

An introduction to mental health awareness

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- ‘Mental health means much more than just the absence of mental ill health. It is about physical and emotional wellbeing, having strength and capacity to live a full and creative life and, also the flexibility to deal with its ups and downs’. (Young Minds)
- ‘Mental health might usefully be viewed as a continuum of experience, from mental wellbeing through to a severe and enduring mental illness. We all experience changes in our mental health.’
(The Counselling Service, University of Liverpool)

Mental illness refers to a diagnosable condition that significantly interferes with an individual's cognitive, emotional or social abilities – NHS

(e.g. depression, anxiety, schizophrenia)

Anyone can become unwell.

Sometimes the change is rapid. Sometimes it is gradual.

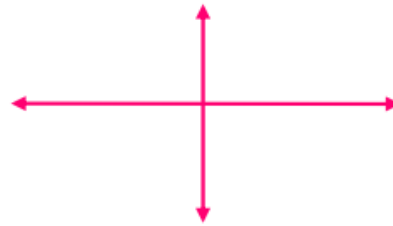
Mental health & mental wellbeing

Example 1 – someone experiencing high levels of wellbeing while living with mental health problems.

**Positive
mental
wellbeing**

Example 1 – someone experiencing positive wellbeing who does not have any mental health problems.

**Mental
health
problems**



**No diagnosis
of a mental
health
problem**

Example 3 to 4 – someone experiencing lower levels of wellbeing who also has mental health problems.

**Negative
mental
wellbeing**

Example 2 – someone experiencing lower levels of wellbeing but does not have a mental health problem.

Types of mental illness

More common – people are still aware of reality even though distressed.

Conditions include: generalised anxiety disorder (**GAD**), panic disorder, phobias, obsessive compulsive disorder (**OCD**), post traumatic stress disorder (**PTSD**) and depression.

Less common – psychosis may be a feature. People suffering from psychosis may become detached from reality and are likely to say or do things which may seem strange. The term is often used to imply incorrectly that people are criminal and violent.

Conditions include: bipolar affective disorder and schizophrenia.

**NHS
Website**

[nhs.uk/mental-health/](https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/)

Factors that can trigger mental illness. (both work and non-work related)



Common forms of treatment

- Talking treatments – counselling and psychotherapy
- Cognitive behavioural therapy (**CBT**)
- Medication
- Exercise

Supporting someone who is suicidal

- Do not get involved physically
- Do not leave them alone – offer to stay with them
- Encourage the person to talk – non-judgemental listening is crucial
- If the person has been suicidal before, ask what helped them then – is there anyone else who can help?
- Try to ensure the person does not have ready access to some means to take their life

Offer to:

- **Take the person to a GP**
- **Take the person to the A&E department of the nearest hospital**
- **Dial 999/112, or Samaritans 116 123**

Five ways to mental wellbeing



Be active



Keep learning



Give



Connect



Take notice

