

Mental Wellness

Continuum of Care



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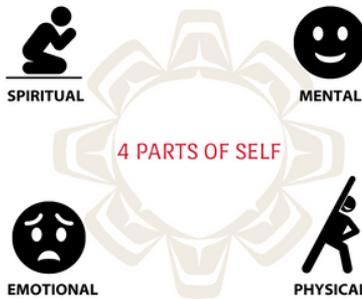
Written by: Christina Dobson
CSFS Health and Wellness Program
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"You can have good mental health even with a diagnosable mental illness and you can have poor mental health in the absence of a mental illness."



Mental Wellness Continuum of Care

Like physical health, taking care of your mental health and overall wellness is up to each individual. While we make appointments to see our family physician for checkups and concerns, the work our medical doctor does is only a small part of managing our overall physical health.



This is also true for mental health.

Sometimes in your lifetime you may need to see a mental health specialist to help you manage your mental health.

Some people will see a mental health professional once, while others will see a mental health professional many times over their life. Good physical and mental health

is in our own hands and is part of our overall well being involving physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

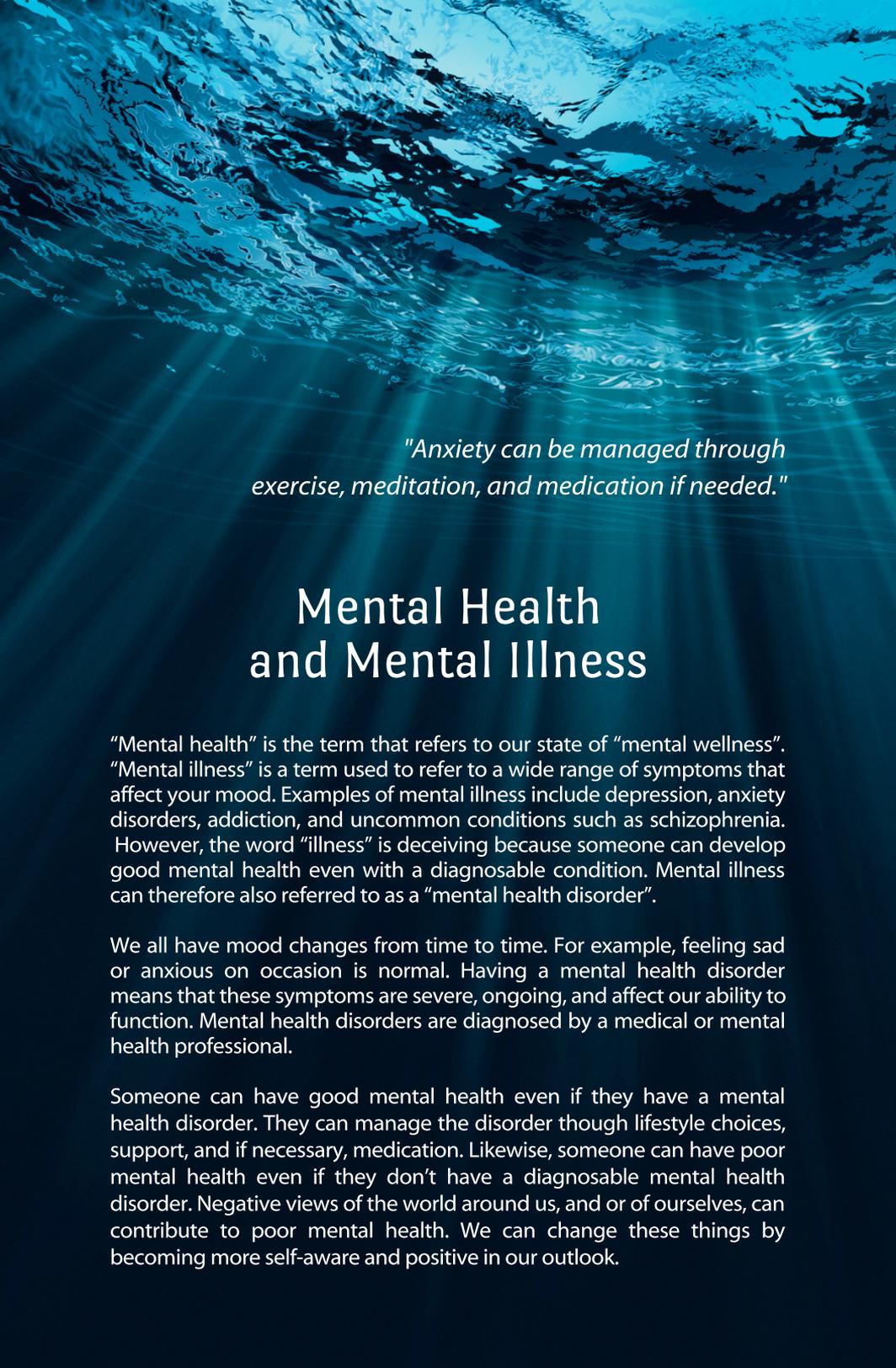


Good Mental Health starts with you

*"Mental health is a state of mind
and a lifestyle."*

Having good mental health means that you have a positive, rational mindset about yourself and your place in your family, community, and the world.

While we all have stressors and challenges in our lives, practicing good mental health means you can meet stress and challenges with confidence. Mental health is both a state of mind and a lifestyle. It's about being settled in your mind and engaging in lifestyle choices that support this.



"Anxiety can be managed through exercise, meditation, and medication if needed."

Mental Health and Mental Illness

"Mental health" is the term that refers to our state of "mental wellness". "Mental illness" is a term used to refer to a wide range of symptoms that affect your mood. Examples of mental illness include depression, anxiety disorders, addiction, and uncommon conditions such as schizophrenia. However, the word "illness" is deceiving because someone can develop good mental health even with a diagnosable condition. Mental illness can therefore also be referred to as a "mental health disorder".

We all have mood changes from time to time. For example, feeling sad or anxious on occasion is normal. Having a mental health disorder means that these symptoms are severe, ongoing, and affect our ability to function. Mental health disorders are diagnosed by a medical or mental health professional.

Someone can have good mental health even if they have a mental health disorder. They can manage the disorder through lifestyle choices, support, and if necessary, medication. Likewise, someone can have poor mental health even if they don't have a diagnosable mental health disorder. Negative views of the world around us, and of ourselves, can contribute to poor mental health. We can change these things by becoming more self-aware and positive in our outlook.



"Taking care of ourselves is an ongoing process."

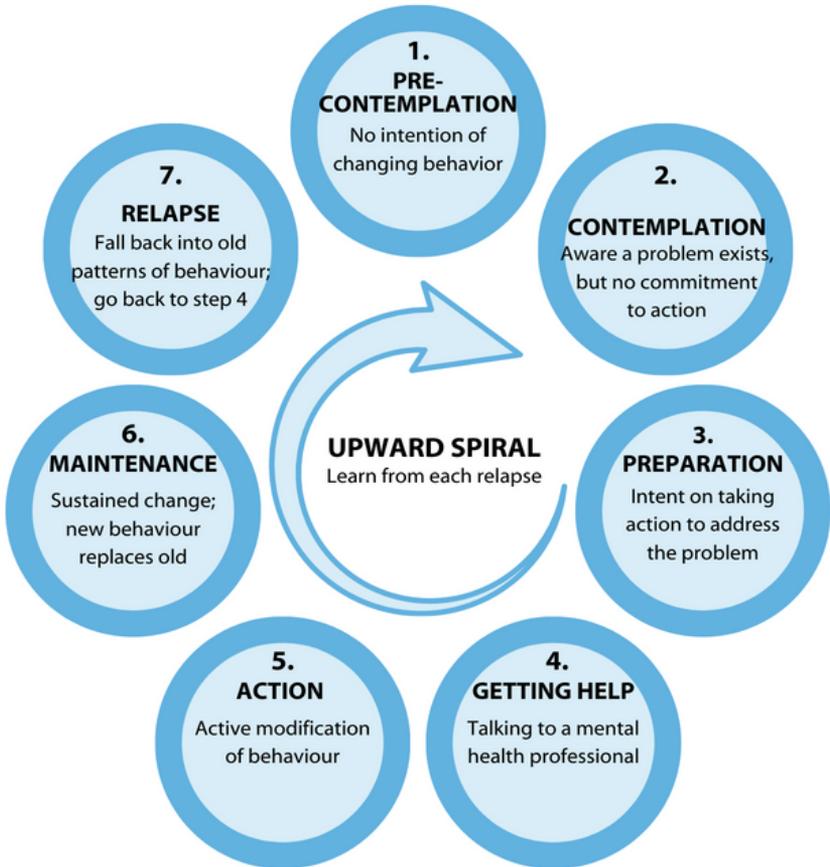
A Continuum of Care Model

Taking care of ourselves is an ongoing part-of-life process. We should pay attention to our mental wellness and work on what we need to do to feel well on an ongoing basis. This may involve altering lifestyle choices; exercising more, eating well, talking to our friends and loved ones about the stressors we have, and limiting substances we use. These are everyday things.

Sometimes when life feels overwhelming, and self-care and talking to friends and loved ones is not enough, we might seek out the help of a traditional healer or a professional mental health worker. These people have the extra skills to help you navigate what is going on in your life and preventing you from feeling mentally well.

This entire process of caring for your mental health is a continuous process in the same way we care for our entire body, mind, and soul. You may need the services of a healer or clinician once, many times for the same problem, or several times throughout your life for different issues that you face.

Stages of Change



Mental wellness is a lifestyle choice, it takes consistent effort of healthy practices, not just whenever you visit a therapist for treatment.

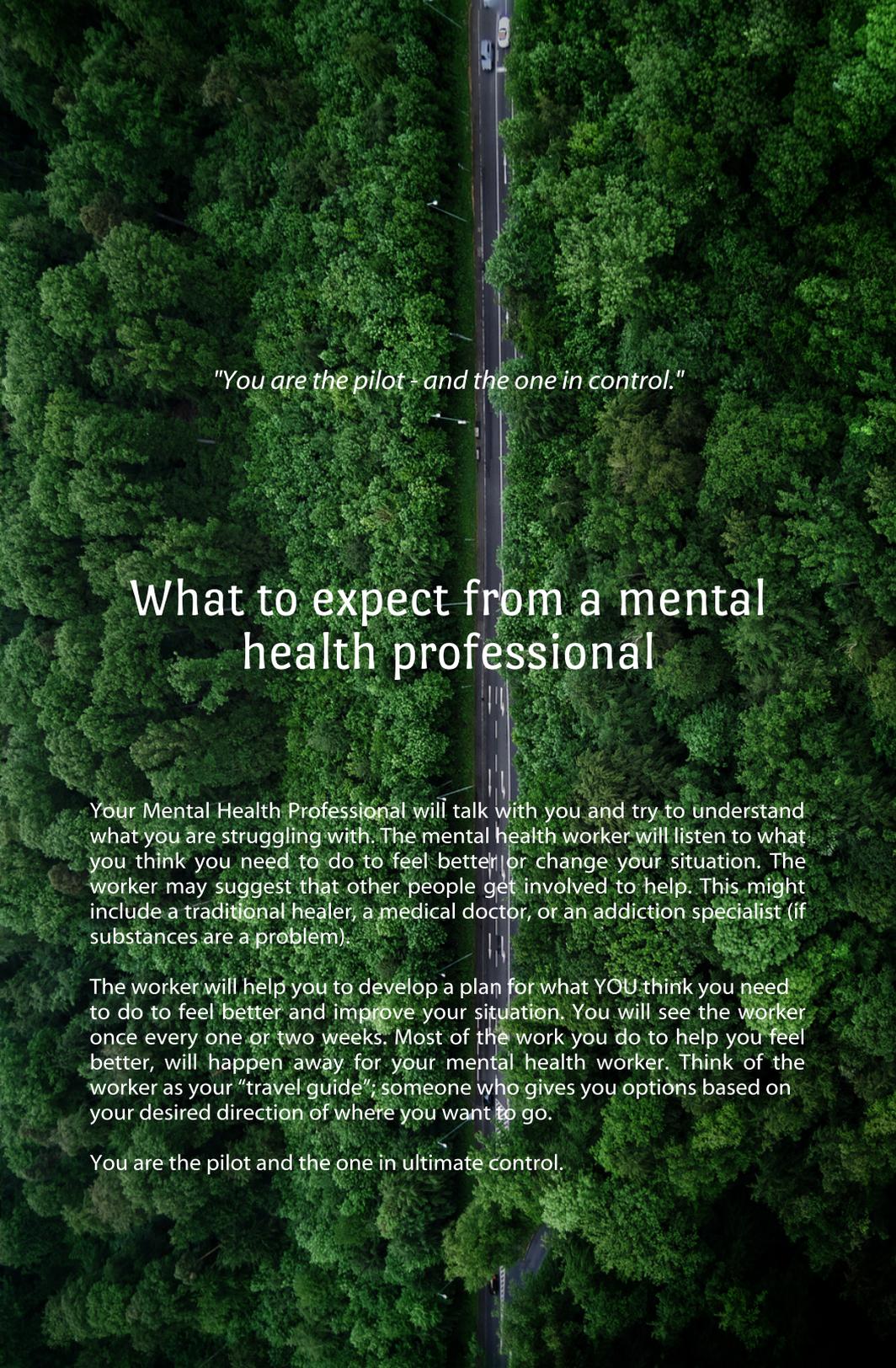
When to see a mental health professional

It is okay to call on a traditional healer or a mental health clinician when you feel that you need help managing the things in your life. You may be feeling sad, anxious, or have other mental health concerns that you want help with. Substance abuse is another reason to contact a professional.

Sudden traumatic events such as an accident or assault may be a reason you feel overwhelmed, as might the death of a loved one. All of these are reasons why someone might call on a professional. But remember self-care and the healing power of yourself, your family, and your community is still of vital importance.

A person with long dark hair, wearing a blue jacket, is sitting on the end of a long wooden pier that extends into a large body of water. The person is facing away from the camera, looking out over the water towards a range of mountains in the distance. The sky is a mix of blue and light orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The water is calm with some ripples. The mountains are rugged and have some snow or light-colored patches. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

"It's okay to seek help."

An aerial photograph of a two-lane road cutting through a dense, lush green forest. The road is dark asphalt with white dashed lines. A few cars are visible on the road. The trees are thick and vibrant green, filling the entire frame around the road.

"You are the pilot - and the one in control."

What to expect from a mental health professional

Your Mental Health Professional will talk with you and try to understand what you are struggling with. The mental health worker will listen to what you think you need to do to feel better or change your situation. The worker may suggest that other people get involved to help. This might include a traditional healer, a medical doctor, or an addiction specialist (if substances are a problem).

The worker will help you to develop a plan for what YOU think you need to do to feel better and improve your situation. You will see the worker once every one or two weeks. Most of the work you do to help you feel better, will happen away from your mental health worker. Think of the worker as your "travel guide"; someone who gives you options based on your desired direction of where you want to go.

You are the pilot and the one in ultimate control.



"We have to take care of our body and eat and exercise well. Our mental wellness is keeping our minds thinking positive and not worrying about anything beyond our control. When it gets to a state where we can't cope, just remember to reach out. We seek others to help us, our friends, our service providers."

- Elder Amie Williams

"Believe in the person you see in the mirror."

- Elder Hilda Schielke

REACH OUT TO SEEK HELP

KUU-US INDIGENOUS CRISIS LINES:

Youth/Kids:

1-250-723-2040

Adults/Elders:

1-250-723-4050

Toll Free:

1-800-588-8717

SUICIDE PREVENTION:

1-800-SUICIDE

OR:

1-800-784-2433

Northern BC Crisis Lines

24/7 Crisis Line:

1-888-562-1214

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS LINES:

310-6789

No Area Code - simply call that number

Texting Crisis Lines

Youth/Adult:

text HOME to 686868

Kids Help Phone

1-800-668-6868

There are non-crisis Carrier Sekani Family Services mental health and addiction recovery supports available for children, adults, and families in our member communities and in the urban communities of Prince George, Vanderhoof, Fort Saint James, Fraser Lake, and Burns Lake. Please check with your health centre or call the Health and Wellness Program at 250-567-2900 for more information.



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