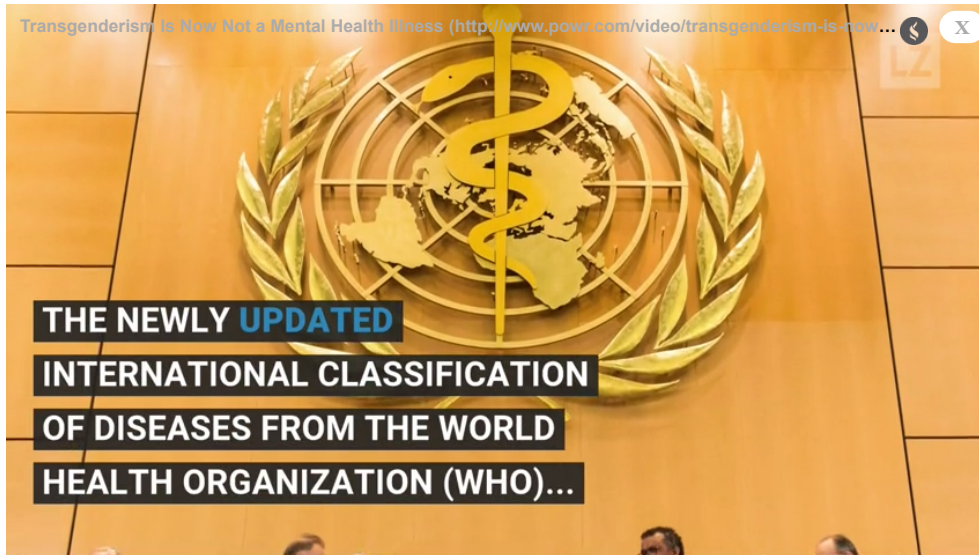

Mental Illness Is Not A Stigma

May is Mental Health Awareness Month



Lisa Mildon (/user/@lisamildon)
May 16, 2017

It all began in 1949, Mental Health America (<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/>) (MHA) started an awareness campaign to educate the masses about mental illnesses. With this campaign in mind, MHA hoped to erase the stigma of having mental illnesses by educating the uninformed on what it was all about and that these conditions are something biological or natural not some man-made creation. Now in its 68th year, Mental Health Awareness Month has multiple tools (<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/mental-health-screening-tools>) and activities (<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/mental-health-america-2017-annual-conference-sex-drugs-and-rock-roll>) to aid in the education and changing of perceptions of mental illnesses such as anxiety, bipolar disorder, depression and much more.



it? As a small child, I threw temper tantrums when I didn't get my way or became frustrated. After being tested with a high IQ much of my angst was dismissed as feeling alienated amongst my peers. It was true that I never felt I belonged anywhere, but this still didn't explain the elephant in the room. Finally, as a teen, I was diagnosed with clinical depression. My brain just didn't produce enough serotonin (<http://www.webmd.com/depression/features/serotonin#1>) to keep my emotions on an even keel. The doctor tried several medications until one finally smoothed over my emotional rough edges. Yet, some of my family and friends made me feel like a pariah because I needed medication to be "normal."

Back then, even though Mental Health Awareness Month was around, mental illness wasn't openly discussed as it should have. I remember whispered talk about my grandmother experiencing some depression, specifically with menopause. To quote her, "women just dealt with it." And even when my own mother spiraled into a depressive abyss because of a pending divorce, all the talk was shameful murmurs. Why? I can't imagine one person out there that hasn't dealt with stress, anxiety or depression in one form or another. Why are people that experience mental health issues seen as broken? Because of these kinds of attitudes, I kept my condition a secret for years. To be quite honest, I was in denial myself. I always felt this was a temporary thing. That I would just "get over it." Somehow my brain would magically heal, and I would no longer need to supplement my brain's serotonin.

It was only when the death of Robin Williams (<https://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2014/08/11/robin-williams-bipolar-sufferer-dead-at-63-due-to-suicide/>) occurred did the MHA's campaign for social acceptance gain any ground. In August 2014, Robin Williams committed suicide. He was always open about his lifelong battle with depression but perhaps because he was a comedic genius people chalked up his statements as dark humor. Nevertheless, his other bleak medical conditions pushed him over the edge causing him to take his own life. After the news spread, social media exploded with many expressing their feelings and confessing their own mental statuses. I had already come to terms with my medical condition but actually hadn't spoken to anyone other than my husband. Feeling it was time to step out of the shadows, I too declared my own battle. I'm not a freak or a weirdo as some have been labeled. I have a medical condition, but it does not define me. I will continue to be open and honest about it and continue to educate others on mental health.

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If you suspect you are suffering from a mental illness, check out MHA's resources (<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/finding-help>) . If you are feeling suicidal, please reach out for help by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or their online chat (<http://chat.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/GetHelp/LifelineChat.aspx>) through their website.

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To All The Nurses In The Making

We tell ourselves that one day it'll all pay off, but will it actually?



Kaylee O'Neal (/user/@onealkaylee)
Mar 29, 2017

I bet you're taking a break from studying right now just to read this, aren't you? Either at the library with friends or in your dorm room. Wherever you may be, you never get the chance to put your books down, at least that's how it feels to most of us. It sucks feeling like you've chosen the hardest major in the world, especially when you see other students barely spending any time studying or doing school work. The exclamation "You're still here!" is an all too frequent expression from fellow students after recognizing that you've spent 10-plus hours in the library. At first it didn't seem so bad and you told yourself "This isn't so difficult. I can handle it." but fast-forward a few months and you're questioning

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6 Must-Haves For College Athletes

Don't forget these before classes start.



Marissa Hall (/user/@marissamariehall)
Aug 21, 2018

Packing for college is already stressful, but it gets worse when you're an athlete. Your summer ends sooner than everyone else which leaves less time for packing the essentials. Don't fret, here are your must-haves as a college athlete you don't want to leave at home.

1. Icy Hot

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