



"I do not agree with what you have to say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it." - Voltaire

From the Well of a Wise Woman

Stamp out Stigma

Carmen Lentz, LPC, NCC, DCC

Could you imagine having three of your friends break their legs and only one of them seek medical treatment for the injury? Hard to conceive, isn't it? Sadly, that is the rate of treatment you would see if we were talking about your friends suffering from a mental health disorder rather than a medical one. The latest Surgeon General's report has found that roughly two-thirds of Americans who have a diagnosable mental illness do not seek help for their condition. One big reason people don't seek help for behavioral healthcare issues is because of the stigma that is still attached to mental health treatment today.

to stay healthy. But if that same person suffered from an imbalance of another organ, the brain for example, and this imbalance manifested itself in the form of a major depressive disorder, things would likely be different.



Carmen Lentz. Picture courtesy of Rooney Coffman.

Stigma often stops people from getting the help they need. Negativity, myths, media stereotypes and misconceptions remain commonplace in the mental health arena, and human suffering increases as a result. Here's an example.

If someone suffers from a chronic illness induced by an imbalance, like diabetes for example, we expect that person to seek treatment, to be compliant with treatment recommendations, and we are supportive of their efforts

Then the person would hear things from others like, "Why don't you just get over it?" "It's just a phase, it will pass" . . . "She could help herself if she wanted to" . . . and the list goes on. Society has not come to accept mental health issues with the same understanding and compassion that is extended to other illnesses. This translates into real life consequences for those affected. Afraid of alienation, job loss, financial repercussions, and other

forms of discrimination, the individuals involved attempt to address mental health issues themselves, sometimes with healthy coping mechanisms, but most often with unhealthy means that create additional problems, such as substance abuse. The ironic aspect of all of these dismal facts is that most mental health problems respond well to intervention, especially if treatment is instituted earlier rather than later.

So, why am I telling you all of this, you ask? Because I want you to help become part of the solution, not the problem. You can help to spread the word that it is ok to get help for problems, that it is not a sign of weakness or a character flaw, and that things can improve. You can also educate yourself about warning signs of common mental health issues and when you see a friend struggling, encourage him or her to get help. Let part of your message be that early intervention is a good thing, and that there's no shame for any of us to need help sometime.

One Tequila, Two Tequila, Three Tequila, FLOOR!

Melody Kirkpatrick

"I'm stressed; I'm getting a martini." Drinking is common for college students. It's just our thing. We have long days and endless class work. By the end of the week, we want to relieve some stress. Grabbing an alcoholic beverage will get the desired feelings we crave. Sometimes we don't want to be full blown drunk, just tipsy. You are probably reading this article and thinking about your next drink. Do you like the sweet flavors of cocktails and pina coladas? Or does the strong tingling feeling of vodka get you pumped up and ready to go? If too much of anything good can be bad for you, then too much alcohol consumption can also put your health at risk.

Alcohol is a part of how you have fun on your spare time or maybe you would

rather relax with a beer. You know all good things come to an end, so check out the negative effects of drinking. It slows down the reaction of your central nervous system (brain). This response leaves you slow to think or, in some cases, dizzy. Here are more negative side effects of alcohol. It can cause diabetes, stomach ulcers, dehydration, and malfunction of the liver. It may not be a problem now but years later, it can cause serious health concerns.

Having a drink is how you spend your quality time and it is your choice. Maintaining self control while under the influence will keep you out of trouble. I'm not here to place any judgments. I just want you'll to know the effects of alcoholic beverages and its consequences.

Breaking Spring Fever

Caroline Mitchell

It's that time of year when you can't keep your mind focused on your classes, especially when you look outside and see beautiful, warm weather. Midterms are over and the semester is on the downhill slide. You start taking more trips to the beach and spending less time inside studying. It's a slippery slope, but there are things you can do to relieve the stress of the end of the semester and break the spring fever blues.

Take the last part of the semester to enjoy doing things that were not as appealing in the bleak weather. Try sitting outside to eat your meals, it will provide you with the sunshine you've been craving. Enjoy studying outside, as long as it is not too distracting for you. There are many benches around our campus made

for basking in the afternoon weather while getting ready for your next big test. Sometimes, teachers will even hold class outside, especially if you let them know that it is something that the class will enjoy. That way, you can spend more time listening and less time peaking out the window and day dreaming about your afternoon.

Athletic events are also much more fun during this kind of weather. Go support our teams and watch baseball, tennis, and lacrosse events. Take a trip out to the barn to watch an IHSA or IDA show. Spring is a fun time to be outside, so be outside as much as you can.

Also, use the new season to set new goals, and then go and achieve them. Whether you want to shed a few pounds you gained

over the winter holidays or you want to get closer to your friends, spring is a fun time to do this. Take a run around campus, or take a few private riding lessons at the barn to shed those winter pounds. Head to the gym to work out and look fit for your summer plans. Ask a friend to take a walk with you around campus, just to talk, or invite them to make a slip-n-slide to cool off once it starts to get really warm.

So, don't feel so antsy when it comes to the bright weather and the upcoming summer fun. You can have fun and prepare for your classes all at once. Whatever you choose to do, make it fun, and invite others to do it with you.

Every minute in the United States, there are 1.3 forcible rapes of adult women; 78 women are forcibly raped each hour. Every day 1,871 women are forcibly raped, equating to 56,916 forcible rapes each month.

-National Victim Center and Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center, 1992

(information provided by North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence.)

If you feel like you're in immediate danger call 911.

If you have any questions or want consultation on something that happened to you please call: 910-276-6288 (Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Center of Scotland County)