

Understand to Upstand

KNOW THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL DISTRESS

Understanding the impact of mental health symptoms and diagnoses is the first step on the journey to helping others. **Upstanders** actively take steps to safely provide support to those who need it!

CHANGES IN BEHAVIORS

Some noticeable behaviors can include changes in appetite or sleeping habits, risk-taking behaviors, difficulty committing to daily responsibilities, like work or school, and withdrawal from previous interests or relationships.



DIFFICULTY MANAGING EMOTIONS

Being quicker to anger or experiencing a sudden overwhelming sense of fear without a perceived cause, could indicate a mental health concern. Other changes in mood might include increased irritability, or periods of intense sadness or hyperactivity that interferes with daily living.



PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Sometimes, mental health concerns can present as physical symptoms because our mind and body are heavily linked. Some common symptoms that can indicate mental health concerns may include racing heart rate, fast breathing, frequent stomach aches or headaches. Physical symptoms should always be discussed with a medical doctor, just as mental health symptoms should be discussed with a clinician or other mental health provider.



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Mental health is an important part of our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Just like physical health, mental health occurs on a spectrum. There can be many red flags that indicate that someone is experiencing a mental health concern. Knowing the signs can help you support them.

Mental health symptoms and concerns can be caused by someone's genetics, brain chemistry, traumatic events, or a combination of all three. Certain environments, like those with frequent arguing, violence, or lack of support, can make mental health symptoms worsen. Mental health symptoms are very common and are no one's fault. Remember that just like physical health, everyone has mental health and should care for it regularly!

One of the best ways for people with mental health symptoms or diagnoses to manage their condition is by having a strong support network. Offering your support and a listening ear can help them build resilience and avoid a serious crisis.

Visit joetorre.org/podcast and tune in to **Episode 8** (*Stop the Stigma: Mental Health*) of **Safe Keeping** for more information about breaking the stigma and talking about mental health.