

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING RESOURCE

WHAT IS MENTAL
HEALTH?

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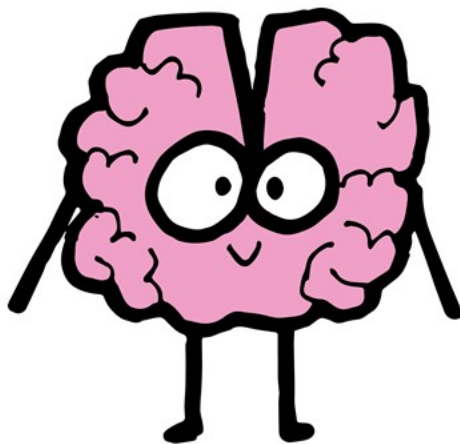
What is Mental Health?

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), mental health is defined as a "state of wellbeing in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community."

Mental Health includes our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and even act. Our Mental Health is very important because it helps determine how we relate to others, handle stress and make choices in life.

This also works in reverse. The different aspects of ones life, such as interpersonal relationships and physical factors can all impact our mental health. Other conditions such as stress, anxiety and depression can also affect a persons mental health.

Mental Health is more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities, it's about achieving ongoing wellness and happiness.



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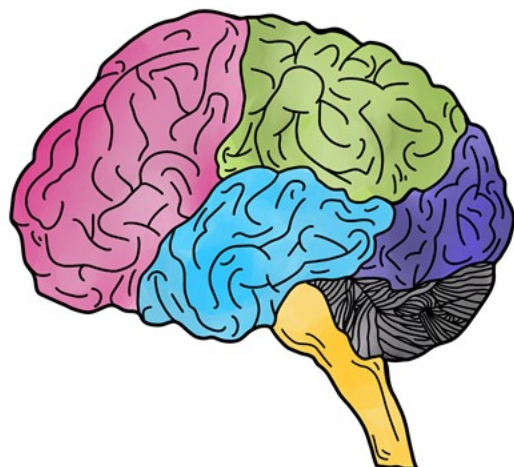
RISK FACTORS

Good Mental health is a delicate balance of many factors and elements in ones life. Together, they help to either contribute to good mental health or potentially cause disruptions. Some of these factors include:

- ☐ Social and economic – such as employment, education, housing quality, level of social involvement and connection
- ☐ Biological factor – such as genetics. A family history of mental health concerns (certain genes and gene variants) can increase the likelihood of mental health conditions. It should be noted however that it does not guarantee that a condition will develop.
- ☐ Physical Health – some mental health conditions such as stress, anxiety and depression may develop due to underlying physical symptoms such as chronic pain
- ☐ Childhood abuse, neglect and trauma

Mental Health Continuum

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?



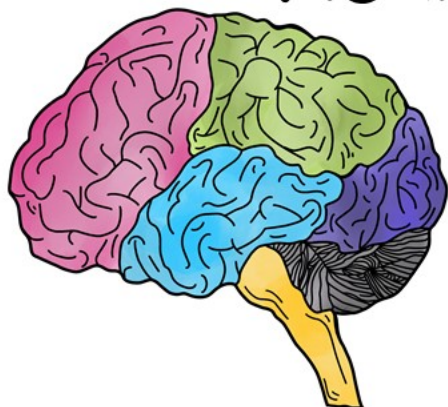
Mental health is a continuum. You are not simply mentally healthy or ill. It is a continuum, ranging from excellent mental health to severe symptoms such as major depressive episodes.

They are five zones. Let's explore each of them below. In each zone there are many shades.

- ☐ **Excelling** – This is when we are functioning at peak level. It could be during a time of joy, such as achieving a goal, having a baby or getting married.
- ☐ **Thriving** – This is a normal, healthy state of mind where you will feel calm, content and happy. You might not necessarily be free from troubles and stress but they don't interfere with your normal day to day life.
- ☐ **Surviving** – This is when you have an "unsettled" state of mind. It's very easy to fall from "thriving" into just "surviving" so if you are sitting here, action is needed. Your sleep and appetite might be impacted and worries and stress fog your mind.
- ☐ **Struggling** – This is when you are significantly troubled. Your mood, energy, concentration is low. In this state you might feel pain emotionally and physically or you might feel numb and empty. Most thoughts will be negative – feelings of worthlessness, helplessness and hopelessness. Your sleep and appetite are also impacted. All hope is not lost in this state because you know that you have been here before and can move back to a better state. Action is needed.
- ☐ **Crisis** – This means that a person is in a state of great suffering and you require immediate help. Severe anxiety or depression prevails. You have great difficulty doing ordinary daily tasks such as sleeping, eating and personal hygiene. You may stay in bed all day and/or experience suicidal ideation in this state. Action is vital.

IN CRISIS	STRUGGLING	SURVIVING	THRIVING	EXCELLING
Very anxious Very low mood Exhausted Very poor sleep Weight loss	Anxious Depressed Tired Poor performance Poor sleep Poor appetite	Worried Nervous Irritable Sad Trouble sleeping Distracted Withdrawn	Positive Calm Performing Sleeping well Eating normally Normal social activity Happy	Cheerful Helpful Energetic high performance Full realisation of potential

Exploring your Mental Health States



In the last week, ask yourself, how much time do you spend in the various zones on the continuum. Think deeply about this.

Would this be a week for you?

Ensure that every day totals 100%

Find out what % you spent in each mental health state that week.

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	IN CRISIS	STRUGGLING	SURVIVING	THRIVING	EXCELLING	TOTAL
MONDAY						100%
TUESDAY						100%
WEDNESDAY						100%
THURSDAY						100%
FRIDAY						100%
SATURDAY						100%
SUNDAY						100%