



Putting the Pieces Together

Becoming a People of Welcome & Support
to People with Mental Health Challenges



Mental Health Challenges Are...

- A biological, medical disorder.
 - Not the person's fault.
- Not a respecter of persons.
- Cause of other challenges.
- A casserole-less condition.



Why We Should Care

- All of us are created
- in the image of God
 - and have worth.
 - - Genesis 1:26-7 .



Why We Should Care

- We are called to be compassionate,
rejoice in hope,
 - care for the needs of others,
- and weep with those who weep...
 - - Romans 12:9-15



Resolution Calls the Church

- To strive to become a people
 - of welcome and support
 - to all God's children
- despite their mental health status.



Seriousness of Problem

- Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in adults.
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in young people 15-24.
 - - National Association on Mental Illness



Seriousness of Problem

- 1 in 5 adults experience
- a mental health challenge in any given year.
- 1 in 5 teenagers experience
- a severe mental health challenge.
- - National Institute on Mental Health



Seriousness of Problem

- Loved ones and caregivers of people
- who have a mental health challenge
- are also affected and need support;



Seriousness of Problem

- 1 in 2 people
- with a mental health challenge
 - will not receive treatment.
- - National Institute on Mental Health



Recovery Is Probable with Treatment & Support

- With appropriate treatment and support,
 - 70-90% of people
 - with serious mental health challenge
 - have significant reduction of symptoms
 - and improved quality of life
- - National Alliance on Mental Illness



Recovery Is Probable with Treatment & Support

Each person needs to be treated
as if they can recover.



Recovery Is

Journey not a destination

Deeply personal, unique process
fueled by hope and
built on one's strengths and abilities

Way of living
a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life
even with limitations caused by the illness



Recovery Is

- Development of
 - new meaning and purpose in one's life
 - as one grows beyond
 - the catastrophic effects
 - of their mental health challenge.

Development of an identity
apart from their challenge.



Goal of Recovery

“The goal of the recovery process
is NOT to become normal...”



Goal of Recovery

“The goal is to become
the unique, awesome,
never to be repeated
human being
that we are called to be.”



You cannot predict
who will recover by

How long a person has been ill.

How serious their condition is.

When their illness began.



The ONLY predictor
of recovery

HOPE



Clergy Must Be Able to Help

- Clergy, not mental health professionals,
 - are the most common source of help
 - sought in times of psychological distress.
- - Baylor University Study



Disciples' Resolution Calls Church Leaders

- to become more knowledgeable
 - so they can fight stigma,
 - be supportive of recovery,
 - and provide information about
 - mental health, recovery
- and available resources for treatment.



Disciples' Resolution Calls the Church

- to encourage and enable
 - the education of church leaders
- by putting on its website and in print
 - information about these things
 - in order that people affected,
 - their loved ones, and caregiversexperience welcome, support & recovery.



UCC's Resolution

- Calls churches to be WISE churches:
 - Welcoming
 - Inclusive
 - Supportive
 - Engaged



Hope

- Believe in our capacity to change & grow.
- Have high expectations.
- Allow us to dream.
- Hold hope for us when we can't hope.



Empowerment

- Encourage action.
- Encourage education.
- Encourage us to meet others in recovery.
- Point out our smallest successes.



Self-Determination

- Collaborate with us in planning.
- Allow us to make mistakes.
- Help, but don't do for us what we can do ourselves.



Meaningful Role

- Encourage us to believe we are “much more than that”.
- Encourage us to find our niche in the community.



Churches Can Inform Members

Mental health challenges and what causes them.

Recovery is possible with treatment & support.

How to be supportive of recovery.

How to access the local mental health system.

Local support groups or the one at church.



Churches Can

Pray for us and our families every Sunday.

Have a Mental Health Sunday.

Have church leaders share their own experience with a mental health challenge.

Have an “In Our Own Voice” presentation by NAMI.



Please Remember

- We are more
 - than
- our mental health challenge!