Changing the Age-old Stigmatization of Mental Health

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Changing the age-old stigmatization of mental health

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Introduction

For years, the importance of mental health has been overlooked. In the past, individuals possessing unstable mental health were not only neglected, but they were highly stigmatized. In the 20th century, these individuals were thought to have demonic roots—they were feared. The mentally ill have been institutionalized, deinstitutionalized, and institutionalized yet again.

Mental health stigmatization has detrimental effects on those that fall victim to it—ridding our society of this cruel stigmatization is long overdue.

While prior research has shown that contact with mentally ill and mentally unstable individuals, as well as organized protests against mental health stigma, can be effective means of diminishing mental health stigma, the portrayal of mental health in the media, the system, and the prevalence of mental health issues and conditions don’t seek help, often because of stigma.

Research has also shown that over 25% of adults between 18 and 24 have a mental illness. This makes many college-aged individuals vulnerable to mental instability and makes seeking treatment during the college years essential. However, 40% of college students with mental health conditions don’t seek help, often because of stigma.

Methods

I’m proposing a new college course aimed at contributing to changing this age-old stigmatization of mental health. This proposed course is intended to provide students with a broad overview of the history and development of mental health and mental health stigma, the portrayal of mental health in the media, the significance of mental health in the criminal justice system, and the prevalence of mental health issues and stigma on college campuses.

Proposed aspects of this course have been created including a syllabus, a lecture, and exam questions which complement the lecture. A proposed update to the course curriculum sheet has also been drafted. Should this course be implemented, I hope that it would reduce mental health stigmatization, and normalize seeking help for mental instability on college campuses.

Proposed Syllabus

A course syllabus that extensively outlines the proposed course has been created. The course is titled PSY 104, Understanding and Accepting Mental Health.

This syllabus includes a course description, a list of outcomes, and a schedule of classes. It also includes information about prerequisites, reading materials, course requirements, and grading.

Proposed Lecture

This lecture gives an in-depth look at some notable statistics about mental health on college campuses, seeking help on campus, self-care throughout college, and current trends regarding mental health services at American colleges.

Proposed Evaluation Questions

Based on the sample lecture about mental health on college campuses, sample evaluation questions have been created. These questions would be included in the second evaluation.

These questions test students knowledge of the prevalence of mental health on college campuses, the stigmatization of mental health on college campuses, when students should seek help, why self-care is important, and the current trends on American college campuses, in regards to mental health awareness.

Proposed Curriculum Sheet

A proposed update to the course curriculum sheet has been drafted. This would include PSY 104 in both psychology and general education curricula.