



Minority Mental Health Awareness Toolkit | *Tip sheet*

# Myth-Busting Mental Health Stigma

Mental illness affects people across all communities. Rates of mental illness are similar among minority groups and white populations in the United States. However, access to care is not equal. About 48 percent of white adults receive mental health services. Only 30 percent of Black and Hispanic adults, and 22 percent of Asian American adults, receive care (Cedars-Sinai). Barriers include cost, lack of insurance, distrust of the medical system and limited diversity among providers. Clearing up common myths can help close these gaps.

❗ **Myth: I'm weak because I'm struggling with my mental health.**

➡ **Fact:** Mental illness can affect anyone. At any time, about one-quarter of adults in the United States have a mental health condition (Johns Hopkins). Mental illness is not a sign of weakness or lack of willpower. It is a medical issue, just like a broken bone or high blood pressure, and it deserves proper treatment.

❗ **Myth: My issues are not “bad enough” to seek help.**

➡ **Fact:** It can be hard to know if what you feel is temporary or a sign of a larger problem. Only a trained mental health professional can make that call. If you are unsure, remember that anyone can benefit from support that improves well-being. You do not need to reach a crisis point to ask for help.

❗ **Myth: No one will understand my mental health issue.**

➡ **Fact:** Mental health providers are trained to recognize many types of conditions and offer treatment plans that work. Most people who receive treatment improve. For example, more than 80 percent of people treated for depression get better (Mental Health America). Treatment for panic disorders can have success rates as high as 90 percent. You are not alone, even if it feels that way.

❗ **Myth: If I talk to a provider about my mental health, it will be used against me.**

➡ **Fact:** What you share with a mental health provider is confidential. Providers cannot share your information without your permission, except in very limited situations required by law.

❗ **Myth: The only safe place to get help is through my religious community.**

➡ **Fact:** A place of worship can offer comfort and support, and many people find strength there. But therapy can add another level of care. A trained therapist can help you work through trauma, stress, anxiety, mood concerns and relationship issues. Therapy also gives you tools to cope and improve your quality of life in a safe, nonjudgmental space.

[#MinorityMentalHealthMatters](#) [#NotaCharacterFlaw](#)

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health issue, help is out there. Contact the Mental Health America 24/7 Crisis Text Line (Text MHA to 741-741).

*Reviewed by medical director, MD and senior counsel, JD.*



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