



# **AWARENESS TODAY, TOMORROW, AND EVERYDAY AFTER THAT**

SEROTONIN SAYS MONTHLY:  
MAY EDITION

# MY PERSONAL MENTAL HEALTH STORY

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It's the beginning of Mental Health Awareness Month, and in honor of that I'd like to share my story. But, I don't want the focus of my personal journey to be about my struggles, but my recovery. Recovery is hard, but beautiful and worth it.

I first asked for help in seventh grade, and that's when I started therapy. I learned that working through my feelings and talking about them is hard, and I have a tendency to give up when things are hard. So, seventh grade through the middle of freshmen year I kind of just went through the motions. I sat and talked, but then I would go home and not do any of the work. So obviously, that wasn't working.

Middle of freshman year I started DBT (Dialectical Behavioral Therapy), and at first I continued with my old patterns of not putting in the work. But sophomore year the people around me that cared about told me that I needed to change that habit, that it was time to put in the work. It took a little time and push back, but eventually I agreed that there needed to be a change.

From there, I worked with my treatment team and my loved ones. I began to focus time and energy on myself, and from there self love sprouted and grew. I learned to identify and love my emotions, I learned that vulnerability is a strength, I learned that I am strong for asking for help, and so much more lessons that got me closer to my life worth living. And at the end of the day the journey of recovery saved my life.

I feel as though this quick summary made recovery sound short. I am still in recovery, and I'm learning something new about self love and growth everyday. I wrote this to let you know that it's worth it. Asking for help is worth it. Recovery is worth it.





# WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

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WRITTEN BY SOPHIA WONG  
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Mental health has become an increasingly important term, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many have been emotionally affected. Education has shown an increase in both awareness and emphasis on mental health, and there has been an increased concern in the emotional well-being of healthcare workers working during the pandemic. Mental health can be defined as one's emotional, psychological, and social well-being; it can affect how we think, feel, act, and handle stress in life. It can even affect physical health, which is why it is so important to understand.

Mental health has a long history of discrimination and stigma, in fact, more than half of people with mental illnesses don't try to receive help. Cultural/social prejudice, the fear of being treated differently, and the possibility of losing jobs or other things of importance all create a fear of being open about mental health.

Deep-rooted institutional stigmas and misrepresentation have created an environment where people with mental illnesses are thought of negatively, and cultural views/values of various racial and ethnic groups can deter individuals from speaking out about mental health. Another big barrier is the distrust in the mental healthcare system from communities such as the African-American community, which has suffered from a long history of mistreatment within the medical and healthcare fields.



# WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH? (CONTINUED)

In the battle of dispelling these issues and erasing the stigma around mental health, it is necessary to combat the lack of understanding and misinformation that circles around the world. Just being open about mental health and educating yourself and others can make a big impact.

There are many factors that can affect mental health, such as biological factors (for example genes), life experiences (such as abuse or other trauma), a family history of mental health issues, or other environmental factors such as stress in the workplace.

There are many symptoms of mental health issues, but they vary from person to person; one's emotional response could be entirely different from someone else. If you feel that you have a mental health problem, seek help or talk to someone you trust.



Even as the world takes strides toward a more accepting world, the present still contains large amounts of prejudice, discrimination, and stigma towards mental health.

Let's push towards an environment where mental health is something everyone can talk about without anything holding them back.

**WRITTEN BY SOPHIA WONG**  
**EDITED BY MADELINE GOLD**



# MAY ZENTANGLE

BY MAYA SIEGAL



MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS EVERY DAY!

# MENTAL HEALTH FACTS

BY MADELINE GOLD

1. **1 in 5 people experience a mental health condition at some point in their lives.**
2. **People with a mental health issue are generally nonviolent. In fact, only 3-5% of violent acts can be attributed to people with a serious mental illness.**
3. **There are many factors that contribute to both the positive and negative aspects of mental health.**
4. **Each year, mental illness costs the United States over 200 billion dollars.**
5. **70-90% of people who seek proper treatment for mental health disorders witness a significant reduction in symptoms.**

## Quote of the Month

"Being vulnerable is actually a strength and not a weakness — that's why more and more mental health is such an important thing to talk about. It's the same as being physically sick. And when you keep all those things inside, when you bottle them up, it makes you ill."  
- Cara Delevigne

## Song of the Month

# SUNFLOWER BY REX ORANGE COUNTY



# CHECK IN NEXT MONTH

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SEROTONIN SAYS MENTAL  
HEALTH CHALLENGE OF  
THE MONTH: TELL YOUR  
FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO  
READ OUR NEWSPAPER AND  
FOLLOW OUR INSTAGRAM  
@SEROTONINSAYS TO HELP  
SPREAD MORE MENTAL  
HEALTH AWARENESS!

FOR MORE  
MENTAL  
HEALTH  
CONTENT

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