

Related Web Site Links:

<http://cpa.ca/psychologyfactsheets/>
(Canadian Psychological Association site with fact sheets and help on how to choose a psychologist and when to see one)

<http://www.cmha.ca/youreducation/introduction.html>. Follow this link to read, *Your Education – Your Future: A guide to College and University for Students with Psychiatric Disabilities*.

<http://www.mentalhealth.org/>



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NORTHERN ONTARIO ASSESSMENT AND RESOURCE CENTRE



Mental Health

Mental health has to do with how you feel about yourself, how you feel about others, and how you are able to meet and handle the demands of life.

Good mental health is not the absence of problems. Rather, it describes the ability to balance or cope with problems

MENTAL HEALTH

What are mental illnesses?

- ◆ Mental illnesses are disorders that cause mild to severe disturbances in thinking, feeling, and behavior.
- ◆ These disturbances may significantly impair a person's ability to cope with life's ordinary demands and routines.
- ◆ Just like other medical conditions, mental illnesses vary greatly by type, symptoms, and severity.

What causes mental illnesses?

- ◆ Many psychiatric disorders can be linked directly to a biological origin.
- ◆ Others may be emotional or psychological reactions to environmental or social stressors.
- ◆ Some of these disorders may be temporary, caused by extreme stress or life changes.
- ◆ Treatment may include medication, psychotherapy, and social support.



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What are some common mental illnesses?

Anxiety Disorders

- ◆ People suffering from an *Anxiety Disorder* may experience uneasiness and fear throughout their daily activities.
- ◆ They are subject to intense, prolonged feelings of fright and distress for no apparent or obvious reason.

Mood Disorders

- ◆ People with a *Depressive Disorder* may suffer from anxiety, feel helpless and hopeless, lose interest in activities they used to enjoy, feel guilty, and think of suicide.
- ◆ People with *Bi-Polar Disorder* experience mood swings going between depression and mania.

What can I do?

- ◆ Take care of yourself
- ◆ Don't give up
- ◆ Talk to someone you trust about what is happening
- ◆ Build peer support through activities such as orientation programs or peer mentoring programs
- ◆ Seek academic accommodations
- ◆ Seek a professional

Accommodations

- ◆ Accommodations are available for students who are diagnosed with a mental illness. Some examples are as follows:
- ◆ Assistance with admission and financial aid applications
- ◆ Extended time for exams
- ◆ Provision of note takers
- ◆ Removal of failures from their academic record
- ◆ Incomplete deferrals or late withdrawals rather than failures
- ◆ Reduced course load

Where Do I Get Help?

- ◆ Canadian Mental Health Association – your local chapter is listed in the phone book, or you can visit their Website (www.cmha.ca)
- ◆ Campus counselling
- ◆ Family doctor
- ◆ Good 2 Talk--1.866.925.5454

Remember

- ◆ The more you know about yourself and your illness, the better your chances are of achieving your goals!