires a difficult decision.
- Types of Stressors
  - Financial
  - Work-life Balance
- Coping
  - The way in which we respond to stress



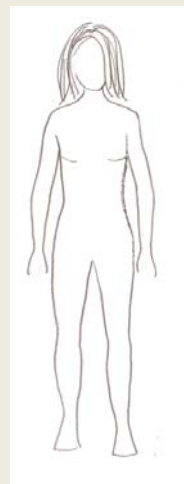
## Stress and Women

- **Chronic stress**
  - day to day
- **Stress in response to a specific event or situation**
  - post-traumatic stress disorder
- **Stress takes many different forms**
  - can contribute to symptoms of illness



## Stress and Women

- **Common symptoms include:**
  - headache
  - sleep disorders
  - difficulty concentrating
  - short-temper
  - upset stomach
  - job dissatisfaction
  - low morale
  - depression
  - anxiety



## Symptoms of Stress Can Lead to or Aggravate Poor Health Outcomes



## Evaluate Your Stress

### Student Stress Scale



## Class Wrap-Up



- **Key Words:**
  - Mental Health, Stress, Coping
- **Individual Importance:**
  - Mental health issues are correlated with disability in daily life and other co-morbidities.
- **Public Health Importance:**
  - Mental health issues are highly prevalent, but are poorly screened.
- **Socio/Economic Importance:**
  - Mental Health issues are highly stigmatized in our society, leading to decreased health service seeking.