

Myths and Facts about Mental Illnesses

Myth: *Mental illnesses cannot affect me.*

Facts: Mental illnesses do not discriminate—they can affect anyone. According to a report from the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, mental illnesses are surprisingly common; they affect almost every family and workplace in America.

Myth: *People with mental illnesses can't hold jobs.*

Facts: On the contrary, many are productive employees, business owners, and contributing members of their communities.

Myth: *There's no hope for people with mental illnesses.*

Facts: There are more treatments, strategies, and community supports than ever before, and even more are on the horizon. People with mental illnesses lead active, productive lives.

Myth: *I can't do anything for someone with a mental illness.*

Facts: We can do a lot more than most people think. Starting with the way we act and speak, we can nurture an environment that builds on people's strengths and promotes good mental health.

Myth: *People with mental illnesses are violent and unpredictable.*

Facts: Chances are you know someone with a mental illness and don't even realize it. In reality, the vast majority of people who have mental illnesses are no more violent than anyone else.

Myth: *Employees with mental illnesses, even those who have received effective treatment and have recovered, tend to be second-rate workers.*

Facts: Employers who have hired these individuals report that they are higher than average in attendance and punctuality, and they are as good as or better than other employees in motivation, quality of work, and job tenure. Studies reported by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) conclude that there were no differences in productivity when compared to other employees.