



MENTAL HEALTH?

We all have bodies—and when our bodies have problems, we see a physician, a doctor for help to become healthy.

We all have minds—and when our thinking has problems, we see a therapist, a counselor for help to become healthy.

Just as our bodies provide clues when we need to see a doctor, our bodies also provide clues when we need to see a therapist/mental health counselor:

College is a stressful time—a significant life transition when students are exposed to a wide range of new academic and social pressures. It is not surprising that the pressures of trying to prepare for a successful career, meet parents' expectations, and balance social expectations can result in anxiety, depression, and academic stress. Almost half (44%) of native speaking American college students report needing professional help from mental health therapists. Research shows that international students struggle even more than domestic students with mental health issues, as they face additional pressures and stressors in their transition to college life: they often have to adjust to an entirely new culture, face a language barrier that impacts their ability to communicate and connect, and live physically farther away from their support network of family and friends back home.

Although international students often report levels of anxiety and depression higher than their domestic peers, they are far less likely to seek help. Deep cultural barriers, depending on their country and culture of origin, may exist. Students from certain cultures are not accustomed to talking about their feelings and experiences, especially to a therapist. Some students may worry that their parents and families would not approve of their seeking help. Others are reluctant to admit they're experiencing difficulties, perceiving it as failure when they are accustomed to being seen as high achievers.

Myths and Reality Associated with Mental Health Problems

Myth #1: Mental health problems are just part of growing up. Reality: One in five children and youth struggle with their mental health. 70% of adult mental illness begins during childhood or adolescence, including: depression, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder and anxiety disorders. **However, 79% of youth who receive help improve significantly with treatment, which lasts less than 12 sessions for 66% of them.**

Myth #2: It is the parents' fault if children suffer from mental health problems. Reality: Mental health disorders are caused by biology, environment, or a combination of both. They can be caused by genetics or biological factors such as a chemical imbalance or prenatal exposure to alcohol or drugs. They can also be the result of abusive or neglectful treatment or stressful events.

Myth #3: People with a mental illness should be locked away. Reality: Most people who have a mental illness struggle with depression and anxiety. They have normal lives, but their feelings and behaviors negatively affect their day-to-day activities.

Myth # 4: All people with mental illness are violent. Reality: Very little violence in society is caused by people who are mentally ill. Unfortunately, Hollywood often portrays mentally ill people as dangerous. People with a major mental illness are more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators.

Myth #5: Depression is a character flaw and people should just 'snap out of it'. Reality: Research shows that depression has nothing to do with being lazy or weak. It results from changes in brain chemistry or brain function. Therapy and/or medication help people to recover.



Myth #6: Addiction is a lifestyle choice and shows a lack of willpower. Reality: Addictions involve complex factors including genetics the environment, and sometimes other underlying psychiatric conditions such as depression. When people who become addicted have these underlying vulnerabilities it's harder for them to simply kick the habit.

Myth #7: Mental illness is a single, rare disorder. Reality: Anxiety disorders, mood disorders, personality disorders, eating disorders, addiction disorders and impulse control disorders are all different categories of very different mental illnesses- each with its own features and underlying causes. Each mental illness is a variation on the theme of brain chemistry gone awry, affecting things like mood and perception and each has its own specific causes, features and approaches to treatment.

Myth #8: People with a mental illness never get better. Reality: **TREATMENT WORKS!** Treatments for mental illnesses are more numerous and more sophisticated than ever and researchers continue to discover new treatments. Because of these advances, many people can and do recover from mental illness.



It is a strong, wise, intelligent person who acknowledges the need for health assistance (physical and mental) and slows down to get help!

FREE help is offered to CCS students at the CCS Student Health Clinic!

SCC Campus, Building 7, Room 122

(509) 533-8611

Monday – Friday 8:30AM-4:00PM

Your physical needs are met anytime during these hours; however, you need an **appointment** to see a trained mental health therapist. Call (or visit) the CCS Student Health Clinic to get an appointment. A Washington State licensed psychiatric nurse is available for counseling appointments one day a week. This nurse is licensed to not only counsel but also prescribe medications. In addition, closely supervised mental health interns are available to offer counseling.

Issues addressed include: -problematic eating patterns -substance abuse concerns -LGBT concerns -couples therapy -sexual assault/rape
-social and relationship concerns -feelings of depression -anger management -stress management -anxiety, grief and loss

IF YOU ARE HAVING THOUGHTS ABOUT HARMING YOURSELF, HELP IS AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES: PLEASE CALL 509-838-4428

You may also use your International Student Insurance to receive help from other physical and mental therapeutic resources; a co-pay is charged.