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ABOUT US

WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal provided dedicated to express views on topical legal issues, thereby generating a cross current of ideas on emerging matters. This platform shall also ignite the initiative and desire of young law students to contribute in the field of law. The erudite response of legal luminaries shall be solicited to enable readers to explore challenges that lie before law makers, lawyers and the society at large, in the event of the ever changing social, economic and technological scenario.

With this thought, we hereby present to you

INVISIBLE BATTLES THE HIDDEN TOLL OF **MENTAL HEALTH IN OUR SOCIETY**

AUTHOR BY - ANMOL MOTWANI

Abstract

Mental health is a topic that is frequently disregarded in India, but the National Mental Health Survey (NMHS) indicates that every sixth Indian is experiencing a problem with their mental health or any symptoms related to it, and that India is the country with the highest rate of depression in the world, ahead of China and the US. The main causes of the rising mental health issue are primarily people's lack of awareness of the problem and the amount of pressure they are under. 50% of mental illness begins with the age 14. Mental illness can be life-threatening too if it is not treated with in time. Mental illness, often misunderstood and stigmatized, encompasses a wide range of conditions affecting the mind and emotions. These conditions can impact one's thoughts, feelings, and behavior, leading to significant challenges in daily life. In this discussion, we'll explore the complexities of mental illness, its prevalence, causes, and the importance of fostering understanding and support for those who grapple with these invisible battles.

Key words

illness, mental health, emotional, India, helpline, adolescent, 50%, symptoms, life threatening, treated, thoughts, challenge, battle

Introduction

WHO claims that mental health is a state of well-being that enables people to manage life's stresses and realize their capacity to learn, work, and contribute to their society or community. According to WHO, mental health includes emotional, social, and psychological aspects of an individual that have an impact on how people think, feel, and act in general and help people make decisions. Mental illness contributes to accidental or purposeful injuries, raises the risk of other diseases, and increases mortality. Some mental illnesses may endure for a few weeks, while other times a severe illness can be a lifelong cause of substantial handicap. Mental health is tied to human emotions, and emotions are a very important component of human life.

Factor affecting mental health

- Although there are numerous complex interactions between elements that contribute to poor mental health, some mental illnesses are brought on by psychological, environmental, genetic, or biological causes, as well as social and economic ones.
- Any type of emotional, physical, sexual, or sexual abuse is caused by psychological issues, and the victim's loss of some close family or friend members often follows.
- Environmental pressure causes work or school changes, divorce, dysfunctional marriages, and low self-esteem, among other things.
- Economic factors can therefore include unemployment, low income, poverty, debt, a bad or unsteady rise in living conditions, or a sense of inferiority among individuals.
- Many mental illnesses are thought to be caused by biological or genetic factors, such as irregularities in some infection's management, which have been related to brain damage. Any deadly brain development or trauma or the time and place of birth play a role in mental disease, and particular brain injuries are linked to some mental illnesses.
- Another cause is having a bad diet and being exposed to pollutants.

Indications person suffering from mental illness

1. Major depressive disorder (depression)
 - Persistent melancholy or depression
 - Loss of enthusiasm for once-enjoyed activities
 - Alterations in weight or appetite
 - Having trouble sleeping (insomnia or oversleeping)
 - Low energy and weary
 - Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
 - Having trouble focusing or making judgments
 - Suicidal or death-related ideas
2. Anxiety conditions, such as generalized anxiety disorder
 - Excessive stress and anxiety about different parts of life agitation or tenseness
 - Irritability and muscle tension
 - Sleep issues
 - Having trouble focusing
 - Physical manifestations including perspiration, shaking, or a fast heartbeat

3. Bipolar Illness

- Strong manic episodes include: Elevated mood Increased energy
- Impulsivity
- Depression episodes like those in severe depressive disorder

4. Schizophrenia

- Delusions (erroneous ideas)
- False sensory impressions, or hallucinations
- Unorganized speech and thinking
- Erratic or unusual motor behavior
- Negative symptoms, such as social disengagement and a flat affect

5. OCD (Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder)

- Obsessions (repeated, nagging ideas)
- Compulsions (repeated actions used to combat anxiety)
- Fear of contracting an infection, hurting someone else, or other obsessions
- Ritualistic actions such as checking or repetitive handwashing

6. PTSD, or post-traumatic stress disorder

- Flashbacks or intrusive memories of a traumatic incident
- Avoiding anything that brings up the trauma
- Negative shifts in attitude or mental processes
- Hyperarousal symptoms such as agitation, hypervigilance, and disturbed sleep

7. ADHD is an attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

- Lack of attention (difficulty focusing)
- Extreme agitation and impulsivity are examples of hyperactivity.
- Impulsivity (the inability to restrain one's urges)

8. Eating disorders, such as bulimia nervosa and anorexia nervosa

- Obsession with food, weight, or appearance
- Limiting one's intake of food (anorexia)
- Binge eating followed by bulimia as a coping mechanism
- Body image distortion

9. Borderline Personality Disorder,

- Strong and shaky partnerships
- Impulsiveness and bad habits
- Irrational mood swings
- Fear of being abandoned
- Identification disorder

There are many more mental health diseases with a wide range of symptoms; these are just a few examples. Individuals may experience these diseases in different ways, so it's vital to keep in mind that addressing mental health issues requires a professional diagnosis and treatment strategy. It is strongly advised that you get treatment from a mental health expert if you or someone you know is struggling with mental health concerns.

There are many ways to prevent mental disease, including:

1. **Maintain a Healthful Lifestyle:** For optimal mental health, it's important to do regular exercise, eat a balanced diet, and get enough sleep.

2. **Manage Stress:** Engage in stress-reduction exercises like deep breathing, mindfulness, or meditation.

3. **Build Strong Relationships:** Keep a helpful social network and ask for assistance when necessary.

4. **"Set Realistic Goals":** Reduce undue strain by establishing realistic objectives and controlling expectations.

5. **Seek professional assistance:** If you see indicators of mental discomfort, don't be afraid to speak with a mental health expert.

6. **Limit or abstain from substance abuse,** which can exacerbate mental health conditions.

7. **Promote Mental Health Education:** Using education and open dialogue, combat stigma related to mental health.

Balance your personal, professional, and recreational obligations.

8. Address mental health issues as soon as possible to stop them from getting worse.

9. Prioritize self-care activities that you enjoy and find relaxing.

It's crucial to customize these steps to your particular needs and circumstances because everyone's mental health is different.

Preventive measures taken by government:-

The Indian government had made various initiatives to address mental illness as of the most recent update in September 2021:

1. The National Mental Health Program (NMHP) was established to provide mental health services, raise awareness, and minimize stigma associated with mental diseases.
2. District Mental Health Program (DMHP): DMHPs were formed across districts as part of the NMHP to provide community-based mental health treatments.
3. The 2017 Mental Health Care Act was passed with the goals of regulating mental health services and defending the rights of those who suffer from mental diseases.

The Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, is a significant piece of legislation that was passed in India in order to protect the rights of those who suffer from mental illness and to govern the provision of mental healthcare services there. Here are some crucial details concerning the law:

- ◆ **Rights of People with Mental Illness:** The act supports the rights of people with mental illness, such as the right to confidentiality, the right to live in a community, and the ability to obtain mental healthcare and treatment.
- ◆ **Advance Directives:** By outlining their preferences in advance, people can ensure that their preferences are respected when they are experiencing a mental health crisis.
- ◆ **Boards for the review of admission and treatment practices and the making of decisions** pertaining to mental healthcare are known as “mental health review boards.”
- ◆ **Decriminalization:** The act makes suicide attempts less of a crime, acknowledging that those who attempt suicide frequently need mental health help rather than legal repercussions.

- ◆ **Services for Mental Health:** It requires the provision of such services as well as the integration of mental healthcare into those provided by general healthcare services.
- ◆ **Insurance:** The law prohibits insurance companies from excluding those with mental illness from their coverage.
- ◆ **Capacity and Consent:** It highlights getting informed consent while outlining the standards for figuring out a person's capacity to make treatment decisions.
- ◆ **Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) and Psychosurgery are Prohibited:** The act restricts the use of ECT and psychosurgery, allowing them only under severe conditions.

The act's requirements are to be monitored and carried out by the central and state mental health authorities.

The 2017 Mental Healthcare Act, which aims to lessen stigma and increase access to high-quality mental health services, represents a significant move in India toward a more rights-based and humane approach to mental healthcare.

4. **Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK):** Recognizing the significance of addressing mental health issues in this age range, this initiative concentrated on adolescent mental health.

RKSK is an acronym for "Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram," which is the name of India's National Adolescent Health Program. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the program as a government effort to meet the special medical requirements of teenagers in India. RKSK offers comprehensive healthcare services and information to adolescents (aged 10–19) in an effort to promote their general health and well-being. The curriculum focuses on topics like nutrition, mental health, substance addiction prevention, sexual and reproductive health, and more. RKSK employs a multi-sectoral strategy to involve many stakeholders, such as healthcare providers, educational institutions, and local communities, in promoting the health and development of India's adolescent

5. **Helplines and Crisis Intervention:** A number of helplines and crisis intervention services were set up to offer instant assistance to people who were experiencing a crisis. Since it was established, a toll-free helpline for mental health rehabilitation with the number 1800 599 000 19 has been available. Staffed by 660 clinical rehabilitation psychologists and 668 psychiatrists, the helpline's primary goals include early screening, psychological support, stress management, and other issues. The National Institute of Persons with Multiple Disabilities and the National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation are in charge of organizing the helpline.

6. **Training for Healthcare Professionals:** Initiatives were made to educate medical staff members, such as doctors and nurses, on how to identify and treat mental health problems. Training for Healthcare Professionals: Initiatives were made to educate medical staff members, such as doctors and nurses, on how to identify and treat mental health problems.

Understanding the Journey

- **Acknowledge Your Strength:** Dealing with mental illness takes immense strength and resilience. Every day you navigate through challenges demonstrates your inner fortitude.

- **Break the Stigma:** Remember that mental health is just as vital as physical health. Seeking help is a sign of self-care and self-compassion, not a cause for shame.

The Power of Seeking Help

- **1. Professional Support:** Trained mental health professionals are there to listen, understand, and guide you through your struggles. Therapy and counseling can be transformative.

- **2. Medication:** For some conditions, medication prescribed by a psychiatrist can be a crucial part of the treatment plan. These medications can help stabilize mood and manage symptoms.

- **3. Peer Support:** Peer support groups provide a safe space to share experiences and coping strategies. Connecting with others who've faced similar challenges can be incredibly validating.

Overcoming the Hurdles

- 1. The Fear of Judgment: It's normal to worry about how others might perceive you. Remember that seeking help is a personal choice, and your well-being should always come first.
- 2. Taking the First Step: Taking that initial step to seek help can be daunting. Start by confiding in a trusted friend or family member who can offer support during this process.

The Journey to Healing

- 1. Patience and Persistence: Recovery is not always linear. There may be setbacks, but each step forward, no matter how small, is a victory.
- 2. Self-compassion: Be gentle with yourself. Mental illness is an illness, not a personal failing. Practice self-care and self-love.

Conclusion: -

In conclusion, mental health issues are intricate and diverse illnesses that can afflict anyone, regardless of age, gender, or background. They cover a broad spectrum of illnesses, from schizophrenia and bipolar disorder to anxiety and sadness. Because mental health issues can have a significant influence on people's lives. Mental illness can be an isolating and challenging journey, but it's essential to remember that you are not alone. Many individuals face similar struggles, and there is hope and help available. Seeking assistance is not a sign of weakness but a courageous step towards a healthier and happier life. Seeking help for mental illness is a brave and vital decision. It's a testament to your resilience and determination to live a fulfilling life. Remember that recovery is possible, and there are countless stories of individuals who have overcome similar challenges. The journey to healing may be challenging, but it's a journey worth taking.