

NC Department of Health and Human Services

NC Home Care Aide Curriculum

Module 19 – Mental Health

July 2021

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness**
- 2. Explain treatment options for mental illness**
- 3. Describe the home care aide's role in helping patients manage symptoms and illness**
- 4. Discuss stigma and discrimination against individuals with mental health issues**

MODULE 19-A

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Physical and Emotional Issues

- **As a home care aide, you will work with patients with many different physical ailments and conditions.**
- **One's physical issues cannot be separated from one's psychological issues.**



Handout #1

Key Terms and Definitions



Activity #1

Words Are Important

Depression and Anxiety

- The home care aide may encounter patients with depression and anxiety more than other mental health conditions



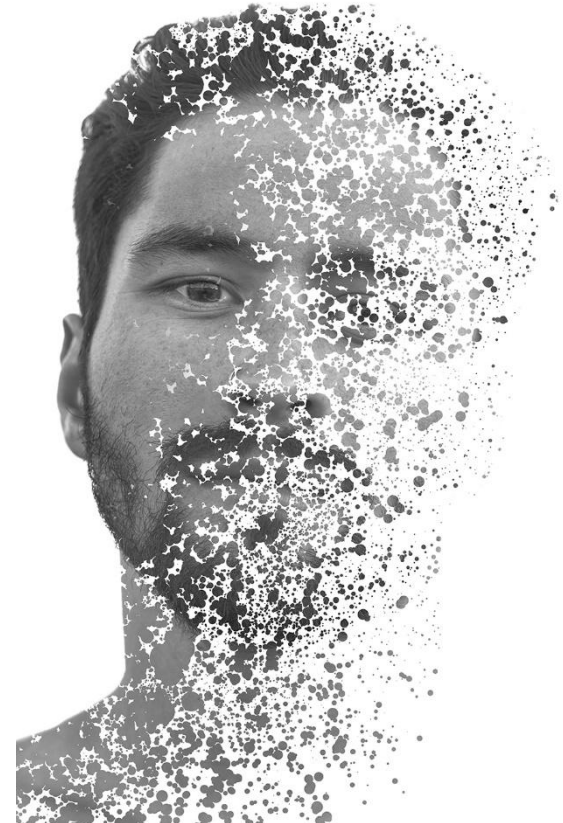
Activity #2

Common Phobias



Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder

- **Schizophrenia is a mental condition in which the person has an altered sense of reality**
- **Bipolar disorder**
 - **Manic episodes**
 - **Depressive episodes**



MODULE 19-B

POSSIBLE TREATMENT OPTIONS

Therapy Options

- **Individual psychotherapy**
- **Group psychotherapy**
- **Family psychotherapy**
- **Art therapy**
- **Occupational therapy**
- **Equine therapy**
- **Pet therapy**



MEDICATION

- Medications treat symptoms and are not a comprehensive treatment for mental health conditions



Combining Treatments

- **Individual Therapy + Medications lead to better outcomes**



MODULE 19-C

THE HOME CARE AIDE'S ROLE IN HELPING PATIENTS MANAGE SYMPTOMS AND ILLNESS

Meeting Mental Health Needs

- **The home care aide is there to help meet the patient's needs**
- **This includes mental health needs**
- **Never give advice or play the role of the therapist in the patient's life**



Handout #2

DEFENSE MECHANISMS



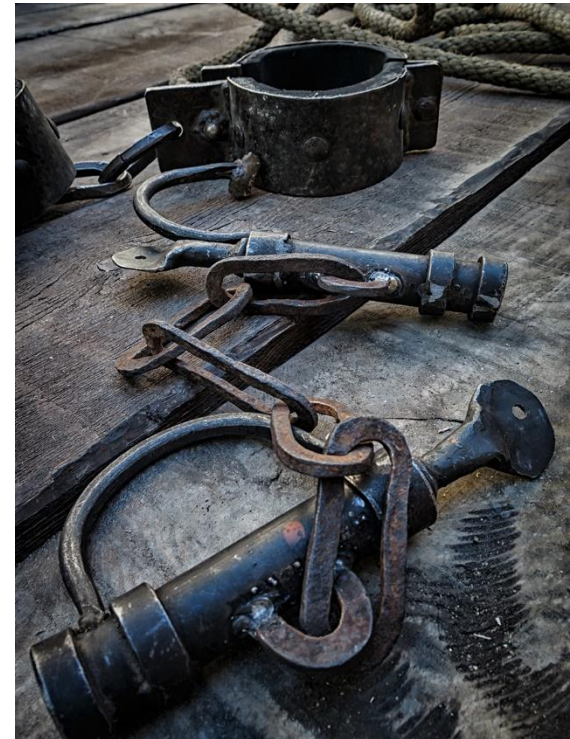
More Ways For The Aide To Help

- **Be sure the patient:**
 - **Gets plenty of rest**
 - **Eats balanced meals**
 - **Stays mentally active**
 - **Participates in activities**
 - **Spends time with others**
- **Be sure to take care of yourself**



Stigmatization and Discrimination (1)

- **Stigmatization and discrimination against the mentally ill have occurred for thousands of years**
- **People with mental illness were imprisoned, tortured, or killed**
- **Middle Ages**
- **Age of Enlightenment**
- **Late Modern Era**



Stigmatization and Discrimination (2)

- **Recent mental health discrimination**
 - **Given same social distancing as criminals**
 - **Viewed as people who should be feared**
 - **Seen as irresponsible, childlike, unable to make decisions**
 - **Less likely to be hired or get safe housing**
 - **More likely to be treated as criminals than offered health care services**
 - **People with mental illness do not get help because they are afraid of rejection by society or even loved ones**

REJECTING STEREOTYPES

- **Knowing facts about mental health issues can help you educate others and reject stigmatizing stereotypes**
- **Each individual has their own story, path and journey that says more about them than their diagnosis does; first comes the person, then comes a diagnosis.**





Even though mental health conditions affect millions of people from every background and age group, it is still misunderstood and highly stigmatized in our society. If you practice person-first language and educate yourself and others, you can contribute to decreasing the stigma and discrimination against persons with a mental illness. As always, never judge your patients or treat them differently due to their illness or condition.