

Mental Health 101

LifeWatch
Employee Assistance Program

Cranston RI 02906



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Why Mental Health 101

- Mental health problems are common
- Stigma associated with mental health problems
- Many people are not well informed about mental health problems
- Professional help is not always on hand
- People often do not know how to respond
- People with mental health problems often do not seek help

Why Mental Health 101 for Law Enforcement

- There are more mentally ill people on the streets today than ever before
- Police are first responders/gatekeepers of Criminal Justice and Mental Health systems.
- These encounters can have significant consequences for the officers, people with mental illness, their families and the community

Working Assumptions

- Mental illness is not a crime
- Most people with mental illnesses are fully functioning community member
- There is no correlation between mental illness and a person's participation in crime
- Involvement in infractions (traffic violations, loitering, disorderly conduct) may be a manifestation of a person's illness

Prison and the Mentally Ill

- It is easier for someone with a severe mental illness to get arrested than to get treatment
 - Jails and prisons are becoming a dominant living setting for people with severe mental illness
 - More than 16% of all inmates in prison and jails suffer from schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and major depression
 - Annual cost 6 billion dollars*
- Mentally ill offenders have a higher rate of substance abuse, unemployment, and homelessness than other offenders
- Higher risk of being victimized

Myths about Mental Illness

- Persons we call “mentally ill” are inherently hostile or dangerous
- Persons with mental illness cannot be helped
- Persons with mental illness are irresponsible, unintelligent or somehow inferior to so called “normal” people
- People who do suffer from mental illness do not realize that others often ridicule them
- Individuals who are mentally ill are easy to pick out of a crowd

What is a Mental Disorder?

A **mental disorder** or **mental illness** is a diagnosable illness that:

- Affects a person's thinking, emotional state and behavior
- Disrupts the person's ability to:
 - Work
 - Carry out other daily activities, and
 - Engage in satisfying relationships

Recovery from Mental Illness

“Recovery is the process in which people are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities.

“For some, this is the ability to live a fulfilling and productive life despite a disability.

“For others, recovery implies the

Where MHFA Can Help

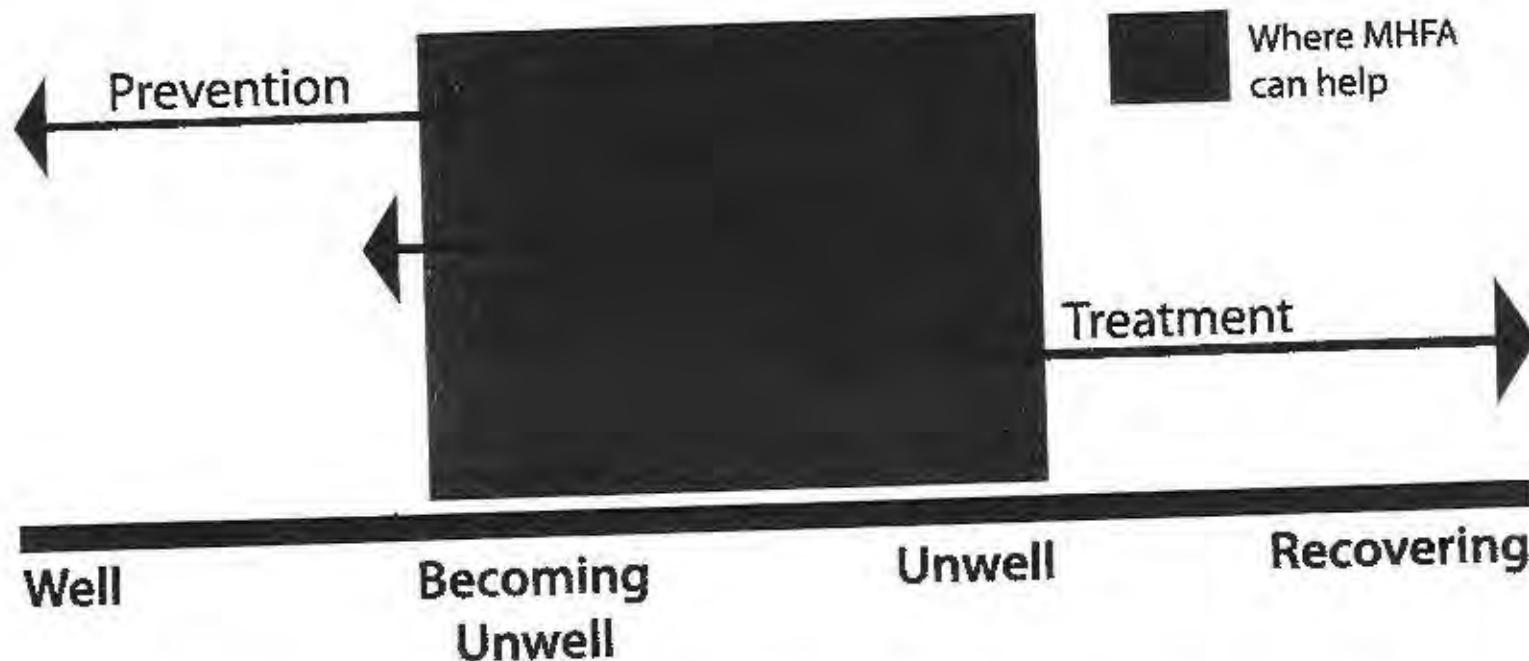


Figure 1: Spectrum of mental health interventions from wellness to mental disorders and through to recovery, showing the contribution of MHFA

American Adults with a Mental Disorder in One Year

Type of Mental Disorder	% Adults
Anxiety disorder	18.1
Major depressive disorder	6.7
Substance use disorder	3.8
Bipolar disorder	2.6
Eating disorders	2.1
Schizophrenia	1.1
Any Mental Disorder	26.2

Mental Health First Aid

The Action Plan

- **A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm
- **L**isten non-judgmentally
- **R**ive reassurance and information
- **G**ive appropriate professional help
- **E**ncourage self-help and other support
- **E**strategies

What is Depression?



- Major depressive disorder lasts for at least 2 weeks and affects a person's emotions, thinking, behavior and physical well-being.
- It affects a person's ability to work and to have satisfying relationships.

Signs and Symptoms of Depression

Emotions

Sadness

Anger

Helplessness

Anxiety

Mood-swings

Hopelessness

Guilt

Irritability

Lack of emotion

Thoughts

Self-criticism

Self-Blame

Pessimism

Indecisiveness

Confusion

Poor concentration

Death

Suicide

Impaired memory

Belief that others see you in a negative light

Signs and Symptoms of Depression cont'd

Behaviors

Loss of motivation
Crying spells
Withdrawal from others
Neglect responsibilities
Using drugs and alcohol
Slowed down
Loss of interest in personal appearance

Physical

Sleeping too much/little
Fatigue/lack of energy
Weight loss/gain
Constipation
Overeating/loss of appetite
Headaches
Irregular menstrual cycle
Loss of sexual desire
Unexplained aches and pains

Types of Mood Disorders

- Major depressive disorder
- Bipolar disorder
- Postnatal depression
- Seasonal depression

Risk Factors of Depression

- + Distressing and uncontrollable event.
- + Exposure to stressful life events - individual stressors often interact, resulting in an additive effect.
- + Persistent (ongoing) stress and anxiety.
- + Illness which is life-threatening, chronic or associated with pain.
- + Lack of exposure to bright light in the winter
- + Some Medical conditions
- + Side effect of some medications

What are Anxiety Disorders?



- An anxiety disorder differs from normal stress and anxiety
- An anxiety disorder is more severe, long lasting and interferes with work and relationships

Signs and Symptoms of Anxiety

Physical

- **Cardiovascular:** pounding heart, chest pain, rapid heartbeat, blushing
- **Respiratory:** fast breathing, shortness of breath
- **Neurological:** dizziness, headache, sweating, tingling, numbness
- **Gastrointestinal:** choking, dry mouth, stomach pains, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- **Musculoskeletal:** muscle aches and pains (esp. neck, shoulders and back), restlessness, tremors, shaking, inability to relax

Signs and Symptoms of Anxiety cont'd

Psychological

- Unrealistic or excessive fear and worry (about past and future events), mind racing or going blank, decreased concentration and memory, indecisiveness, irritability, impatience, anger, confusion, restlessness or feeling "on edge," nervousness, tiredness, sleep disturbance, vivid dreams

Behavioral

- Avoidance of situations, obsessive or compulsive behavior, distress in social situations, phobic behavior

Risk Factors for Anxiety Disorders

- Anxiety is mostly caused by perceived threats
- People who are more at risk to react with anxiety when they feel threatened are those who:
 - Have a more sensitive emotional nature
 - Have a history of anxiety in childhood or adolescence
 - Are female
 - Abuse alcohol
 - Experience a traumatic event

Risk Factors for Anxiety Disorders cont'd

Anxiety symptoms can also result from:

- Some medical conditions
- Side effects of some prescription medications
- Intoxication with alcohol and drugs
- Withdrawal from alcohol, cocaine, sedatives, and anti-anxiety medications

Anxiety Disorder in Any One Year

Type of Anxiety Disorder	% Adults
Specific Phobia	8.7 %
Social Phobia	6.8 %
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	3.5 %
Generalized Anxiety Disorder	3.1 %
Panic Disorder	2.7 %
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder	1.0 %
Agoraphobia (without panic)	0.8 %
Any Anxiety Disorder	18.1 %

What are Substance Use Disorders?



Substance Use Disorders include:

- Dependence
- Abuse that leads to problems at home or work
- Abuse that causes damage to health

Understanding Substance Use Disorders

- 3.8% of American adults have a Substance Use Disorder in any given year
- The use of alcohol or drugs does not mean a person has a Substance Use Disorder
- 75% of people who develop Substance Use Disorders do so by age 27
- Alcohol use disorders are 3 times as common as drug use disorders

Risk Factors for Substance Use Disorders

- Availability and tolerance of the substance in society
- Social factors
- Genetic predisposition
- Sensitivity to the substance
- Learning
- Other mental health problems

Co-occurrence

- Substance Use Disorders can co-occur with almost any mental illness
- Some people “self-medicate” with alcohol and/or other drugs
- People with mood or anxiety disorders are 2-3 times more likely to have a Substance Use Disorder

Common Substances

- Marijuana
- Heroin (and other Opioids)
- Sedatives and Tranquilizers
- Cocaine
- Amphetamines
- Methamphetamines
- Ecstasy and other hallucinogens
- Inhalants
- Tobacco
- Alcohol

What are Psychotic Disorders?

- Psychosis is a mental disorder in which a person has lost some contact with reality
- There may be severe disturbances in thinking, emotion and behavior
- Psychotic disorders are not as common as depression and anxiety disorders
- Psychosis usually happens in episodes and is not a constant or static condition

Common Symptoms when Psychosis is Developing

Changes in emotion and motivation

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Suspiciousness
- Blunted, flat or inappropriate emotion
- Change in appetite
- Reduced energy and motivation

Common Symptoms when Psychosis is Developing cont'd

Changes in thinking and perception

- Difficulties with concentration or attention
- Sense of alteration of self, others or the outside world (e.g. feeling that self or others have changed or are acting different in some way)
- Odd ideas
- Unusual perceptual experiences (e.g. a reduction or greater intensity of smell, sound or colour)

Changes in behavior

- Sleep disturbances
- Social isolation or withdrawal
- Reduced ability to carry out work and social roles^o

Observable Symptoms

- Statements that someone is trying to harm them
- Wearing flamboyant clothing – or no clothing at all
- Specific objects have special powers
- Conversing with someone or something not visible to others present
- Walking around avoiding objects not visible to others
- Obsession with/about a particular news event or social phenomenon
- Changes in personal appearance

Types of Disorders in which Psychosis Occurs

- Schizophrenia
- Bipolar Disorder
- Psychotic Depression
- Schizoaffective Disorder
- Drug-induced Psychosis

Characteristics of Schizophrenia

- Delusions
- Hallucinations
- Thinking difficulties
- Loss of drive
- Blunted emotions
- Social withdrawal

Characteristics of Mania

- Increased energy and over activity
- Elated mood
- Need less sleep than usual
- Irritability
- Rapid thinking and speech
- Lack of inhibitions
- Grandiose delusions
- Lack of insight
- Reckless behavior

Risk Factors for Psychotic Disorders

A combination of:

- Genetic factors
- Biochemistry
- Stress
- Other factors

How to Help

- Approach a person with mental illness in a calm, non-threatening manner.
 - He or she may
 - Be overwhelmed by delusions, paranoia or hallucinations
 - Feel threatened by you or afraid of you.
 - Continually assess the situation.
- Try to limit distractions
 - Maintain adequate space between you and them

How to Help

- Speak slowly
 - In most cases people with mental illnesses will respond to questions concerning their basic needs. Ask "What would make you feel safer/calmer, etc?"
 - Give firm, clear directions. They may already be confused and may have trouble making the simplest decision
 - Repeat things if needed
 - Determine whether they have a family member, guardian, or mental health provider who helps them with daily living. Contact that person

How to Help

Important questions to ask

- Do you take any medication?
- When was the last time you took your medication?
- Do you want to hurt yourself?
- Do you want to hurt someone else?
- Ask them if they have been drinking or using any other illegal drugs?

Avoid

the following interaction when dealing with a person with a mental illness

- Touching the person without their permission
- Circling, surrounding, closing in on, or standing too close
- Sudden movements or rapid instructions and questioning.
- Direct, continuous eye contact, This may be interpreted as a threat
- Signs of impatience
- Raising your voice or talking to fast
- Challenging or arguing with them
- Agreeing or questioning with their delusions, paranoia or hallucinations

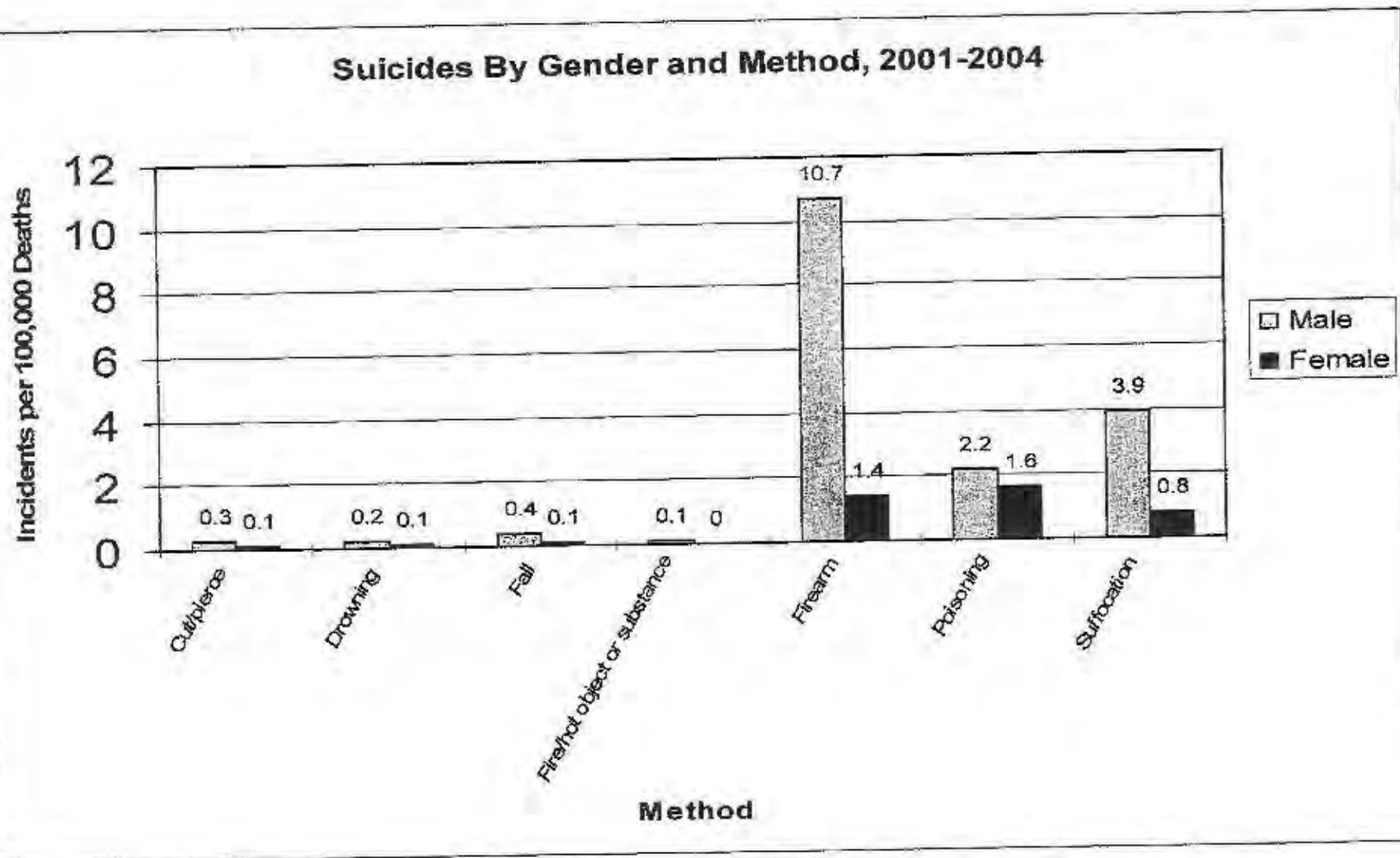
What if the Person Doesn't Want Help?

- Encourage the person to talk with someone they trust
- Never threaten them with hospitalization
- Remain patient
- Remain friendly and open
- They may want your help in the future

Suicide

- Suicide is one of the 10 leading causes of death
- 80-90 suicides occur daily in the U.S.
- Men complete 3 times more than women but women attempt more
- A suicidal person is in so much pain that they see no other option
- Many people do not receive treatment for depression, and thus are at risk for suicide

Trends In Suicide Methods: 2001-2004



Suicide Risk Assessment

- Gender
- Age
- Chronic physical illness
- Mental Illness
- Use of alcohol or other substances
- Less social support
- Previous Attempt
- Plan

Warning Signs of Suicide

- Threatening to hurt or kill him/herself
- Seeking access to means
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling worthless/lack of purpose
- Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities
- Feeling trapped
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from family, friends, or society
- Rage, anger, seeking revenge
- Agitation
- Dramatic change in mood

Questions to Ask

Ask them Directly if they are Suicidal

- “Are you having thoughts of suicide?”
- “Are you thinking of killing yourself?”
- “Have you ever served in the military?”
- Have you decided how you are going to kill yourself?
- Have you decided when you would do it?
- Have you collected the things you need to carry out your plan?
- Have you been using alcohol or other drugs?
- Have you attempted suicide in the past?

Medications

- Many effective medications are available for the treatment of mental illness
- Medication does not cure mental illness
- The correct medication can lessen the burdens of the illness and enable someone who has a mental illness to reclaim some level of independence
- Newer medications seem more effective in treating psychosis and depression

Types of Medication

- Anti- depressants
- Stimulants
- Anti-Anxiety
- Anti-Obsessive
- Anti-Psychotic
- Mood stabilizers
- Anti-Aggression
- Medication to treat substance abuse

Side Effects of Psychotropic Medications

- Dry mouth, headache, double vision
- Sedation
- Agitation
- Impotence
- Constipation, frequent urination
- Impaired Coordination
- Hand tremors
- Facial spasms, drooling
- Weight gain

Medication Non Compliant

- Return of symptoms-decompensation
- Hospitalization
- Arrest
- Homeless
- Episodes of violence
- Suicide attempts
- Loss of previous stabilization

Thank You

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1-800-333-6228