

An Overview of Mental Health First Aid

Presented by

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*"Advancing Positive Mental Health and
Behavioral Health Career Opportunities"*



cypress resilience project

Cypress Resilience Project is a program at Public Health Institute

Developed in 2019 to support inherent individual and community resilience through trainings in Mental Health First Aid certification, trauma informed practices and grief recovery



What is Mental Health First Aid?

This training is an OVERVIEW of some of the key elements of MHFA training.

It is NOT a substitute for MHFA certification.

WHY IS MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID IMPORTANT?

Mental Health challenges are common.

Stigma is still a barrier to people receiving the care they need.

Many people have misinformation about mental health.

Professional help is not always available to someone.

People do not always know how to respond to someone experiencing a mental health challenge.



TAKE A LOOK AT THESE STATISTICS.

47 million Americans have a diagnosed mental illness, with 11 million having a severe mental illness that seriously disrupted their lives

800,000 lives are lost to suicide worldwide each year

The World Health Organization reports that mental health will be the leading cause of global mortality by 2030

45% of Americans report their mental health is being negatively impacted by the pandemic





*LANGUAGE
MATTERS.*

A group of white paper cutouts of people holding hands in a circle against a green background. The cutouts are simple, stylized figures with circular heads and rectangular bodies. They are arranged in a line, holding hands, and are slightly out of focus. The background is a solid green color.

*LET'S TALK ABOUT
STIGMA.*



A LOOK AT MENTAL ILLNESS

Can be mild, moderate, severe

Someone can experience more than one mental illness at a time

Linked to trauma

Disrupts the 4 L's: Live, Love, Laugh, Learn



SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

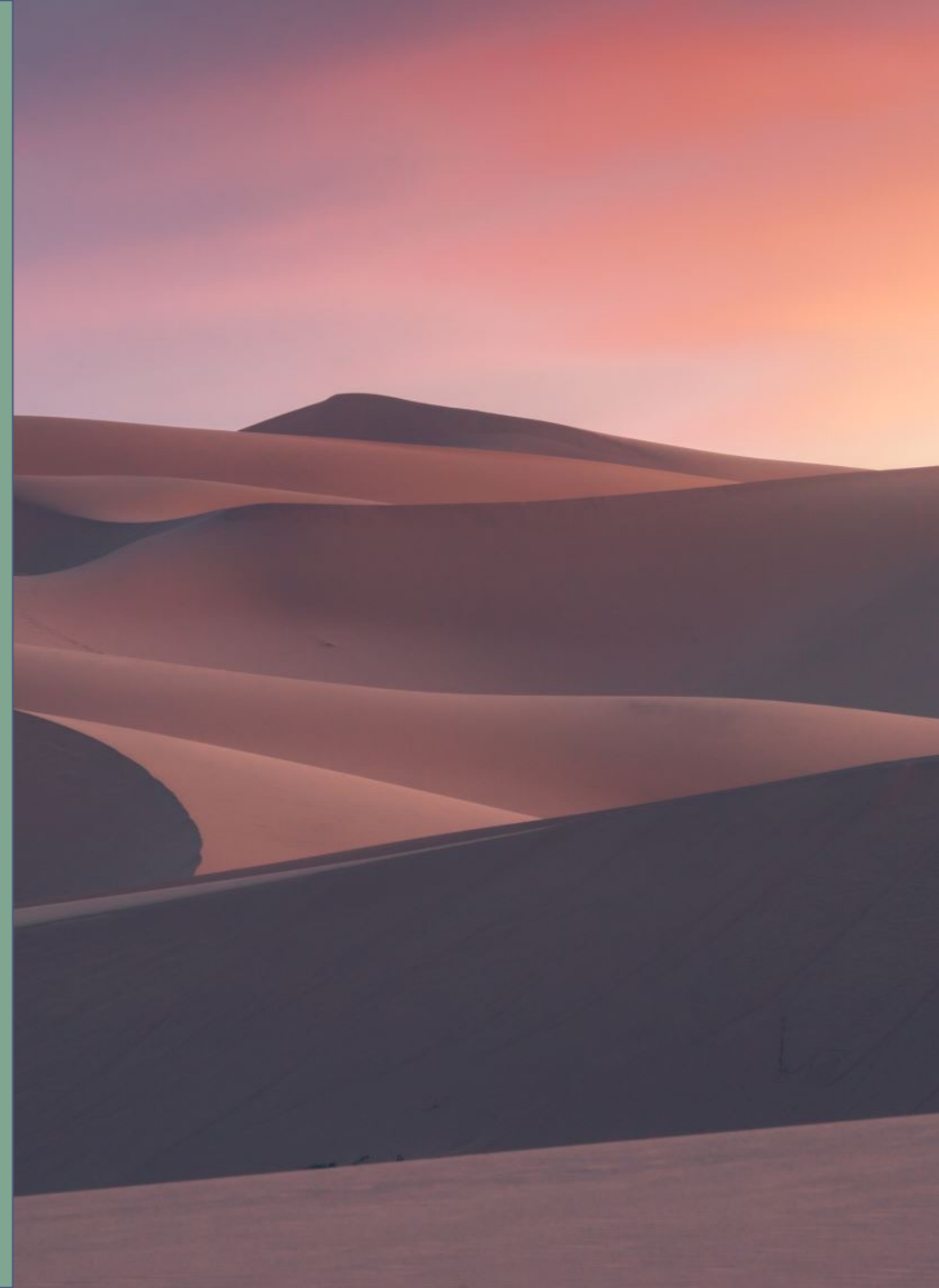
What is the difference between **signs** and **symptoms**?

Why does that difference matter so much?

MHFA COMMUNICATION

An effective Mental Health First Aider is:

- Safe
- Open and inclusive
- Calm AND confident
- Curious
- Nonjudgmental – FIX YOUR FACE
- Aware of their body language



INTRODUCING ALGEE

Assess – for risk of suicide or harm

Listen – non-judgmentally

Give – reassurance and information

Encourage – appropriate professional help

Encourage – self-help and other support strategies





ANXIETY & DEPRESSION

Most common mental health issues you'll encounter

They often occur together and can have the same symptoms

Median onset for anxiety is 11 years old

Median onset for depression is 32 years old

80% of primary care visits can be linked to a mental health issue – most likely anxiety and/or depression but 69% of patients only report their physical symptoms

SUICIDE RISK ASSESSMENT

Gender

Age

Chronic physical illness

Mental illness

Use of substances

Less social support and isolation

Previous attempt

Organized plan



WARNING SIGNS

Threatening to hurt oneself
Seeking access to means
Talking, writing or social media posting
Feeling hopeless
Acting recklessly or engaging in risk taking behaviors
Feeling trapped
Increasing substance use
Withdrawing from friends and family
Demonstrating rage or seeking revenge
Agitation
A dramatic change in mood (even positive)



TOP MYTHS: SUICIDE RISK

Asking if someone is intending to end their life will “plant the seed in their head”

Someone who is talking about dying isn't really serious

Suicide is a “them” problem, not an “us” problem





HOW DO WE SUPPORT . . .

OTHERS during COVID-19?

Regular check-in's

Make a commitment to tell the truth with our friends and family

Be brave and be vulnerable

Remain non-judgmental

Don't forget to say you care

OURSELVES during COVID-19?

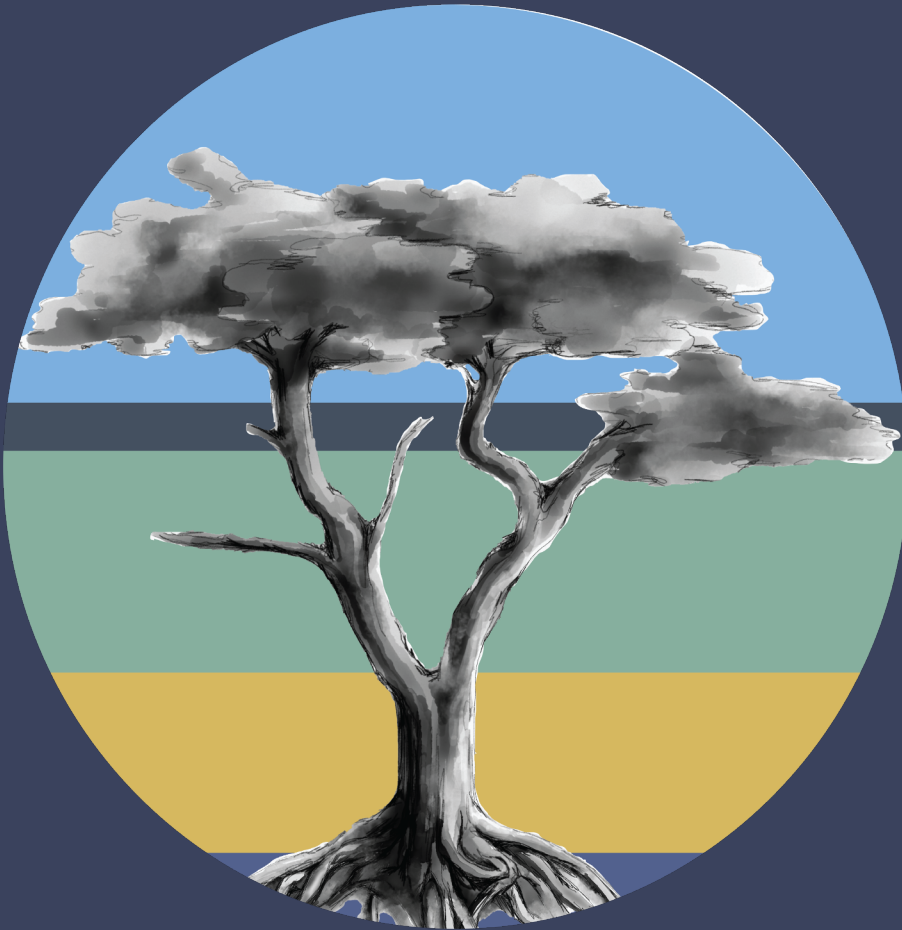
Name our protected space and protected relationships

Put things in your environment that make you feel happy

Remember self-compassion is a part of self-care

Don't forget to MOVE!

Get up and try again tomorrow!



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