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?

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

- Lifetime: 46.4%
- 1 year: 26.2%
- 1 year Severe: 5.6%
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

- 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

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.