



# Understanding Mental Health Myths and Facts

Use this resource during staff huddles to dispel some common myths about mental health.

**Myth: There is no hope for people with mental health problems. Once a friend or family member develops mental health problems, he or she will never recover.**

Fact: People with mental health problems can get better, and many recover completely. Recovery refers to the process in which people can live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities. There are more treatments, services, and community support systems than ever before, and they work.

**Myth: People with mental health problems are violent and unpredictable.**

Fact: Most people with mental health problems are no more likely to be violent than anyone else. Most people with mental illness are not violent, and only 3%–5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with a serious mental illness.<sup>1</sup>

**Myth: If a person has a mental health condition, it means the person has low intelligence.**

Fact: Mental illness, like physical illness, can affect anyone regardless of intelligence, social class, or income level.

**Myth: A mental health condition is a sign of weakness; if the person was stronger, he or she would not have this condition.**

Fact: A mental health condition has nothing to do with being weak or lacking willpower. It is not a condition people choose to have or not have. In fact, recognizing the need to accept help for a mental health condition requires great strength and courage. Anyone can develop a mental health condition.

**Myth: People with mental health conditions cannot work**

Fact: It is true that someone living with a particularly severe mental health condition might be unable to conduct regular work. Most people with mental health issues can be as productive as individuals without mental health disorders.

**Myth: Mental Health Problems are Permanent**

Fact: A mental health diagnosis is not necessarily a “life sentence.” Others may find treatments, medication, or talking therapies to restore balance to their lives.

## Resources

- [Busted: 7 Myths About Mental Health](#)
- [Medical Myths: Mental Health Misconceptions](#)

<sup>1</sup> Mental Health Myths and Facts, [www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/mental-health-myths-facts](http://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/mental-health-myths-facts)