

Episode 1 - Professor Cupchik is a professor of Psychology at the University of Toronto. He identifies mental health as us bringing our baggage/stress with us. This can be stress we've experienced from our families and our culture. This can make it challenging for us to be ourselves in this world. But as he says, "It is permissible to put on the table your fears and your anger." Don't hide it within yourself, tell your friends and family. In a traditional society, you can be defined by your family and feel lost in it all but as professor Cupchik reminds us, "It's okay to not know what you're going to do. It's okay to be uncertain about who you are." An important part of mental health is recognizing your stress and sharing your problems with the people who love you. The more you avoid these problems, the more you're trapped within yourself. Yet another brilliant reminder by professor Cupchik is, "We can idealize and romanticize other people, but it is not real." He reminds us that everyone is struggling, and you are not alone. There is hope for you and everyone around you.

Episode 2 - Farhat starts off the podcast by introducing his guest, Chandini, the head of psychogenic assessments at Amal and a behavioural psychologist in Dubai. Chandini describes bipolar disorder as "mania, a state of an elevated mood or euphoria or overactivity." Through the podcast we learn that with bipolar disorder people can experience an extreme state of euphoria followed by an extreme state of depression. According to Chandini, bipolar disorder can be genetically passed down to 50% of people and twins are more likely to experience this kind of disorder. Bipolar disorder can be difficult for your family and friends to understand which is why therapy and psychoeducation is extremely important in helping them know what you're going through. It is also important to look into cognitive behavioural therapy for your bipolar disorder, they talk you through your disorder and help you recognize your coping mechanisms when you experience a mood change. If someone you know is experiencing bipolar disorder, learn their triggers and try to understand that they can't control their moods. Remember it's okay to ask for help and as Chandini says, "It's the bravest thing you can do."

Episode 3 - Sneethi starts off this insomnia focused episode of the podcast by saying, "I believe many of us have experienced this at least once in our lifetime." Joining Sneethi as a guest is clinical psychologist and cognitive behavioural therapist Safia. Safia describes insomnia as difficulty falling asleep, waking up when you're already asleep and having trouble going back to sleep. There are 2 categories of insomnia: short term acute insomnia which lasts from one night to a week and the other is long term chronic insomnia which lasts from 3 nights to a week or 3 months or even in some cases 3 years. According to Safia, the number one cause for chronic insomnia is heavy stress which can stem from family, relationship or financial issues. This was seen a lot during Covid as stress levels were high if a loved one fell sick or unfortunately,

passed away. A common misunderstanding of insomnia is that since your body is getting used to less sleep you're fine but if this is a frequent problem it can lead to serious health issues. A rare case of insomnia is fatal insomnia which is genetic and can lead to paranoia, panic attacks and dementia. As Safia says, some ways to prevent insomnia are; listening to light music, white noise, blackout curtains or yoga for pregnant women as well as applying oils like lavender can help. But the key to helping you out of your insomnia is accepting you have a problem and seeking out help.