

**Mental health is...**

1

2

3

**These are some of the characteristics of people with good mental health.**

1

*They feel  
comfortable  
about  
themselves.*

They are not bowled over by their own emotions—by their fears, anger, love, jealousy, guilt or worries.

They can take life's disappointments in their stride.

They have a tolerant, easy-going attitude towards themselves as well as others; they can laugh at themselves.

They neither under-estimate nor over-estimate their abilities.

They can accept their own shortcomings.

They have self-respect.

They feel able to deal with most situations that come their way.

They get satisfaction from the simple, every-day pleasures.

2

*They feel  
right  
about  
other people.*

They are able to give love and to consider the interests of others.

They have personal relationships that are satisfying and lasting.

They expect to like and trust others, and take it for granted that others will like and trust them.

They respect the many differences they find in people.

They do not push people around, nor do they allow themselves to be pushed around.

They can feel they are part of a group.

They feel a sense of responsibility to their neighbors and fellow men.

3

*They are able  
to meet  
the demands  
of life.*

They do something about their problems as they arise.

They accept their responsibilities.

They shape their environment whenever possible; they adjust to it whenever necessary.

They plan ahead but do not fear the future.

They welcome new experiences and new ideas.

They make use of their natural capacities.

They set realistic goals for themselves.

They are able to think for themselves and make their own decisions.

They put their best effort into what they do, and get satisfaction out of doing it.

**Many people**, when they hear the term *mental health* think first of *mental illness*. But *mental health* is far more than merely the absence of *mental illness*.

*Mental health* is something all of us want for ourselves, whether we know it by name or not. When we speak of happiness, or peace of mind, or enjoyment, or satisfaction, we are usually talking about *mental health*.

*Mental health* has to do with everybody's everyday life. It means the over-all way that people get along—in their families, at school, on the job, at play, with their associates, in their communities. It has to do with the way that each person harmonizes his desires, ambition, abilities, ideals, feelings and his conscience in order to meet the demands of life as he has to face it. It has to do with:

- 1 *how you feel about yourself*
- 2 *how you feel about other people*
- 3 *how you are able to meet  
the demands of life*

There is no line that neatly divides the mentally healthy from the unhealthy. There are many different degrees of *mental health*. No one characteristic by itself can be taken as evidence of good *mental health*, nor the lack of any one as evidence of *mental illness*. And nobody has all the traits of good *mental health* all the time.

One way of describing *mental health* is to describe mentally healthy people. Just *knowing* what *mental health* is doesn't mean you can go out and *be* mentally healthy, but *knowing can* help you to think straight about it.

*good friends*

**Mentally healthy people are:** *good workers*

*good mates*

*good parents*

*good citizens*

**Knowing ourselves helps us  
to live better with others.  
Through scientific research,  
we are learning more  
and more about this business  
of keeping mentally healthy.  
In your community, there are  
organizations and people who can  
give you the facts.  
Learn more about mental health  
and what can be done about it.**

## **State Department of Mental Hygiene**

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