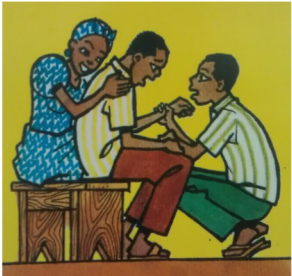


*I feel sad all the time and
I never have any energy.
I sometimes wonder if it is
worth going on with life..
I can't sleep because
I am anxious about
everything and lay awake at
night worrying.*



Promote your own mental health...

- Don't work too hard, instead balance work with a healthy family & social life
- Don't respond to stress by drinking too much alcohol or using illegal drugs
- Speak to your family & friends if you have any worries or feel you cannot cope with life
- If you are still feeling bad after speaking to your friends and family, especially if your sleep is disturbed or you are thinking that life is not worth living, speak to a doctor or a nurse about it, as you may need professional treatment.

Mental Health is Everybody's Business.....And That Includes You!

Help people in your community affected by mental illness:

- Do not blame the person for their illness
- Show the person love and consideration
- Do not abuse or mishandle the person
- Talk to the person and listen carefully
- Make sure the person is well cared for, has clean clothes and regular food
- Include the person in community activities
- Learn more about mental illness so that you understand it better

Where to get help...

- If there are no mental health services in your community, advocate to your local health authority and tell them why services are needed!



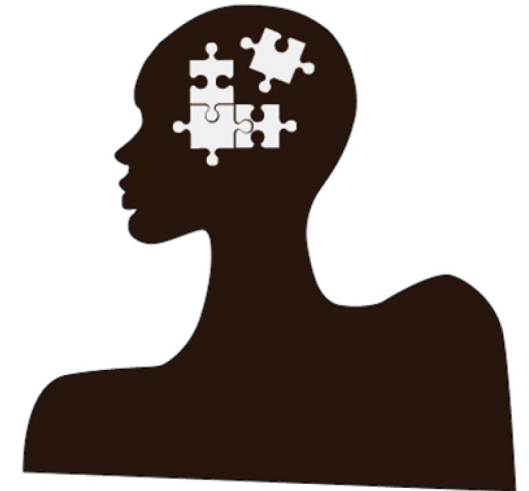
Name of specialist health worker:

Contact no.:

Address:



Mental Health is Everybody's Business



*A basic introduction to
mental health,
mental illness
and how to help.*

*An initiative coordinated by
Enabling Access to Mental Health in Sierra Leone
& funded by the EU*

Mental health is everybody's business.

Good mental health is when somebody feels good about themselves, can cope with the stresses of life, and can meet their normal day-to-day responsibilities. When someone is mentally healthy, they can maintain good relationships with those around them and effectively contribute to society.

Stresses and worries are a normal part of life, but sometimes they become too much to cope with, and we need help from those around us. When someone's life is being affected significantly, we call it mental illness.

Mental illnesses are conditions that affect how somebody thinks and feels. A mental illness can prevent someone from caring for themselves, working and doing things that they find enjoyable. Sometimes their behavior can be strange to those who don't know what they are thinking.

Common mental illnesses include depression and anxiety. One of the reasons why people can develop mental illness is because they have too many worries or stresses in life, and not enough support and understanding from those around them. A mental illness can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, race or religion.

Mental illness is more common than you think!

-1 in 4 people have a treatable mental health problem at some time in their life

-Every year, on average, 800,000 people commit suicide around the world

-By the year 2020, depression will be the leading cause of disability globally

-World Health Organization, 2012

Mental illness is NOT everything you have heard...



Mental illness is NOT a curse
A mental illness is a sickness. It is not caused by an attack from an evil spirit.



Mental illness is NOT someone's fault
It is important not to blame someone for having a mental illness. A mental illness can happen to anyone, regardless of their beliefs or things they might have done in the past.



Mental illness is NOT contagious
You cannot 'catch' a mental illness from talking or touching someone or eating together with them. In fact, treating them like anyone else in your community will help their illness improve!



People with mental illness should NOT be chained or tied up
The majority of people with mental illness are not violent. If a person is acting bizarrely and you are afraid for their (or other's) safety, talk to a trained mental health professional and ask for their help.

There IS hope for people living with mental illness...



Mental Illness IS treatable
Mental illness can be treated with medications and talking therapies. These should be offered by somebody trained in mental health care.



People with mental illness CAN contribute to society
With treatment, a person with a mental illness can lead a normal life. They can go to school, go to work, marry and have children.



People with Mental Illness DO have human rights
A person with a mental illness should be treated like anyone else in your community. They have the right to food, water, shelter and education. They should not be beaten, made fun of or locked up.



You CAN make a difference
If you, or somebody you know, has experienced mental illness, then SPEAK UP! Bring together a group of other people who have been affected by mental illness and show your communities how to treat people with mental illness with respect!

Tell your community that mental health is their business too!