



## **Mental Health**

involves **effective functioning in daily activities** resulting in:

- Productive activities (work, school, caregiving).
- Healthy relationships.
- Ability to adapt to change and cope with adversity (problems).

## **Mental Illness**

refers collectively to all **diagnosable mental disorders / health conditions** involving:

- Significant changes in thinking, emotion and/or behavior.
- Distress and/or problems functioning in social, work or family activities.

## **Common Types of Mental Illnesses:**

**Depression**

**Anxiety disorder**

**Bipolar mood disorder**

**Personality disorder**

**Psychotic disorders like schizophrenia**

**Substance use disorders**

## **Myths & Facts about Mental Illness:**

**Myth: Mental health problems are rare.**

**Fact: 1 in 4 people experience mental illness in any given year.**

**Myth: Mental illness is not real, it is a character flaw.**

**Fact: Mental illness is real and is influenced by factors such as genes, physical injury, and brain chemistry.**

**Myth: People with mental illness are unable to work.**

**Fact: With the appropriate treatment and adequate levels of support people with mental illness can enter the workforce.**

**Myth: People with mental illness are violent and unpredictable.**

**Fact: People with mental illness are more likely to be victims of violence.**

Sources:

<https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/what-is-mental-illness>

<https://mhanational.org/live-your-life-well>

## Myths & Facts about Mental Illness:

**Myth:** Therapy doesn't work.

**Fact:** Therapy alone may not be sufficient. Some people require a combination of therapy and medication. Treatment depends on the individual.

**Myth:** People with mental illness never recover.

**Fact:** Recovery is a process through which people are able to live, learn, work and socialise within their communities while continuing with necessary treatments and/or interventions.

**Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of.** It is a medical condition, just like heart disease or diabetes.

**Mental health conditions are treatable.**

**Mental illness can affect anyone** regardless of age, gender, geography, income, social status, race/ethnicity, religion/spirituality, sexual orientation, background or other aspect of cultural identity.

### **Tips to maintain & improve your Mental Health:**

**Connect with others.**

**Get physically active.**

**Get enough sleep.**

**Stay positive.**

**Help others.**

**Eat well.**

**Take care of your spirit.**

**Create joy & satisfaction.**

**Deal better with hard times.**

**Get professional help when needed.**

### **Organisations to contact for assistance:**

- **Cape Mental Health**  
<https://capementalhealth.co.za> 021 447 9040
- **South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG)**  
<https://www.sadag.org> 0800 567 567
- **Mental Health Information Centre**  
<https://mentalhealthsa.org.za> 021 938 9229

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