

STUDENT VOICE SERIES

Mental Health Stigma

Challenging it together!

A discussion booklet for the classroom



Canadian Teachers' Federation
Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants



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ISBN 978-0-88989-419-8

To order, please visit:

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Mental Health Stigma

Challenging it together!

A discussion booklet for the classroom

Grades 5 to 12

MESSAGE FROM THE CTF PRESIDENT

Dear Teachers,

In September 2014, 95.4% of classroom teachers polled told the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) that we should be advocating for child and youth mental health. A previous survey conducted by CTF in 2012, in collaboration with the Mental Health Commission of Canada, confirmed that classroom teachers experience numerous systemic, professional and personal barriers when faced with the many individual student mental health issues in the classroom. Most teachers believe that stigma and discrimination are by far the biggest barriers hindering dialogue and support for everyone's mental health and wellness. It is with this in mind that the CTF began a pilot project, the *Student Voice on Mental Health and Stigma*, with an aim to supporting teachers to increase the comfort level of students with the issue of mental health.

If supported to do so, educators can create an inclusive community within schools. Current statistics suggest that 1 in 5 Canadians will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime. By providing accurate information and opening up respectful dialogue between students, we can help future generations develop empathy, correct

misconceptions, eliminate stigma, and develop insights into living with mental illness. When we help youth better understand the issue of mental health, and address the stereotypes and stigma, we start to build a community of empathetic youth. Understanding, acceptance, and empathy will go a long way in breaking down the stigma that surrounds a complex illness. We need to challenge stigma with facts or we perpetuate the fears and shame that become a barrier to diagnosis, treatment, and acceptance.

Canadian teachers can build relationships to create mentally healthy communities that support recovery and social inclusion, and reduce discrimination. We can weave a blanket of support to wrap around children and youth, and by extension their family, through positively influencing attitudes and knowledge about mental illness. This booklet, *Mental Health Stigma: Challenging it together!*, was developed by CTF as part of its Imagineaction program. It presents some of the responses received from Grade 5 to 12 students from across Canada who participated in facilitated discussions about mental health and stigma, in the fall of 2015. We hope this booklet, and the suggested lesson plans found on the Imagineaction teacher platform www.imagine-action.ca, will be a valuable resource to you and the students in your care.

Heather Smith

Heather Smith
President, Canadian Teachers' Federatic



Pedagogy:

Lesson plans and discussion questions have been developed to support the use of this discussion booklet in the classroom. To access these lesson plans and questions, teachers need to sign in on the CTF Imagineaction platform (www.imagine-action.ca), then select "Teacher Resources" under the "Teachers" tab, and then again "Mental Health Stigma: Challenging it together!".

SUGGESTED USE

Mental illness affects people of all ages, all education and income levels, and traverses all cultures. The stigma of mental illness continues and media often promote myths and misconceptions. The Canadian Teachers' Federation has developed this resource booklet to support teachers to raise awareness and reduce stigma around mental illness, and, in turn, decrease the barriers that can prevent youth and family members from seeking help.

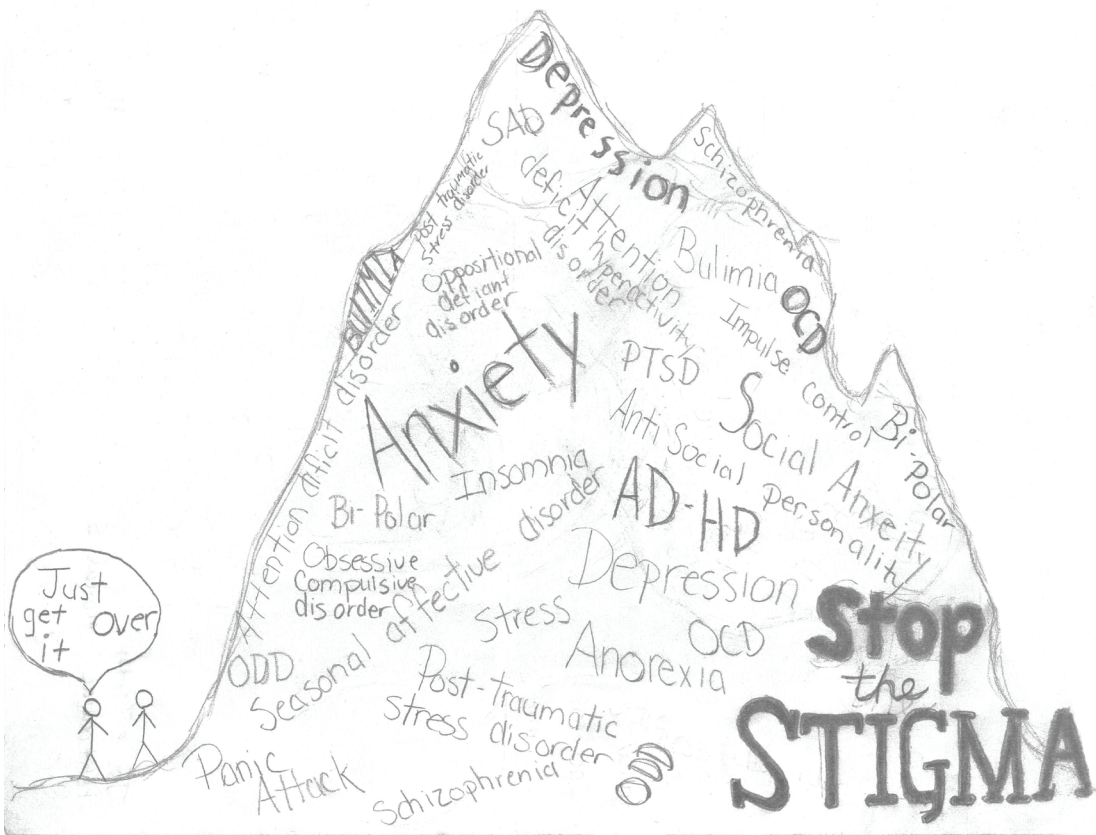
Using this booklet as a resource, youth will:

- develop critical thinking skills by examining preconceptions and misconceptions about mental illness;
- explore stigma around mental illness to help eliminate or reduce it;
- develop empathy and understanding regarding how mental illness affects people and communities;
- create a dialogue of understanding to build a community of acceptance, compassion, and inclusivity.

The Student Voice booklets are a resource to support discussions about complex societal issues using the voice of students. These student voices form the content of the booklets from which lesson plans are developed. These booklets help teachers to encourage students to discuss important issues, to challenge the status quo societal response, and to take action to increase awareness among the school population and the local community. The three Student Voice booklets are: *Poverty, What is it?* (2014), *Mental Health Stigma: Challenging it together!* (2016), *Truth and Reconciliation, What is it?* (late 2016).



Imagineaction is a CTF social justice program that supports school-community social action projects. We offer resources and lesson plans, and we also offer small subsidies to support student engagement in social action projects. CTF invites you to challenge your students to come up with creative ideas to eliminate mental health stigma, at school or in the community, and to access a funding subsidy (payable to the school) to make your project happen. Visit www.imagine-action.ca.



Just get over it

Stop the STIGMA

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Notes:

- a) Many pages in this booklet have supporting myths and facts to help with the discussion. Sources for these myths and facts can be found on page 34.
- b) Elementary school students comprise Grade 5 to 8 students and secondary school students comprise Grade 9 to 12 students.

A STORY FROM THE HEART

To be honest, I have never really given mental health much thought. Yes, it's crossed my mind a few times, but I never focussed on the topic for long. There was this one day when a girl came in and spoke about her experience battling with her brother's death and a mental illness. Her message was great, and I was deeply touched. But one day in health class our teacher told us about this *'Student Voice Project'*. Because we talked about mental illness in class, I now have a better understanding of the topic and I have lots to say about it. Your mental health is just as important as your physical, intellectual and spiritual health. You can't control whether or not you have a mental illness, although you may overcome it. Much like cancer, it is often unexpected. I have never experienced life with a mental illness but now I know for sure that the journey is not easy. I think our society fails to see that just because someone has a mental illness, they are no different than you and I. We don't look down on someone with cancer, so why do that to someone with mental illness? Just because someone has a different struggle than you doesn't mean you should treat them any differently. Yes, certain mental illnesses may cause a person to act peculiar compared to their peers but they are still human. A mental illness may cause someone to lash out randomly in anger, or their mood might change quickly without warning, or someone might just be hyper all the time. But it is not their fault. It is the mental illness talking. And besides, human is human.

- Elementary school student

WHAT DOES GOOD MENTAL HEALTH MEAN TO YOU?

When **LITTLE** problems don't turn into **BIG** ones.

You **ACCEPT** changes.

You are not always **SAD**.

Being able to go to bed every day and **LOOK FORWARD** to tomorrow.

SELF-LOVE and acceptance.

Being **POSITIVE**, being **SOCIAL**, and feeling good about **YOURSELF**, controlling your **EMOTIONS** and finding your **VOICE**.



Positive
Thought

When you can **EXPERIENCE** a range of emotions and handle them in a **HEALTHY** way.

Having **GOOD** relationships with others.

When you are **HAPPY** and proud of who you are and can **ACCEPT** your differences.

ABLE to try new things and take positive risks.

Being **SOCIAL** with friends.



HOW DO YOU TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF TO STAY HEALTHY?

EAT healthy.

EXERCISE daily.

Be ACTIVE.

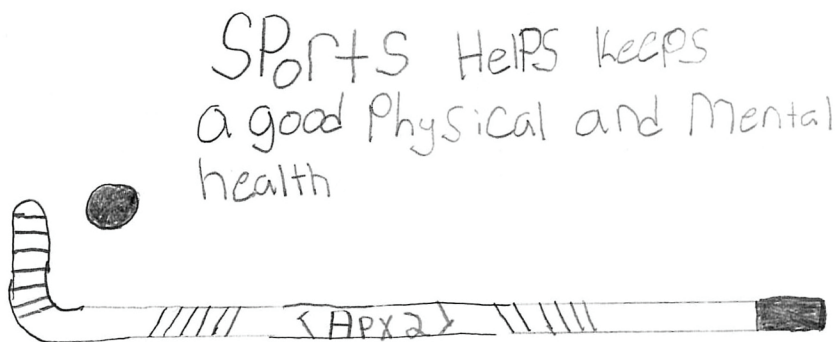
Remind MYSELF that things get better.

Have a good ATTITUDE towards others.

I stay POSITIVE and I go skiing.

Have a FRIEND you can depend on.

HEALTHY means to stay fit, be active, eat breakfast, lunch and supper.



FACT: Young people aged 15 to 24 are more likely to experience mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders than any other age group. (1)

HOW DO YOU TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF TO STAY MENTALLY HEALTHY?

Don't **HOLD THINGS** in.

I do **MINDFULNESS** activities.

Always be **POSITIVE**.

TALK about feelings.

I **DISCUSS** my problems with people I know who will **LISTEN**.

Knowing that I have **PEOPLE WHO CARE** for me.



Have good **FRIENDS**.

I do things that make me **HAPPY** as an individual.

Do **WORKOUTS** that help relieve pent up emotions.

Take a **BUBBLE BATH**.

Make time to **HAVE FUN** with friends.

You **TAKE CARE** of your mental health by taking care of **YOURSELF**.



FACT: Regular exercise can have a positive effect on mood. It can help reduce anxiety, relieve stress and even improve sleep. (6)

A STORY FROM THE HEART



Whenever you have a “bad day”, there is lots of stuff in your mind like names that people say to you like “You are stupid.” It stays in your head and then there is always someone or something that helps you get that off your mind. But then it will come back when you get mad or sad. So you do the same thing to get it off your mind.

- Elementary school student

WHAT DOES MENTAL ILLNESS MEAN TO YOU?

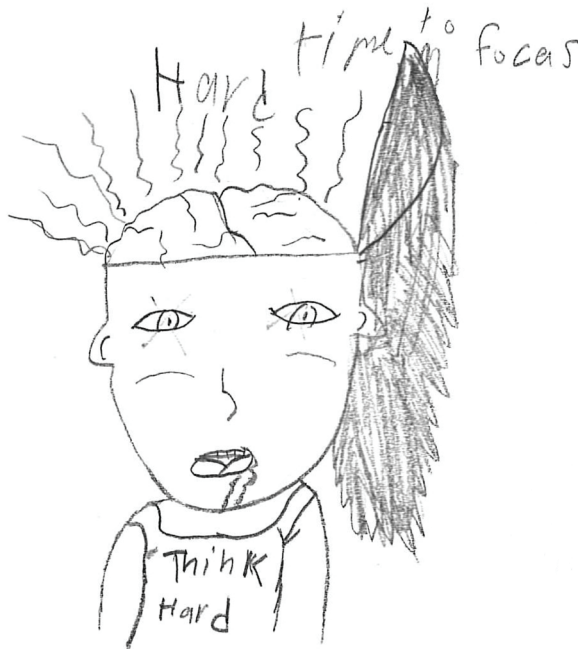
Mental illness could be what **HAPPENED** in your life that made you this way or maybe you were **BORN** with the illness.

You can't **FUNCTION** properly.

It means waking up every day and **NOT WANTING** to get out of bed.

It is a word that the doctor uses to **DESCRIBE** you but it does **NOT DEFINE** you.

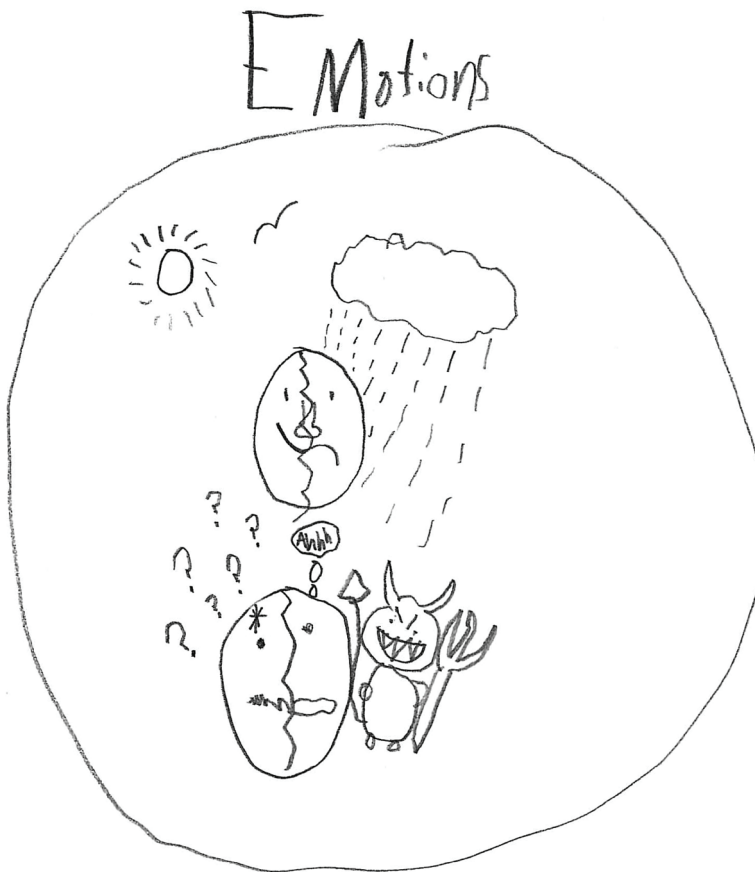
Your brain is having **TROUBLE** working.



INABILITY to cope with situations.

MOOD swings.

Something you have to LIVE with and CONTROL.



WHAT ARE YOUR PERCEPTIONS OF SOMEONE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS?

I believe they are no **DIFFERENT** than anyone else, they simply have a different kind of **STRUGGLE**.

Acts differently. **LOSS OF JOY**. Nervousness. Depression.

Sometimes people with mental illness scare me. Not to be rude but seeing someone struggle is **SCARY**. You don't know what to say or do around them...

My perception is that they are just normal people, but life can be more **DIFFICULT** for them.

Some people **NEED HELP** to improve and move forward from their illness, although most people do get **BETTER**.

They are incredibly **STRONG** people because fighting with your mind is **TERRIFYING**.



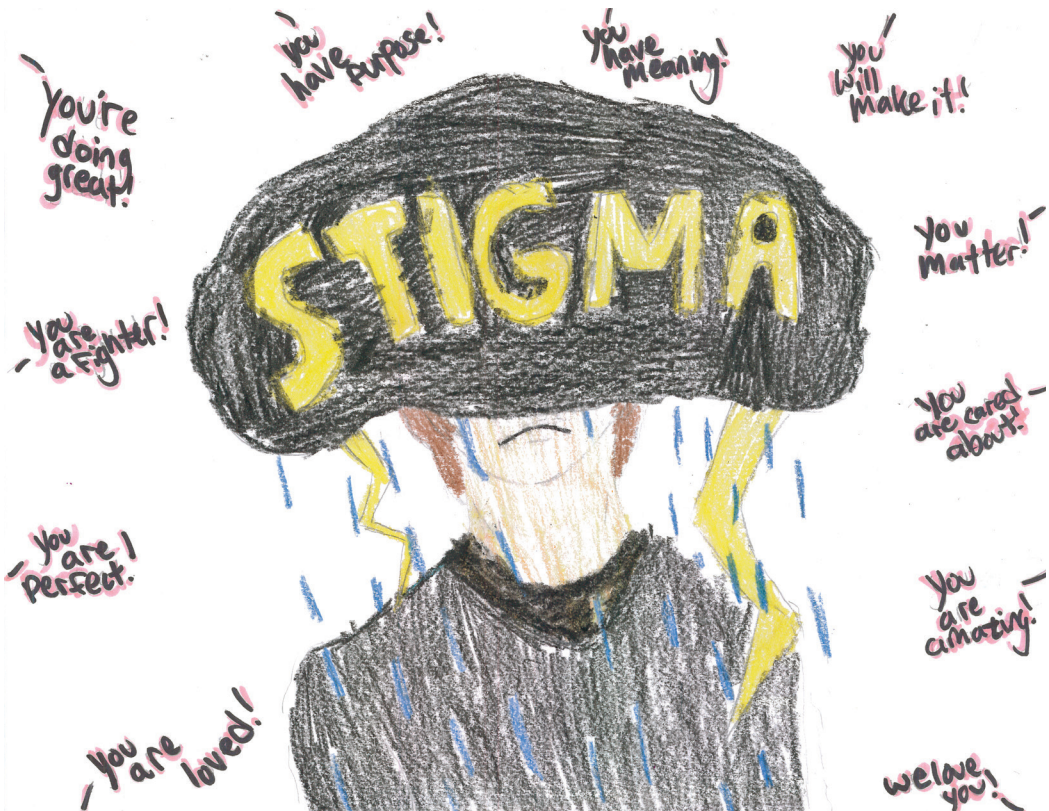
FACT: Roughly 18% of youth, aged 15-24 report a mental illness or substance abuse problem. The statistics are staggering, 1 in 5 people will suffer from a mental illness in their lifetime; that's 20% of our population. (2)

They need **FRIENDS**. They need to know that someone can be there for them.

They work **HARDER** to keep up with their peers.

There is something from their past that is bothering them and they can **NEVER FORGET**.

They should be accepted for **WHO THEY ARE**.



WHAT CHALLENGES MIGHT PEOPLE FACE WHEN THEY ARE EXPERIENCING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES RELATED TO A MENTAL DISORDER OR MENTAL ILLNESS?

Being constantly **TIRE**D or sad. Being **TERRIFIED** of going in public. Being happy one moment and sad the next. Being **CALL**ED lazy or pathetic for something **THEY CAN'T HELP**.

They feel they are **ALONE** indeed.

I think one of the biggest **CHALLENGES** is that someone might **MAKE FUN** of them.

People with mental illness might **NOT FEEL** accepted, or **DON'T FEEL** like they belong.

NOT WANTING to go to school.

Depressed.

HATING themselves.

Suicide is another challenge because mental illness can **OVERWHELM** someone right to the point of death.

A mental illness can easily **TAKE OVER** what the person thinks about, and how they see things.

FACT: The words we use to describe mental illnesses have changed greatly over time. What hasn't changed is the fact that mental illnesses are not the regular ups and downs of life. Mental illnesses create distress, don't go away on their own, and are real health problems with effective treatments. (3)

They are **AFRAID** to talk about mental health or mental health challenges because they are afraid people will **JUDGE** them.

ADMITTING they have a problem.



HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE STIGMA?

Stigma is like a **STEREOTYPE**.

Some of us feel **EMBARRASSED** when it comes to talking about what is going on in our lives or an illness we have. Mostly because it is a **FRIGHTENING** thought to think that we might be **MADE FUN** of or **BULLIED**.

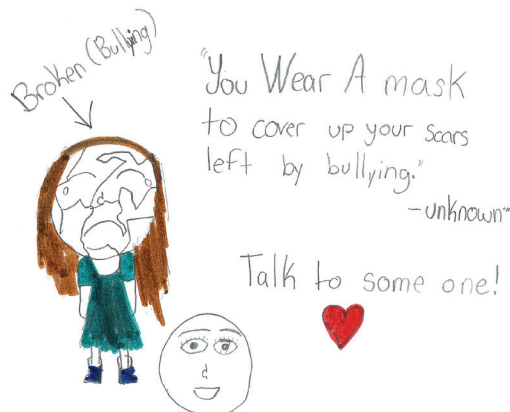
Stigma is a big cloud of **NEGATIVE ATTITUDE** following someone.

All the **UNNECESSARY** and **UNTRUE** things being said about a topic.

A negative **THOUGHT** or **ACTION** surrounding a mental illness.

MISUNDERSTANDING.

Judging and jumping to **CONCLUSIONS**.



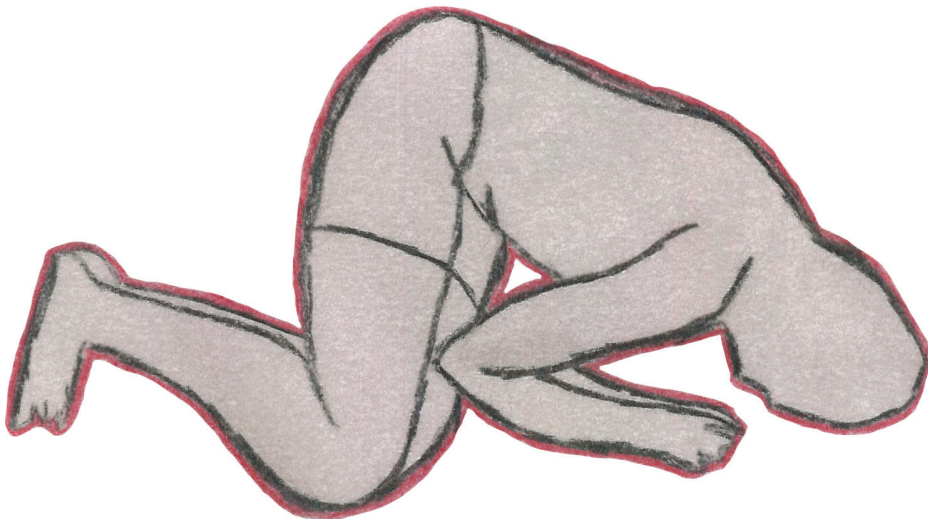
FACT: Beethoven (composer), Van Gogh (painter), Clara Hughes (athlete), Howie Mandell (comedian), Robert Munsch (writer), Demi Lovato (actress), Jim Carrey (actor), Sinéad O'Connor (singer) are just some people you may have heard of who suffered or still suffer from mental illness. Mental illness is not confined to any particular ethnic, racial, religious, or financial group. Anyone can be affected, at any time. (7)

A STORY FROM THE HEART

Stigma: Shame is painful

If only you knew what I have to go through you wouldn't have been so rude. Though I feel shame every single day, there is nothing left for me to do but pray... Our time is short in this world yet there will always be disgrace. For there are tears that run down my face... The humiliation is real but some think it's not a big deal... But to me it means everything... It can affect anyone...

- Secondary school student



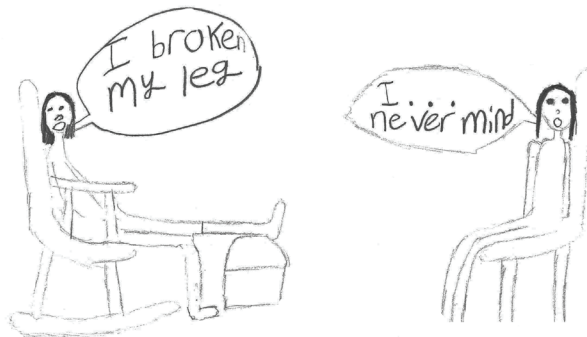
WHY ARE WE SOMETIMES AFRAID OR UNCOMFORTABLE TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS OR A MENTAL DISORDER?

Because sometimes depending on your **DISORDER** you can be scared of it. Maybe you think it's a **SCARY** topic because you are afraid you won't get better or you think you will be **JUDGED** because not everyone has a disorder.

They are afraid to talk about something they **DON'T UNDERSTAND**. They can't see it is so hard for them to **COPE**. If you have a broken arm, you go to the hospital to get a cast; if you have **DEPRESSION**, you get medication but it **DOESN'T ALWAYS WORK**.

We are sometimes afraid to talk about mental health because it is **EMBARRASSING** to share your thoughts. Some people are **SCARED** of what others are going to think of them. It is not really a topic that a lot of people want to talk about.

Why is it so hard to say that you have a mental illness and it's not hard to say you have a broken leg

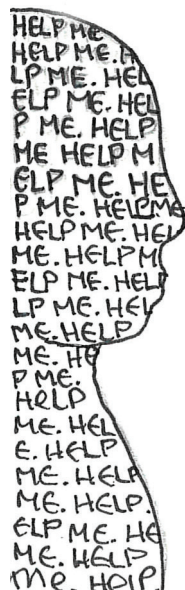


We are either **AFRAID** they will not understand the problem or afraid we will **OFFEND** someone with mental illness.

Fear of being **LABELLED**, stereotyped...

Because of people **THINKING** they know what we are going through and that it is not a big deal—that they know how it **FEELS** to be afraid of your **OWN MIND**.

Because of the **STIGMA** which means you are afraid to talk about your mental illness because you are **EMBARRASSED** about it.



No, really. I'm fine.

DO PEOPLE WHO ARE SICK EVER GET BETTER? DOES THAT INCLUDE PEOPLE WHO MAY HAVE A MENTAL ILLNESS?

Sometimes those who **LIVE** with a mental illness get **BETTER** although it leaves a **SCAR**, which means that they will always know that they have it.

Yes. But everyone's experience is **DIFFERENT**.

Sometimes, I think. Although it could be harder than it looks to **OVERCOME** an **OBSTACLE** like this.

Some people who are sick **GET HELP** to get better and some people who are sick get help but **CAN'T** get better.



FACT: It's important to reach out to a friend in trouble, and even if you get rejected, you should keep trying. Let your friend know he or she won't be stigmatized for being honest. Remind friends that **EVERYBODY** has problems, and that it's not only okay to talk about them, it's better to do so. (6)

SOMETIMES. It depends on how severe the illness is.

They can **IMPROVE**, and they can learn to live and **ACCEPT** their illness...

MAYBE. It depends on the person because different **TREATMENTS** work or don't work for certain people.



WHEN YOU THINK OF SOMEONE WHO HAS A MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE, DO YOU THINK BADLY OF THEM?

No, it is **NOT** your fault.

It must be **HARD**.

To be honest: jealous, hateful, **ATTENTION SEEKER**.

It is **WEIRD**, I know, to talk about.

Let me **HELP**.

You are normal but **SICK**.

I don't think of you any **DIFFERENTLY**.

People are sad. Can be difficult. **DRAG** others into their problems.

I know you are **SUFFERING** right now.

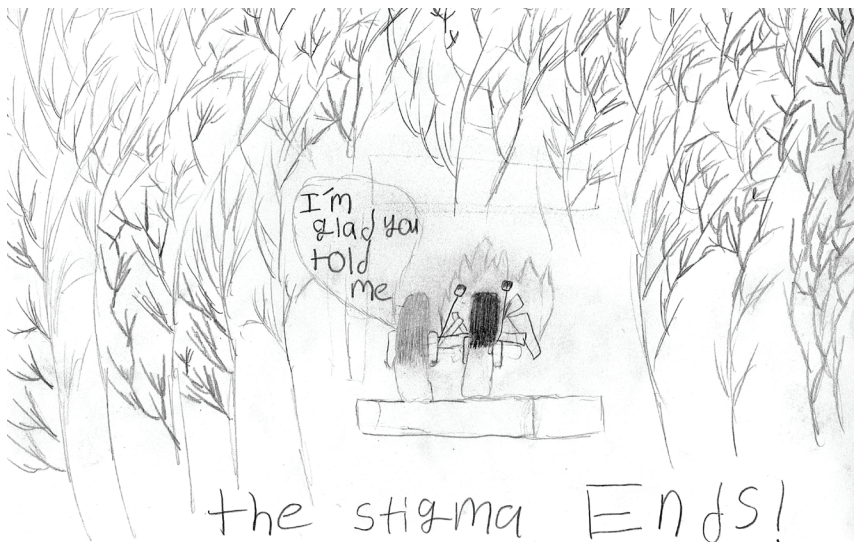
FACT: People can and do recover from mental illnesses. Today, there are many different kinds of treatments, services, and supports that can help. No one should expect to feel unwell forever. The fact is, people who experience mental illnesses can and do lead productive, engaged lives. They work, volunteer, or contribute their unique skills and abilities to their communities. Even when people experience ongoing or even chronic mental illnesses, they can learn how to manage their symptoms so they can enjoy much that life has to offer. If someone continues to experience many challenges, it may be a sign that different approaches or supports are needed. (3)

WOULD YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE TALKING TO SOMEONE THAT YOU TRUST ABOUT A MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE THAT YOU OR A FRIEND MAY HAVE? WHY OR WHY NOT?

Yes, I would because I am going through things too. I can't stand **INTERNALIZING** this anymore. I can't stand being called lazy and pathetic, and being told **IT'S A PHASE**.

No. I was never really one to talk to people other than my **DOCTOR** when mental illness came in the picture.

Yes, I would because the more you **HOLD** in your illness, the **WORSE** it will get.



I would only tell a **FAMILY** member because I am afraid if I tell a **FRIEND**, he or she would tell someone else.

Yes, I would probably feel **COMFORTABLE** talking about it because I think that the more we know about mental illness, the closer we get to **CURING** or at least **HELPING** it.

I would tell a **TEACHER** at school. Teachers can talk to **PARENTS**. I think teachers will understand the **MOST** and can really help.

I would feel comfortable to tell if it's **ABOUT ME** but not if it is about a **FRIEND**, I wouldn't because it wouldn't be my **PLACE TO TELL**.



FACT: Only 58% of Canadians surveyed said they would socialize with a friend who had a serious mental illness. We are still learning about mental health challenges and mental illnesses. Negative judgment continues due to misunderstandings and lack of knowledge. (4)

A STORY FROM THE HEART



Mental illness affects your day to day life. Nobody realizes that some people dissipate tremendous amounts of energy simply to be “normal.” Everyone is fighting their own battles, so never underestimate the pain of a person because we are all struggling. We all know how it feels to be unappreciated, small, worthless, etc. We have all felt these emotions some time in our lives and the feelings are unbearable so why would we intentionally want to make someone else feel that way? Why does society look down upon people with mental health challenges? Why does society judge someone based on an illness that primarily isn't their fault? There are a lot of youth in our world today who have mental health difficulties and there are a lot of people passing judgment about them and no one seems to realize how hurtful their words are until they are said. So be careful and cautious with your words because it could have a huge impact on a person's life. So I challenge you to reach out to your community and promote self-love and mental health because anyone who has challenges should never feel ashamed or different from the rest of the world. You can create awareness about mental health challenges and let your voice to be heard.

- Elementary school student

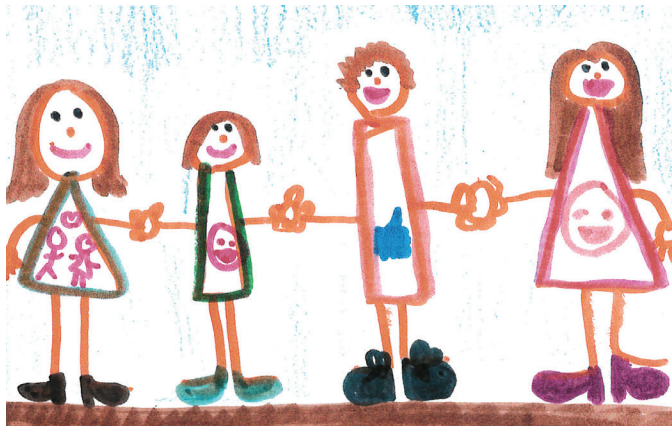
IF A FRIEND CAME TO SEE YOU BECAUSE THEY NEEDED TO TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO THEM, LIKE A MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE, HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND?

I have a friend who has a **PROBLEM**. I don't make fun of my friend.

I would try my best to **HELP** them in any way I could. I would **COMFORT** them. I would show them that there are better things in life to look **FORWARD** to and that things will get **BETTER**.

Their mental health is **INJURED** and it's not their fault.

I would **LISTEN** and try to **NOT JUDGE**. I would try to get them to talk to an adult. If they were in real **TROUBLE**, I would tell **SOMEONE** to make sure they got help and didn't **GET HURT**. Nobody should have to deal with things all **ALONE**.



I don't know what to **SAY**.

Don't let the bad things in life hold you **DOWN**.

I would tell them I shouldn't be the **ONLY** person they go to for help and they should go **TALK** to an adult or another person they **TRUST**.

I would give them a **BIG BEAR HUG** for trusting me enough to tell me about their problem. Mental health is something we should **RECOGNIZE** and not **HIDE** and **PRETEND** it is not even happening.



A STORY FROM THE HEART



Who said it was okay to
go to the hospital for a
Broken bone, but not for a
Broken mind?



When I think of mental health, I think it means that you don't think the same way. Most people are depressed. If I had a mental illness, I would find it hard to deal with. Some people won't tell their friends or family which is because of stigma. Sometimes it costs them their life which is sad. People with a mental health problem should get the help they need. Some will and some won't. That is why we need to stop the STIGMA! and talk! We need to stop this because it takes away lives sometimes.

- Elementary school student

FACT: Supportive friends can play an important role in the mental health recovery process. If you are struggling, ask for help from family, friends, and the medical community. If a friend asks you for help, do all that you can to be part of their circle of caring. (6)

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL MESSAGES AND ACTIONS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

STAND UP for someone who has a mental health condition and who is being made **FUN OF**.

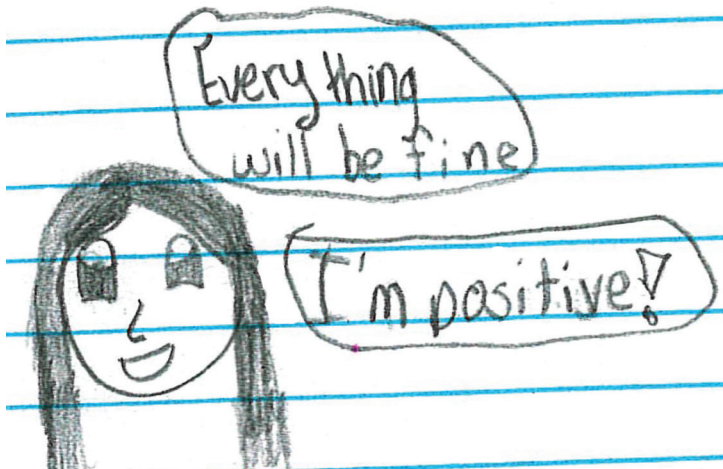
Be **KIND** to people with health issues.

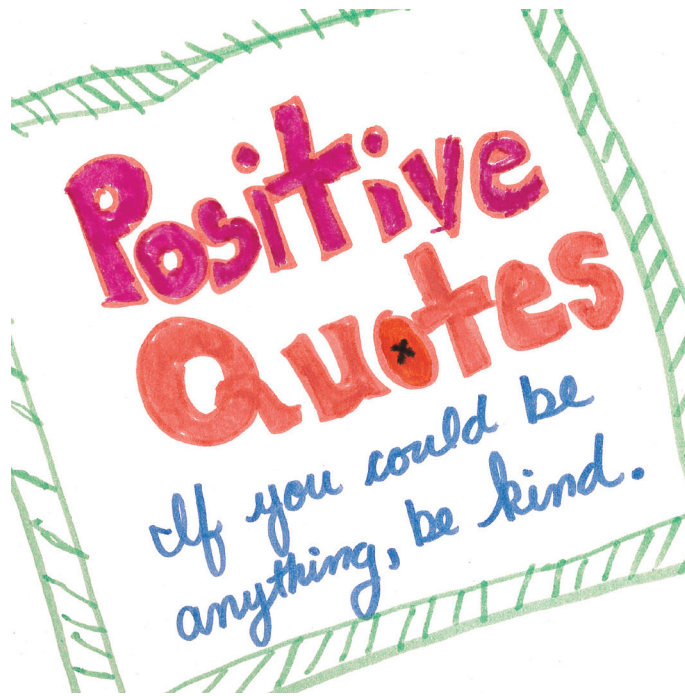
CUT DOWN on using words like "retard" and "OCD."

When I am having a really **BAD DAY**, I go in my room and do **NOTHING**. Sometimes I **SLEEP**. Sometimes I **CRY**. Sometimes I listen to **MUSIC**.

Be **OPEN** about it.

Help people feel more **WELCOME**.





Don't always **PUSH** problems to the side.

INCLUDE others in games.

Teach about this in class at **SCHOOL**.

TRY and **UNDERSTAND** how the person needs to act.

Provide **FACTS** and **INFORMATION** to us about mental illness.

A STORY FROM THE HEART

Do you know anyone with a mental illness? Some people believe that when a person has a mental illness, it is because of something they did, or it is their fault. It isn't. No one wishes to have a mental illness. They didn't do anything to make themselves that way. People who have a mental illness should be treated the same as people who don't. They are still human. People think they can bully these people because they are likely to not fight back or say anything about it.

- Elementary school student



WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU SAW A NEGATIVE POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA ABOUT SOMEONE?

I do what I think everyone should do - **IGNORE IT**. If you have mental illness and someone makes a comment that hurts you - **DON'T LISTEN** to that person.

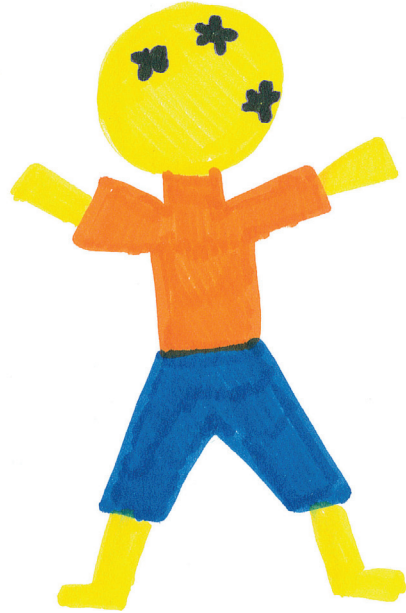
I feel secondary **EMBARRASSMENT** for the person who made the post because they are that immature to **ATTACK** someone over the Internet.

I will either be positive to the **VICTIM** and help them through it even if that makes me a "freak." I would **RISK** being made fun of to help someone **ELSE** out.

Usually I **IGNORE** it because it would take way more than one person to **CHANGE** things.

I talk to both the **VICTIM** to assure them it is okay, and the **POSTER** to remove it, because not everyone needs to be **INVOLVED** in their conflicts on line.

Oftentimes when you comment, it turns into a **HUGE DEAL** and you may get into something you never asked for.



FACT: The great majority of teens (53%) participate in some sort of social activity online. Social networking sites are where youth spend time leaving messages for friends, sharing interesting links or information and posting photos and videos. If you see a comment that concerns you, many sites have an anonymous way of reporting the comment so that it can be removed. You can also talk to your parent, or a trusted adult at school to get help when there is an inappropriate post. (5)

I **HATE** seeing negative posts about **PEOPLE** on social media because not everyone needs to see that and the person it's about would feel sad and it really **UPSETS** me when I see that kind of stuff. Sometimes I **REPORT** it.

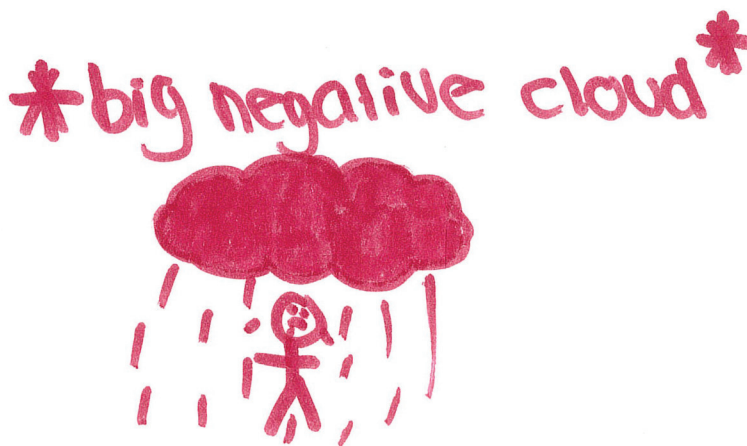
I ignore it. It is **NOT MY PROBLEM** so why should I make it my problem.

It makes me **FEEL SAD** because they don't have a clue what they're saying. I ignore them because if I **REACT** I am giving them what they want. **ATTENTION.**

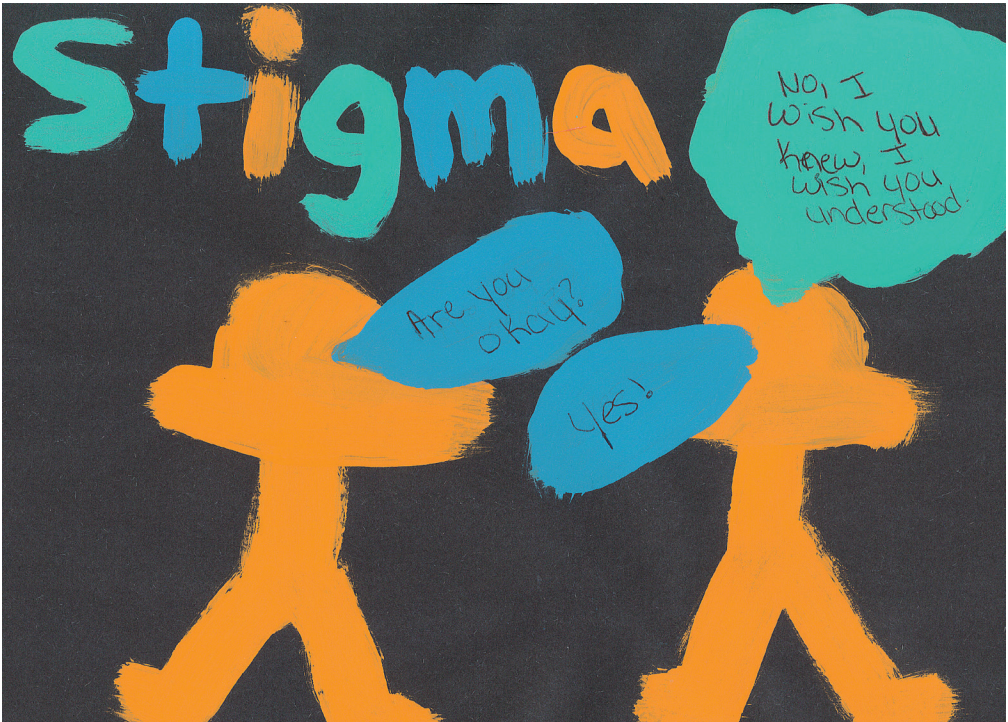
When I see something **BAD** on social media about mental illness, it gets me **MAD** and I ignore it.

I ignore it because it is totally **UNNECESSARY, UNCALLED FOR** and **NOT COOL**. If it is really bad or mean, I would **TELL SOMEONE** but I would never comment on it.

There is **SO MUCH** negative on the Internet, it **OVERRULES** what is the positive. Sometimes it is **HARD** to say something, especially if it is a friend or family member making the **COMMENT**.



A STORY FROM THE HEART



A couple years ago my friend did come and told me something she didn't want anyone to know about her mental health. The person just wanted to talk to one person about it and not tell anyone else so said it was fine until it wasn't and it got bad. I didn't know what to do so I told my mom to tell her mom and it got better. I still talk to the person sometimes about it but it is a lot better now.

- Elementary school student

The following schools participated in the development of this booklet:

Elementary Schools

- Grade 6 and 7 students, Cambridge Narrows Community School, Cambridge, New Brunswick
- Grade 5 students, École André-Piolat, Vancouver, British Columbia
- Grade 6 students, École des Grands-Vents, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador
- Grade 8 students, Hillcrest School, Moncton, New Brunswick
- Grade 8 and 9 students, Mackenzie Mountain School, Norman Wells, Northwest Territories
- Grade 5 and 6 students, St. John's Elementary School, Campbell's Bay, Quebec
- Grade 6, 7 and 8 students, Superior Middle School, Bathurst, New Brunswick

Secondary Schools

- Grade 10 students, Nasivvik High School, Pond Inlet, Nunavut
- Grade 9, 11 and 12 students, Petitcodiac Regional School, Petitcodiac, New Brunswick
- Grade 9 and 10 students, Philemon Wright High School, Gatineau, Quebec
- Grade 11 and 12 students, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Secondary School, Lindsay, Ontario
- Grade 9, 10, 11 and 12 students, Swan Valley Regional Secondary School, Swan River, Manitoba

Special thanks to participating teachers:

Neena Adams-Smith, Victor Aucoin, Jenna Bamford, Michelle Basque, François Bédard, Jordan Brown, Leanda Bruijns, Leigh Dolan, Shannon Fullerton, Erin Jones, Constance Keating, Sarah Kelly, Luce Landry, Jay McKechnie, Janet Ramsay, Marie Rayner, Kaitlin Thompson, Erica Trail, Kathlene Vibert.

CTF ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The conception, development and production of this booklet represent the collaborative work of teachers who are members of the Canadian Teachers' Federation 2015-2016 Advisory Committee on Diversity and Human Rights:

- Heather Smith, Chair, President, Canadian Teachers' Federation
- Mary Chalmers, The Manitoba Teachers' Society
- Diane Dewing, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario
- Áine Larkin, Yukon Teachers' Association
- Ronald Muller, Nova Scotia Teachers Union
- Juanita Tuharsky, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation

Thanks to Deirdre Buckley-McKie, from the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, for her help with data compilation, resource development and lesson plans.



SUPPORTING RESOURCES FOR MYTHS AND FACTS

- (1) Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. *Mental Illness and Addictions: Facts and Statistics*, [Online], May 14, 2016. [www.camh.ca/en/hospital/about_camh/newsroom/for_reporters/pages/addictionmentalhealthstatistics.aspx].
- (2) Kirby, M. , and W. Keon (2004). *Report 1, Mental Health, Mental Illness and Addiction: Overview of Policies and Programs in Canada* (Chapter 5), Interim Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, retrieved from *Quick Facts: Mental illness and addiction in Canada*, November 2009, 3rd Edition, retrieved May 2016. [www.mooddisorderscanada.ca/page/quick-facts].
- (3) Canadian Mental Health Association. *Myths about Mental Illness*, [Online]. [www.cmha.ca/mental_health/myths-about-mental-illness/#.VzeZE3ErLC0].
- (4) Canadian Institutes of Health Research. *Mental Health Statistics*, [Online], May 2016. [www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/47914.html].
- (5) MediaSmarts. *Social Networking*, [Online], May 2016. [<http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/general-information/internet-mobile/social-networking>].
- (6) Generated from classroom discussions
- (7) Generated from online news and stories



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND LINKS

Au Contraire — Film Festival on Mental Illness

www.acff.ca

Anxiety: Deal with it before it ties you up in knots

Mandel, Joey, James Lorimer & Company Ltd., 2014.

Bell Let's Talk

<http://letstalk.bell.ca/en/>

Can I Catch it like a Cold? Coping with a Parent's Depression.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

CBC's *The Passionate Eye*, October 31, 2015

Aidan Scott's video, 2 minutes, 39 seconds.

www.cbc.ca/passionateeye/features/interview-with-aiden-scott

Compassionate classrooms : Understanding student mental health

The Alberta Teachers' Association and the Canadian Mental Health Association.

<http://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Human-Rights-Issues/COOR-79e%202015%2012.pdf?Web=1>

I had a black dog, his name was depression

World Health Organization, 4 minutes, 19 seconds.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiCrniLQGYc>

Kids Help Phone

Kids Help Phone has a section on emotional health for teens [https://kidshelpphone.ca/search?keys=emotional health for teens](https://kidshelpphone.ca/search?keys=emotional+health+for+teens) and a section on feelings for younger students

[https://kidshelpphone.ca/search?keys=Search feelings for younger students](https://kidshelpphone.ca/search?keys=Search+feelings+for+younger+students)

Kids Help Phone APP

<http://kidshelpphone.ca/Teens/PhoneUs/AlwaysThere.aspx>

Mental Health and High School

Canadian Mental Health Association.

www.cmha.ca/highschool/english.htm

Mental health in the classroom: Resources for teachers

<https://www.porticonetwork.ca/learn/mental-health-in-the-classroom-resources-for-teachers>

MHCC Headstrong, *School-Based Activities Toolkit*

Go to the bottom of the page to find the PDF of the Toolkit.

<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/document/71871/headstrong-school-based-activity-toolkit>

MHCC Headstrong, *Planning a Youth Anti-Stigma Summit*

Go to the bottom of the page to find the PDF of the resource.

<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/document/71531/headstrong-planning-youth-anti-stigma-summit-webinar>

Stigma: The Facts

A one-page produced by the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/media/3076>

Talking About Mental Illness: A guide for developing an awareness program for youth

www.camh.ca/en/education/documents/www.camh.net/education/resources_teachers_schools/tami/tami_teachersall.pdf

The Mental Health Strategy for Canada: The Youth Perspective

Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2015.

<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/initiatives/11849/mhs-a-youth-perspective>

What is mental health? With Dr. Mike Condra

A whiteboard animation video, 5 minutes, 32 seconds.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNOBdIMM3mQ>

What people with depression want you to know

"Depression doesn't define me." 2 minutes, 18 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQr1G1O0EEQ>



A STORY FROM THE HEART

Friends.

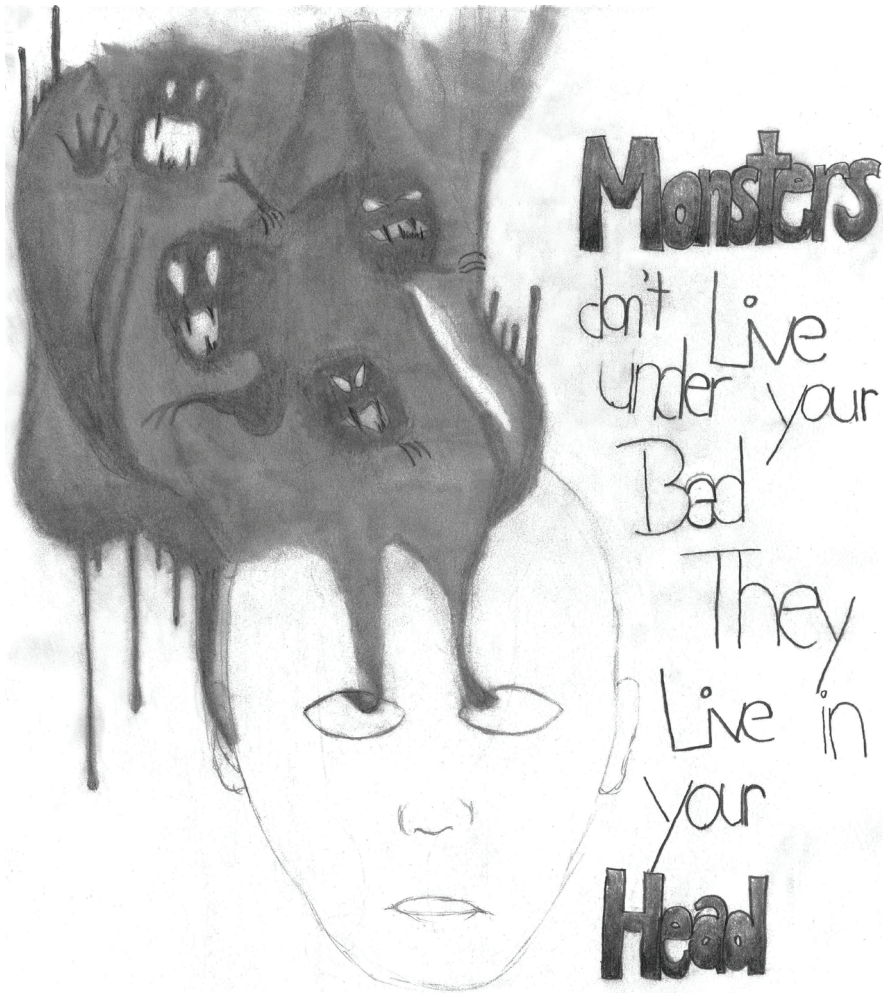


Dear You,

I want to thank you for talking to me about your mental health issues. I will be there to help and support you whenever you need someone to talk to. I can listen, understand and be empathetic. You don't deserve to feel alone! Just know that I'll be right next to you in bad times, and still be by your side in good times. Because a person like you needs a person like me. What I understand about mental health is similar to having a crappy day — yet a crappy day is just a day that will end. But having a mental illness is with you for a long time. You should never be scared to ask for help. People with mental illness should always have someone to talk to, or even cry with. It is better to let things out rather than keep them in. So, by letting you have that kind of person, I will help you with everything I've got. I will always be right there when you need a friend because that is just the kind of person I am.

Sincerely,
Me.

- Secondary school student



KidsHelpPhone.ca 1-800-668-6868

#GETLOUD #BELLETTALK #ENDTHESTIGMA



www.Imagine-action.ca