



Time to Talk Mental Health

By Daniel Ranson, LCSW

When feelings of depression or anxiety begin to interfere with your everyday life, it's easy to become overwhelmed and unsure of where to turn. Many people do not want to acknowledge that they have any issues coping with day-to-day life, but the reality is behavioral health issues are not only common and treatable, but play a major role in everyone's health and well-being. We all experience and cope with symptoms in different ways, and some coping strategies are more effective than others. While many people are able to process and deal with feelings of despair, loss, and hopelessness without any help, there are a number of people whose coping methods or habits actually exasperate or complicate ongoing behavioral health issues.

There are a variety of behaviors such as excessive spending, self-mutilation (cutting), overeating, substance use, compulsive sex and gambling, and obsessive TV or internet use that may be a sign of crisis. Other signs such as feeling overly fatigued, too much or too little sleep, feeling down, excessive worry, or hearing voices should not be ignored in hope that they will resolve on their own. It is of vital importance that behavioral health related issues be identified and treated as early and quickly as possible to obtain the best possible outcome.

May is Mental Health Month, and The Family Medicine Clinic is raising awareness of behavioral health, symptoms of psychological issues, and the behaviors that can make them worse. Numerous treatment options are available, and include interventions such as talk therapy, medication, and



Two of our Behavioral Health Providers, Eryn Coffey, Marriage and Family Therapist Registered Intern, and Daniel Ranson, LCSW.

peer support, to name a few. As already noted, many people who need help don't seek it due to the stigma associated with these conditions. But the fact is one in five of us will experience a behavioral health issue just this year alone, and it is likely that all of us will experience an episode at least once over the course of our life time. Those who seek out treatment should take pride for doing so. Just like with any other medical condition, being proactive about your mental health is not something to be ashamed of. As with all personal growth, maintaining a healthy balance takes work and sometimes discomfort.

At Mammoth Hospital, we know that behavioral issues are



Wellness & Healthy Lifestyle

real, and not a sign of weakness. It is of utmost importance to be aware of the early signs and symptoms of behavioral health issues, especially when some behaviors may be an indicator of a more serious underlying illness. Recovery is very possible, and we are here to support those who are struggling. Effective, evidence based treatment is available for most issues and for patients of all ages.

Overall wellness includes regular exercise, sleep, a balanced diet, a positive sense of self-worth, and effective coping skills that focus on emotional awareness, resilience, and a sense of connection to family, friends, and your community. Healthy habits and coping skills can help prevent not only depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues from worsening, but also improve the management of chronic health issues like diabetes, pain management, heart disease, and obesity. For many who suffer from behavioral health conditions, moving forward requires the help of counselors and medical doctors.

Don't be afraid to talk to friends and family about high risk behaviors and behavioral health. When expressing your concerns do so with compassion, concern, and without judgement. There is help available, and with the right treatment, you can add years to your life and life to your years!