



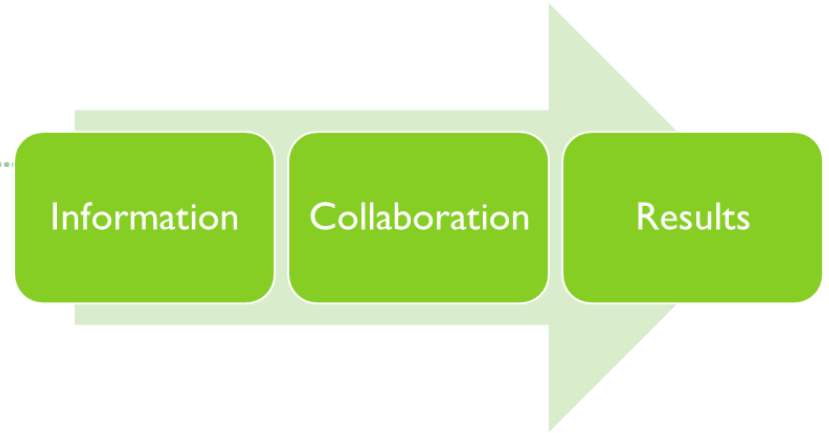
LIVABLE MECK
BETTER...TOGETHER.

ENGAGEMENT CAFE

March 10, 2021

TODAY'S EVENT

- ▶ **County Manager's Remarks**
- ▶ **Mental Health Panelists**
- ▶ **Submit your questions via the Comments section on Facebook**





DENA R. DIORIO
COUNTY MANAGER






PANELISTS



PANELIST: ERICKA ELLIS-STEWART MHA DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & ADVOCACY



Navigating Our
NEW NORMAL

A Quick Guide for Emotional & Mental Well-Being

Presented by Ericka Ellis-Stewart, Director of Education & Advocacy
Mental Health America of Central Carolinas



Quarantine is a MOOD!

The coronavirus outbreak may be stressful for many. Fear and anxiety about the disease can be overwhelming and may cause strong emotions.

Our worry-filled thoughts can present dangers of their own. Negative thinking can drag down our moods, actions, and even our health.

Personal Strategies:

- Stay Connected & Reduce Isolation
- Foster Resilience & Optimism
- Prevent Chronic Stress / Avoid Negative Thinking
- Incorporate Emotional Wellness Strategies
- Practice Gratitude & Self-Compassion
- Get Professional Help / Break Stigma

Pandemics can be stressful



MENTAL HEALTH:

*By the Numbers**



WHO

is affected by mental illnesses?

1 IN 5

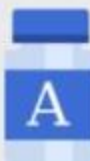
adults in the U.S.

1 IN 5

youth (age 13-18)
in the U.S.

WHAT

are the most common illnesses?



18.1%

of adults in the U.S.
have an anxiety
disorder



6.9%

of adults in the U.S.
have a form of major
depression

WHAT

are some of the negative effects?



COST: Americans lose
\$193.2 billion earnings
per year because of
serious mental illnesses



HOSPITALIZATION:
Mood disorders are the
third most common
cause of hospitalization
of adults aged 18-44.

*All facts and statistics from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

THE NUMBERS

DON'T LIE

8 - 10 years - On average, the length of time that elapses from the onset of mental health signs/symptoms to actually getting a diagnosis and treatment.

1 in 5 American Adults - Currently, dealing with a diagnosable mental health condition. Approximately 66 million U.S. adults.

48,344 lives lost - Suicide deaths in the United States in 2020.

1.4 million - Suicide Attempts in the U.S. in 2020.

44 billion dollars - Lost in productivity as a result of depression.

32 days - Presenteeism associated with depression resulted in the equivalent of 32 incremental workdays lost.

Despite the numbers,
the symptoms,
the stress,
the despair,
the anxiety,
the depression,
the hopelessness,
or thoughts of suicide...

**YOU ARE
NOT
ALONE**

Now more than ever, we need to find ways to stay connected with our community. No one should feel alone or without the information, support and help they need.

What Can We Do As Individuals and As Employers?

Equip ourselves and those around us with the
KNOWLEDGE, SKILL, & ABILITY to:

- Spread Positive Messages Hope & Compassion
- Make Referrals to Mental Health Services
- Obtain Mental Health Awareness Education
- Prevent Suicide as a QPR Gatekeeper
- Create a Culture of Emotional Well-Being
- Talk Openly About Mental Health Concerns
- Encourage & Incorporate Self-Care
- Get Help from Mental Health Professionals
- Act #B4Stage4 or a Code Red Crisis Point
- Focus on Emotional Intelligence

#Anti-StigmaTools



Recognize the Signs of Suicide



National Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

MHA's Online Mental Health Screening Tools

Recognize these symptoms? Act before Stage 4 - take a screen at MHAScreening.org.

Changes in energy level and sleep patterns

Noticeable restlessness or irritability

Difficulties with concentration or decision making

Frequent thoughts of death or suicide

Feeling sad, empty, hopeless, worthless, or guilty

Loss of interest or pleasure in activities

Changes in appetite, eating habits, or weight



MHA
Mental Health America
B4Stage4

Free, Confidential, Anonymous

www.MHAScreening.org



Ready, Set, Act!

Resources & Specific Steps
Each Workplace Can Take

- MHA Bell Seal
- Workplace Mental Health Assessment
- MHA National – Mental Health & COVID-19 Information & Resources
- The Business Case for Mental Health @ Work
- Mental Health First Aid & QPR Suicide Prevention Training

PANELIST: JUSTIN PERRY, MSW, LCSW, LCAS
PERRY COUNSELING

Pursuing mental and emotional balance during the pandemic

Justin Perry

Founder, Therapist

Perry Counseling Healing and Recovery



Current landscape and challenges we are seeing

- In any given year, at least 1/5 people experience a mental health disorder, with many others experiencing symptoms (increased during events such as now)
- According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 19.7 million American adults (aged 12 and older) battled a substance use disorder in 2017.¹
- Almost 74% of adults suffering from a substance use disorder in 2017 struggled with an alcohol use disorder.¹
- About 38% of adults in 2017 battled an illicit drug use disorder.¹
- That same year, 1 out of every 8 adults struggled with both alcohol and drug use disorders simultaneously.¹
- In 2017, 8.5 million American adults suffered from both a mental health disorder and a substance use disorder, or [co-occurring disorders](#).¹
- Drug abuse and addiction cost American society more than \$740 billion annually in lost workplace productivity, healthcare expenses, and crime-related costs.²
- We evaluate impact on functioning in responsibilities, job, family, personal care, etc. for diagnosing, but diagnosis label symptoms, not people

People are dealing with a multitude of Adjustments:

- Leaders stressed over keeping people employed while trying to meet needs and support morale of employees who are burned out from doing extra work, not having a break, along with people who've lost jobs/businesses
- People have been taken out of routines
- People working in jobs where they worry about exposure because of the amount of public interaction who fear the impact, not only on them, but on family members they return to

What We are Seeing (Continued)

- People having varying proximity to the issue which impacts the level of how serious, dangerous, or real it feels to them (BIPOC disproportionately impacted; Black mortality rate following contracting twice that of white people)
- Some people have been pushed into greater proximity with significant others and/or family at greater frequencies than usual (challenge for many, while also presenting unique risk in cases of abuse)
- Some parents have been pushed into taking greater responsibility for children's education at home (distance learning) while trying to juggle work responsibilities at the same time
- Enhanced challenges emotionally around racial unrest, scenes around police brutality and protests, and a polarized election with fewer distractions
- Angst, stress, fatigue, and pain about racial climate in the nation
- Battles between parents and kids/adolescents/college students around autonomy around schoolwork, peer interaction, family interaction
- People who live alone in some instances feeling more isolated as they no longer having traditional interaction with colleagues or external social supports
- People who struggle with challenges around substance use, emotion based eating, and other challenges facing stronger urges as isolation has increased and accountability has seemingly decreased

People are Dealing with Grief and Loss

- **Loss of relationships either related to COVID deaths or change in relationships, including feeling more disconnected from partner, family, friends**
- **Loss of income in the household (primary and/or secondary)**
- **Loss of safety in places once familiar, neutral that brought comfort, such as: houses of worship; libraries; shopping; family gatherings or events (acknowledging even recreational activities like concerts or festivals now feel unsafe or are cancelled)**
- **Loss of self-care practices (hair care, manicures/pedicures, massages, gyms, etc.)**
- **Loss of both established structure and routine as well as autonomy and a sense of control**
- **Children having loss of access to friends, school routine, and parts of life that matter to them**
- **Grieving loss of traditional grandparent/older relative interaction for both grandchildren, parents, and grandparents/older relatives**

Stages of Grief

They aren't linear, but happen in ebbs and flows (dimmer switch more than light switch)

<https://www.recover-from-grief.com/7-stages-of-grief.html>

1) **Shock and denial**, accompanied by numbness at times

2) **Pain and Guilt**, frustration, hurt, and at times guilt about not doing something well enough

3) **Anger and Bargaining**: Urge to lash out or inward followed by thoughts, "if this happens, I promise I'll..."

4) **Depression, reflection, loneliness**, understand the gravity or magnitude of the situation and may lead to isolation and despair

5) **Upward Turn**: Things can start to feel more organized or settled, reducing depression slightly

6) **Reconstruction and working through**: Becoming more functional and finding solutions while reconstructing what makes sense based on what you are experiencing

7) **Acceptance and Hope**—Finding a way forward (does not mean forgetting what happened to start the grief or never recycling through other stages)

What challenges or realities do we want to acknowledge and name in the workplace

Shifts in team cohesion

Decrease in motivation levels

Staff morale?

How has COVID-19 impacted you and how you're being impacted

- Financial pressures
- Altered daily routines
- Social isolation or uncertainty navigating social plans (associates and loved ones have different comfort levels around interactions)
- Overwhelm
- Uncertainty
- Over functioning
- Information overload, misinformation

What Can We Do?

- **Worry Chart (4 columns: 1) What am I worried about; 2) What Can I do about it; 3) Have I done these things; 4) If yes, what can I do to move on**
- **Offer affinity groups and processing spaces for your staff, and in particular BIPOC staff if they affirm an interest in them**
- **5, 4, 3, 2, 1 senses grounding exercise**
- **For folks dealing with children, build frameworks with boundaries, but flexibility, versus rigid schedules that produce power struggles and feelings of failure**
- **Recognize that this is likely different for others as well**
- **Check in with other leaders about how they are navigating these challenges. Drop the fake tough façade and develop a peer network**
- **Make sure folks know about the availability of Zoom 12 step meetings and other support groups including Al-Anon for loved ones**
- **Create Group Texts with peers having similar experiences and do your own “get together” virtually or distanced as folks are comfortable to hang out, talk, vent, and laugh**
- **Compassionate accountability for your staff. It’s fine to hold folks accountable, but if you act as though this has been just another year without considering what’s been listed above, your employees with options will explore them.**

External Resources:

Perry Counseling Healing and Recovery:

<https://justinperrycounseling.com/>

Harmony Health Therapeutic Services:

<https://www.harmonyhealthpllc.com/>

Dogwood Counseling:

<https://dogwoodcounseling.com/>

Center for Family and Maternal Wellness:

<https://www.cfmwellness.com/>

Psychology Today (Therapists all over the country):

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us>

Open Path Collective (Reduced Fee Therapy):

<https://openpathcollective.org/>

Mental Health of America of the Central Carolinas:

<https://www.mhacentralcarolinas.org/>

AA Intergroup for 12 step meetings: <http://charlotteaa.org/>

National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255 (1-800-273-TALK)

PANELIST: E. ELISE HERMAN, MD
MINDPATH CARE CENTERS

E. Elise Herman, MD

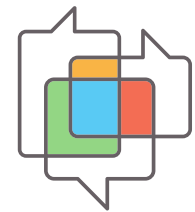
Regional Medical Director of
Western NC, Medical Director
of SC





Q&A:

SUBMIT QUESTIONS IN FACEBOOK COMMENTS



LIVABLE
MECK



CALL TO ACTION



BETTER...TOGETHER.

- **Complete the post-café survey.**
- **Send** us an email. If you did not preregister, please email LivableMeck@mecklenburgcountync.gov so we have your contact information.
- **Follow** Livable Meck on Facebook and Twitter



THANK YOU!

