



Mental Health Challenges

"The experience I have had is that once you start talking about [experiencing a mental health struggle], you realize that actually you're part of quite a big club." — Prince Harry

Mental Health Challenges are disturbances in thinking, behavior, energy, or emotion that make it difficult to cope with the ordinary demands of life due to a physical illness of the brain.

The two most common mental health conditions are:

1. Anxiety Disorders (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Obsessive-compulsive Disorder, Panic Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, and specific Phobias)
2. Mood Disorders (Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder)

Others include voice-hearing (Schizophrenia) and dissociative disorders (Dissociative Amnesia, Dissociative Identity Disorder -formerly known as multiple personality disorder).

(See Pine Rest "The Importance of Mental Health Awareness" pinerest.org/newsroom/articles/mental-health-awareness-blog/ and National Alliance on Mental Illness nami.org/about-mental-illness/).

How to be a good friend to someone with a mental health challenge:

- Validate what they share about how they feel.
- Ask how you can help.
- Be understanding of their limitations.
- Don't gossip.
- Engage in positive, pleasant conversation and activities.
- Keep open and honest communication.

(See childmind.org/article/support-friend-with-mental-health-challenges/)

References

- Key Ministry mental health webinars keyministry.org/mental-health-webinars
- "John Swinton on the Complexity of Hearing Voices and a Mother's Love" (4 minutes) youtube.com/watch?v=77RHbfFO4To
- *Mental Health and the Church*, Dr. Steve Grcevich, MD
- National Alliance on Mental Illness West Michigan namiwestmi.org/
- Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services pinerest.org/newsroom/articles/