



There is HOPE



Removing the Stigma

Increased awareness leads to greater acceptance

BY MIKE BLOUNT

The National Institute of Mental Health reports that one in four adults in the U.S. — approximately 57.7 million Americans — is affected by mental illness in any given year. It could be a family member, co-worker, friend or your neighbor — or maybe even you. Even though mental illness is more common than most people think, many are still misinformed or uneducated about the people living with it.

Maureen Bauman wants to change people's attitudes to one of understanding. As the mental-health director for Placer County, Bauman says a large problem for people with mental illness is encountering stigma. Placer's Campaign for Community Wellness is trying to raise public awareness of the issue by teaming with multiple community partners, in hopes of reaching more people to get the message out.

"When people get to know a person with mental illness, a lot of those misconceptions evaporate."

Maureen Bauman
mental-health director, Placer County

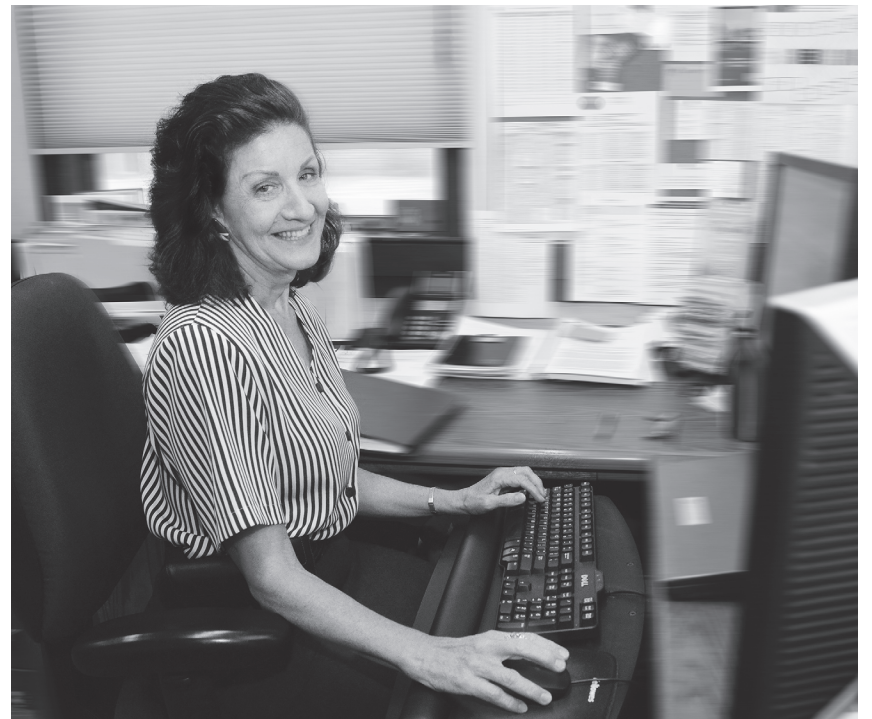
"We really want to help identify myths and facts about mental illness, so we encourage people to learn as much as they can to have a greater understanding," Bauman says. "The first thing we want people to realize is we're not talking about a small isolated group, but we have a lot of cultural norms that make people not want to be identified that way."

Bauman says that people with mental illness often decide to keep it to themselves. As a result of the social isolation they feel, they often withdraw from society and refuse to seek help because they are ashamed or in a state of denial.

"The result is people with mental illness feel different, and they feel like they don't fit in because people discriminate against them," Bauman says. "People are really afraid to seek help and that exacerbates the issue."

In Placer County alone, Bauman estimates that approximately 90,000 are affected by mental illness in any given year. Bauman says she believes with more support from the public, people with mental illness will be less afraid to share their story and seek help as they feel more accepted. This also allows them to seek help early on before the symptoms of their mental illness become more severe. She says preventative care is a huge component of being able to effectively treat mental illness.

Though there is still much work to do in eliminating the stigma surrounding mental health, Bauman notes that progress has been achieved and she remains optimistic about the future. "When people get to know a person with mental illness, a lot of those misconceptions evaporate," Bauman explains. "The whole shift will make people more accepting of those in their lives with mental illness. Feeling accepted and supported for who we are helps all of us flourish."



Maureen Bauman is the mental-health director for Placer County.

PHOTO BY KIM PALAFERRI

IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE

Mental illness affects people of every background, race and age. Here are some facts about mental illness:

- » One in four American adults lives with a diagnosable mental illness in any given year.
- » Mental health is as important to our well-being as physical health. People with mental

illness are more likely to have physical health conditions.

- » A diagnosis of mental illness is not a life sentence.
- » Half of all mental illnesses start by age 14 and three-quarters start by age 24.
- » Stigma about mental illness prevents many people from seeking mental-health care.

Finding Balance in Life



David Bartley learned how to fight chronic depression after he suffered an anxiety attack in 2010.

PHOTO BY KIM PALAFERRI

Those with chronic depression don't have to face it alone

BY AMANDA CARAWAY

David Bartley was a successful business owner who managed A Chance for Bliss animal sanctuary when he hit rock bottom in 2010. Although he had been on medication for chronic depression since his mid-20s, the financial pressures of the business combined with marital struggles overwhelmed him. On a flight back from visiting his mother, David suffered a serious anxiety attack.

"I am predisposed to crumble under pressure," David says. "When I got home I felt completely hopeless."

David planned to kill himself by driving his truck off a bridge. He made one last attempt to reach out and called his mother in tears. She contacted his brothers in Sacramento, who helped him to be evaluated and admitted to Cirby Hills Hospital for two weeks.

"I really had a great experience there," David says. "I met a lot of great people and found some good resources. The staff members were all loving and caring. It was not at all what I thought it would be."

When David was released, he went to live with his brother. He left his marriage, found homes for all the animals and closed the sanctuary.

"My tolerance for stress was nonexistent," David says. "I spent the next

year getting myself back into a good place. I began regular counseling, joined a support group, became involved in church and started taking care of myself physically."

"It is important to have a place where you can express what you are feeling."

David Bartley

According to David, fighting depression is a constant battle that isn't won through medication alone. Because his depression is caused by a chemical imbalance, it is crucial that he keep balance in his life. Although he was taking medication in 2010, he had stopped other stabilizing practices to maintain his spiritual well-being, nutrition and physical health.

"To fight depression you must take a complete approach," David says. "Staying healthy takes daily discipline.

I need structure and solid support."

Crucial to David's success is his participation in a weekly support group.

"This group has been enormously helpful," David says. "There is a social stigma attached to depression. It is important to have a place where you can express what you are feeling and [learn] that you are not the only person on the planet who feels that way."

David now volunteers on the Placer County Speakers Bureau to help reduce the stigma attached to mental health. He says this allows him to help himself while helping bring others hope.

"Before I was admitted to the hospital I was completely devoid of hope," David says. "Now I feel very hopeful."

David wants people to know that there is no reason to suffer alone. There are resources out there that can help.

What You Can Do: Share Your Story



The most powerful thing you can do to end stigma is to tell your story.

Research shows that personal contact with a person living with mental health challenges is the most effective way to open someone's mind and start to end stigma. For more information, contact the Placer County Speakers Bureau at 530-886-2980.

PREVENTING A CRISIS

If left untreated, mental illness can progress to the point of crisis, leading to severe impact on one's life. Often, friends and family are the first to notice the symptoms of someone who is in the early stages of mental illness. Connecting loved ones to early intervention can reduce the severity of the illness. Here are some signs of mental illness you can look for:

- » Problems with concentration, memory or logical thought
- » Social withdrawal or a loss of interest in others
- » Sudden drop in functioning, such as an inability to complete simple tasks
- » Uncharacteristic, peculiar behavior
- » Rapid mood changes or shifts
- » A strong nervous feeling or feeling suspicious of others
- » Heightened sensitivity to sights and sounds
- » Changes in sleep patterns or excessive napping
- » Using drugs or alcohol to self-medicate



A New Chapter

Logan Noone was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and now works to spread awareness and understanding about mental illness to others.
PHOTO BY KIM PALAFERRI

NEVER LOSE HOPE

If you are a young person living with mental illness, help is available. These tools and resources are available specifically for young people.

CRISIS HOTLINES

If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call 866-293-1940 or 916-872-6549 or text the word HOPE to 916-668-iCan (4226).

SIERRANATIVEALLIANCE.ORG

The Sierra Native Alliance provides cultural education, family resources and environmental preservation activities in the Sierra Nevada region.

YOUTHEMPOWERMENTSUPPORT.COM

Youth Coordinators provide one-on-one, individually tailored support and education to youth and young adults ages 12 to 26.

THE TREVOR LIFELINE

The Trevor Lifeline is a hotline for LGBTQ and heterosexual youth to speak with qualified counselors. Call 866-488-7386 or visit www.thetrevorproject.org.

WALKINOURSHOES.ORG

If you are curious about what it's like to live with mental illness, this website is a great starting place. Designed especially for young people ages 9 to 13. In Spanish at www.PonteEnMisZapatos.org.

REACHOUT.COM

Helping youth and young adults get through tough times. Find support for a variety of wellness topics, from grief to eating issues to sexuality. Available in Spanish at us.reachout.com/buscaapoyo.

PLACER.NETWORKOFCARE.ORG

Visit this website for wellness and behavioral health resources in Placer County.

While studying abroad, a student begins experiencing the symptoms of mental illness

BY MIKE BLOUNT

Logan Noone, 24, sat alone many nights in his dorm room in Scotland while on a study abroad program his junior year of college. Even though he knew he had friends and family who loved him, he began to withdraw and have thoughts they were rejecting him. He started questioning his identity and believed his girlfriend was cheating on him. The only way he could make the thoughts stop was to drink alcohol.

"I hid it from everyone because I was completely embarrassed," Logan says. "I just thought it would fade and go away, because there were times where I was feeling good, but I definitely had my own personal stigma against mental illness and medication. I thought, 'That's not me,' and I refused to believe I was ill, in a sense."

Though he didn't know it at the time, Logan was suffering from bipolar disorder, which manifests as periods of depression that fluctuate with periods of mania. These highs and lows cause unusual shifts in mood, energy and activity levels and generally affect a person's ability to carry out day-to-day tasks.

Once Logan returned to the U.S., he continued abusing alcohol and began smoking marijuana to self-medicate. Everything came to a head when he reached a hugely transitional moment in his life.

"I was graduating, starting a new job, and that same week, I broke up with my girlfriend," Logan recalls. "I didn't sleep for about six or seven days, and my speech was rapid and unclear. I was just paranoid

and living in my own world."

Logan reached out to his family, who recognized what he was going through. Years before, Logan's uncle had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Logan's parents called on social workers in the community to get their son the help he needed.

Logan was admitted to a hospital and later began attending group therapy and individual therapy sessions. Though he was being treated for the first time in his life, he was still depressed and ashamed of his mental illness.

"I felt even further isolated, and I was afraid to seek out anyone like me," Logan says. "I stopped taking care of myself and I gained a lot of weight."

"I thought, 'That's not me,' and I refused to believe I was ill, in a sense."

Logan Noone

When Logan's job required him to transfer to Sacramento, it gave him a chance for a new beginning and a new attitude. He decided to adopt an open attitude about his bipolar disorder. When he told his new roommates about it, they were supportive. The reaction encouraged Logan to share his story with even more people.

He became motivated again. He lost weight. He became passionate about his cause.

Logan then filmed a YouTube clip for his friends, explaining the challenges he's faced with mental illness. The video took off organically and has more than 16,000 views now. Logan also shared his story as a guest speaker for the National Alliance on Mental Illness and he is currently a member of the Placer County Speakers Bureau. He also spreads his message through his website blissify.org.

"I found that being open and honest allows me to be happy. The stigma really bothered me and I wanted to change that. Finding others that feel like me or people who don't understand what bipolar disorder is — that's really my driving force," Logan says.



What You Can Do: Be a Friend

You can pledge to stand up for people who are being treated differently because of their mental health conditions. You can be a friend to a person who feels completely alone.

Judy Sullenberger has learned to cope with her son's mental illness.
PHOTO BY KIM PALAFERRI

Family Ties

Woman finds ways to support her son with schizophrenia

BY AMANDA CARAWAY

Judy Sullenberger knew something was wrong when she came home from vacation in August of 2009 to find her son, Jordan*, then age 36, in her home looking unwell. Jordan had been in Southern California since 1995. Judy rushed her son to the emergency room where he was transferred to Cirby Hills Mental Hospital in Roseville.

"Because of the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act] privacy laws, I wasn't allowed to have any information," Judy says. "I remember rushing around the hospital, begging nurses to tell me what was going on."

Eventually she learned that her son had been diagnosed with schizophrenia. The doctors said the onset of his disease likely occurred when he was in his 20s, but Jordan had been able to function until recently.

Judy found herself surprised by and unprepared for her son's diagnosis.

"I had never known anyone with schizophrenia. We have no mental illness in our family that I know of," Judy says.

To help her cope, Judy began keeping a journal. Looking back, she remembers that there was so much confusion and everything was happening too fast.

"It basically took my life away," Judy says. "I realized that if I wasn't there to be his advocate, he wouldn't get what he needs. I thought of the mentally ill out there with no one to fight for them, who become homeless. I couldn't let that be my son."

After spending six weeks in Cirby Hills, Jordan was released. Judy retired to provide full-time care for her son. But once at home, Jordan began to withdraw again.

"He became paranoid, and he would hide from me," says Judy, who remembers being outside doing yard work and seeing her son skirt around the house to avoid her.

Judy returned him to Cirby Hills where she discovered Jordan had been only pretending to take his medication. Over the next year, Jordan was released and readmitted to the hospital five times.

"I realized that I needed help and support as well, so I began researching online for assistance," Judy says.

She discovered many services provided by Placer County and began attending support groups, using the resource center and working to ensure that her son receive consistent treatment.

"I think [Placer County] saved [Jordan's] life by helping him get the care he needed," Judy says. "He is so different now. His mood swings are gone. He is no longer paranoid, and he doesn't withdraw and hide."

Judy has also become a strong advocate for mental health. She is a board member for Advocates for Mentally Ill Housing and does volunteer work for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) to help remove the stigma attached to mental illness.

"When I tell people that my son has schizophrenia, they turn white," Judy says. "It is one of those words that make people cringe."



"I think [Placer County] saved [Jordan's] life by helping him get the care he needed."

Judy Sullenberger

People ask her how she had come to terms with her son's condition. Judy says she realized over time that everyone has challenges and that things could have been worse.

"At one point, [Jordan] was so sick that I could have lost him," she says. "I am so grateful that he is alive."

**Name has been changed*



What You Can Do: Listen

You can pledge to listen with care as your loved ones share their challenges with you. Your support can make all the difference.

LENDING SUPPORT

by
Shannon Springmeyer

A support network of loved ones is an invaluable resource in mental health recovery. Here are ways you can support someone you care about who is dealing with mental illness.

COMMUNICATE

Listening to your loved one's concerns and not expressing judgment are important keys to opening communication and overcoming the stigma that sometimes keeps those with mental illness silent. Learn more about starting a conversation at www.campaignforcommunitywellness.org.

GET INFORMED

Understanding as much as you can about the mental illness of a loved one can equip you to better understand what he or she experiences, find resources, and prepare you to participate in the person's treatment team.

OFFER HELP

Find out what you can offer to do that will make a real difference. Make sure your loved one knows you are available for support.

RESPECT BOUNDARIES

People recovering from mental illness can sometimes feel they've lost control of their own lives. Make sure your loved one maintains independence for tasks and decisions he or she can handle. Respect your loved one's privacy and confidentiality.

The Road to Recovery



Angelena Nunez says the cultural stigma of mental illness within her family kept her from seeking help for several years.
PHOTO BY KIM PALAFERRI

Woman confronts mental illness after years of denial

BY MIKE BLOUNT

The moment 32-year-old Rocklin resident Angelena Nunez decided to open up about her mental illness, she felt better for the first time in a long time. Speaking about the dark places she would go in her mind was therapeutic because she was always taught to bottle up those feelings and keep them to herself. Angelena says the cultural stigma of mental illness within her family kept her from seeking help for several years.

When she was a teenager, Angelena was diagnosed with depression. As an adult, she was also diagnosed with panic disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder.

"These are things that I've had for a long time, and I knew it, but I just didn't have a name for them," Angelena says.

As a teenager, Angelena spent most of her time in her room withdrawn from everyone else in her family. Her parents ignored her behavior, shrugging off her long hours of sleep and isolation.

"For Latino culture, we don't talk about our problems," Angelena says. "We ignore our problems and brush them under the rug, even when they're staring us straight in the face. Mental health is not talked about and is seen as a sign of weakness in our culture. You

keep it in your family, and you don't ask for outside help."

While still a teen, she was placed in foster care with a new family. But the cultural stigma she was raised with made it hard for her to describe what she was feeling, even to her new parents. They encouraged her to begin seeing a therapist.

"Mental health is not talked about and is seen as a sign of weakness in our culture."

Angelena Nunez

Still, the symptoms of her mental illness were compounded and exacerbated because she didn't seek help for so long. As a result, she turned to drugs and alcohol to self-medicate.

"I was numbing the feelings for a moment, but they would come back worse, and I would feel horrible about it once I was done," Angelena says. "My therapist really helped me realize that I needed to find another way to help myself feel better."

Angelena found that sharing her experience and feelings through peer support and counseling allowed her to confront her mental illness in a way she never had before. By being open about her feelings, she was able to feel a sense of relief, and the more she shared with other people about what she was going through, the better she felt. It was empowering for her.

"Everybody has to find their own wellness tool," Angelena says. "Recovery is not one-size-fits-all. What's good for me is not always good for someone else, and that's OK. But recovery is possible. You just have to find what helps you stay well and stick with it."



**What You Can Do:
Ask for Help**

Don't let fear of embarrassment or judgment keep you from getting the help you need. Reach out!

EACH MIND MATTERS

Mental health is important for everyone. Each Mind Matters is an all-inclusive movement that aims to eliminate the barriers of stigma and discrimination against mental illness and increase awareness and acceptance. The movement brings together millions of Californians who want to speak out about untreated mental illnesses that take an unnecessary toll on families. You can join this movement by taking simple actions that help eliminate stigma surrounding mental illness in your community. Look for the green ribbon for ways you can help and visit www.eachmindmatters.org.

**EACH
MIND
MATTERS**
California's Mental
Health Movement





Road Map to Mental Wellness

by SHANNON SPRINGMEYER

There are many steps on the road to mental well-being, and no two paths are quite the same. For those with mental illness, a variety of treatment and care options provide hope that recovery truly is possible.

EDUCATION

Learning about one's mental illness is an important step in being able to make informed decisions and actively participate in the care and treatment process. Friends, family and others who care about someone with mental illness should also learn all they can.



PEER SUPPORT

Connecting with others who share similar experiences and challenges can be a vital lifeline. Peer-based support groups are available in many communities and online.



MEDICATION

Psychiatric medications don't cure mental disorders, but they can often significantly improve symptoms, or make other treatments such as psychotherapy more effective. Close communication with a doctor about different types of medications that may help and the effects of prescribed medications is essential.



COMMUNITY-BASED SUPPORT

Community-based programs are designed to serve people outside of traditional health care settings and have proven very effective. Programs can be offered in schools, work sites, health care facilities and community centers, and may focus on education, awareness and building coping and wellness strategies.



EXERCISE

Physical health supports a healthy mind. Aerobic exercise has been found to improve mood, self-esteem and cognitive function, as well as reduce stress and symptoms of anxiety and depression. Even light physical activity such as walking or gardening can provide benefits.



COUNSELING

In therapy, clients talk with a mental health provider about their thoughts, feelings, moods and behaviors in order to gain awareness about their condition and learn coping strategies. When used in conjunction with medication, therapy has been shown to more effectively reduce symptoms of mental illness than medication alone. There are many approaches to therapy to aid in finding a good fit for each individual.



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

It's helpful to stay connected to friends, family and others by participating in social activities and spending time with loved ones regularly. Connecting to larger communities, such as cultural or faith groups, can also help build a network of support and play an important role in healing.



NUTRITION



A diet high in processed foods and lacking in fresh fruits and vegetables may be deficient in nutrients crucial to the proper functioning of the central nervous system. Eating healthy, balanced meals on a regular schedule can help support general health and provide the fuel to manage the demands of daily life while seeking recovery. A doctor may also be able to recommend specific dietary supplements that could aid recovery.

AVOID DRUGS & ALCOHOL

The temptation to self-medicate symptoms of mental illness using drugs or alcohol can be strong. But ultimately, using drugs or alcohol can quickly make symptoms much worse. People with mental illnesses should stop using these substances, and should talk to a doctor to receive specific treatment for substance abuse in addition to treatment for their mental health symptoms.



KNOW THE SIGNS. FIND THE WORDS. REACH OUT.

Pain isn't always obvious. But if someone is considering suicide, there are signs you may notice. The Know the Signs campaign aims to educate people about those signs, so they can be there for a loved one or family member when they need it the most. Here are a few warning signs of suicide you can look for:

KNOW THE SIGNS:

- » Increased drug or alcohol use
- » Withdrawal
- » Sudden mood changes
- » Feeling hopeless, desperate or trapped
- » Talking about wanting to die or suicide
- » Reckless behavior
- » Putting affairs in order
- » Anxiety
- » Changes in sleep
- » No sense of purpose

FIND THE WORDS:

- » Start a conversation: listen, express concern and reassure.

REACH OUT:

- » For more information on suicide prevention and resources, visit www.suicideispreventable.org.

Pain Isn't Always Obvious



Suicide Is Preventable

A Connection to Hope

RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Placer County's Campaign for Community Wellness aims to spread the message that there is hope for the prevention, treatment and recovery of mental illness, and that we have the power to shift society's attitudes toward mental health.

WANT TO KNOW MORE? CONNECT TO THESE LOCAL AND NATIONAL RESOURCES:

PLACER COUNTY WELLNESS AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NETWORK OF CARE

www.placer.networkofcare.org

Connect to local resources, services and community events, as well as information on health and mental wellness and a link to resources for veterans.

PLACER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

www.placer.ca.gov/departments/hhs

Emergency Services for Placer County:

Adult Crisis & Intake:

888-886-5401 or 916-787-8860

Child & Family Crisis & Intake:

866-293-1940 or 916-872-6549

WELLSPACE HEALTH

www.wellspacehealth.org/suicide_prevention.htm

Suicide Prevention Hotlines:

Auburn: 530-885-2300

Lincoln: 916-645-8866

Roseville: 916-773-3111

In crisis? Log on to chat or text the word HOPE to 916-668-iCan (4226). It's free and confidential.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS (NAMI)

www.namicalifornia.org

Placer County: 916-554-0554

California: 916-567-0163

Dedicated to building better lives for those affected by mental illness. NAMI advocates for treatment, access to services, supports, research and increased awareness.

PLACER COUNTY'S CAMPAIGN FOR COMMUNITY WELLNESS

www.campaignforcommunitywellness.org

Log on to learn how to start a conversation about mental wellness and find local meetings, trainings and events.

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Anyone can call or log on, 24/7. A skilled, trained crisis worker will listen to your problems and help connect you to services in your area. Always confidential and free.

THE FRIENDSHIP LINE

1-800-971-0016

www.IOAging.com

Sponsored by the Institute on Aging, The Friendship Line is a confidential telephone line for people 60 or over, who may be feeling lonely, isolated, grieving, depressed, anxious and/or thinking about death or suicide.

REACHOUT.COM

1-800-448-3000

us.reachout.com

Youth and young adults can find support on a variety of wellness issues. Also in Spanish at us.reachout.com/buscaapoyo.

EACH MIND MATTERS: CALIFORNIA'S MENTAL HEALTH MOVEMENT

www.eachmindmatters.org

Hundreds of organizations and millions of people united to end the stigma surrounding mental health.

KNOW THE SIGNS

www.suicideispreventable.org

Know the signs. Find the words. Reach out. A campaign to educate Californians how to recognize the warning signs of suicide, have a direct conversation with someone in crisis and find resources.

THE TREVOR LIFELINE

866-488-7386

www.thetrevorproject.org

A hotline for LGBTQ youth in crisis.

◀ MAKE THE PLEDGE ▶

BY SHANNON SPRINGMEYER

Living with the stigma of mental illness can hurt. But there is hope. Together, we can eliminate the stigma and break down barriers to mental wellness. Little steps really can make a big difference. Because nearly half of all Americans will experience some form of mental illness in their lifetimes, do it for someone you love. Do it for yourself. Do it for all of us. Make a pledge today that you will fight the stigma surrounding mental illness by doing the following things that anyone can do.



I will ...

- ✓ Refuse to see someone as merely a label.
- ✓ Watch my language. Using words like "crazy," "lunatic," "bipolar" or "schizo" casually can cause real hurt.
- ✓ Ask someone I am concerned about how he or she is feeling.
- ✓ Listen with care and concern.
- ✓ Ask what I can do, right now, to help.
- ✓ Be compassionate.
- ✓ Become more informed about mental illnesses and resources that can help.
- ✓ Emphasize abilities, not limitations.
- ✓ Stand up for people who are bullied or treated differently due to mental health challenges.
- ✓ Be a friend to someone who feels alone.
- ✓ Not let embarrassment prevent me from reaching out.
- ✓ Not walk on by.
- ✓ Learn the warning signs of suicide. I can start at www.suicideispreventable.org.
- ✓ Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255) when I recognize the warning signs in someone I know.
- ✓ Make my own pledge and read those of others at www.eachmindmatters.org.



WELLNESS • RECOVERY • RESILIENCE

**EACH
MIND
MATTERS**
California's Mental
Health Movement