

Warning
Signs &
Symptoms
of Mental
Illness

Common **WARNING SIGNS** of Mental Illness

Diagnosing mental illness isn't a straightforward science. We can't test for it the same way we can test blood sugar levels for diabetes. Each condition has its own set of unique symptoms, though symptoms often overlap. Common signs and/or symptoms can include:

- ! Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks
- ! Trying to harm or end one's life or making plans to do so
- ! Severe, out-of-control, risk-taking behavior that causes harm to self or others
- ! Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or difficulty breathing
- ! Significant weight loss or gain
- ! Seeing, hearing or believing things that aren't real*
- ! Excessive use of alcohol or drugs
- ! Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality or sleeping habits
- ! Extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still
- ! Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities



*Various communities and backgrounds might view this sign differently based on their beliefs and experiences. Some people within these communities and cultures may not interpret hearing voices as unusual.

WORRIED ABOUT YOURSELF OR SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT?



If you notice any of these symptoms, it's important to ask questions



Try to understand what they're experiencing and how their daily life is impacted



Making this connection is often the first step to getting treatment

50%

of all lifetime mental illness begins by age

14

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



Talk with a health care professional



Learn more about mental illness



Take a mental health education class



Call the NAMI HelpLine at 800-950-NAMI (6264)

75%

by age

24

Data from CDC, NIMH and other select sources. Find citations for this resource at nami.org/mhstats

NAMI HelpLine
800-950-NAMI (6264)



AVERAGE TEEN OR WARNING SIGN?

Symptoms of mental illness can often appear similar to average teen development.



VS

AVERAGE ADOLESCENCE

Withdrawing from family to spend more time with friends

Wanting more privacy



Moving from childhood likes to teen pursuits

POTENTIAL WARNING SIGN

Withdrawing from friends, family and social activity



Becoming secretive; Seems to be hiding something

Losing interest in favorite activities and not replacing with other pursuits



Learn how to help a young person who may need help. Get trained in Mental Health First Aid.

www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org

Mental Health America

May is Mental Health Month



Mental Illness Warning Signs

Getting early help with mental health issues can have a positive impact on treatment. Being aware of signs that you or a loved one may need help can save lives. The following list includes signs that indicate help may be needed. It's important to note that a combination or sudden onset of several symptoms can be a trigger to seek professional help.



IN ADULTS, YOUNG ADULTS

AND ADOLESCENTS:

- Confused thinking
- Prolonged depression (sadness or irritability)
- Feelings of extreme highs and lows
- Excessive fears, worries and anxieties
- Social withdrawal
- Dramatic changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Strong feelings of anger
- Strange thoughts (delusions)
- Seeing or hearing things that aren't there (hallucinations)
- Growing inability to cope with daily problems and activities
- Suicidal thoughts
- Numerous unexplained physical ailments
- Substance use



IN OLDER CHILDREN AND PRE-ADOLESCENTS:

- Substance use
- Inability to cope with problems and daily activities
- Changes in sleeping and/or eating habits
- Excessive complaints of physical ailments
- Changes in ability to manage responsibilities - at home and/or at school
- Defiance of authority, truancy, theft, and/or vandalism
- Intense fear
- Prolonged negative mood, often accompanied by poor appetite or thoughts of death
- Frequent outbursts of anger

IN YOUNGER CHILDREN:

- Changes in school performance
- Poor grades despite strong efforts
- Changes in sleeping and/or eating habits
- Excessive worry or anxiety (i.e. refusing to go to bed or school)
- Hyperactivity
- Persistent nightmares
- Persistent disobedience or aggression
- Frequent temper tantrums

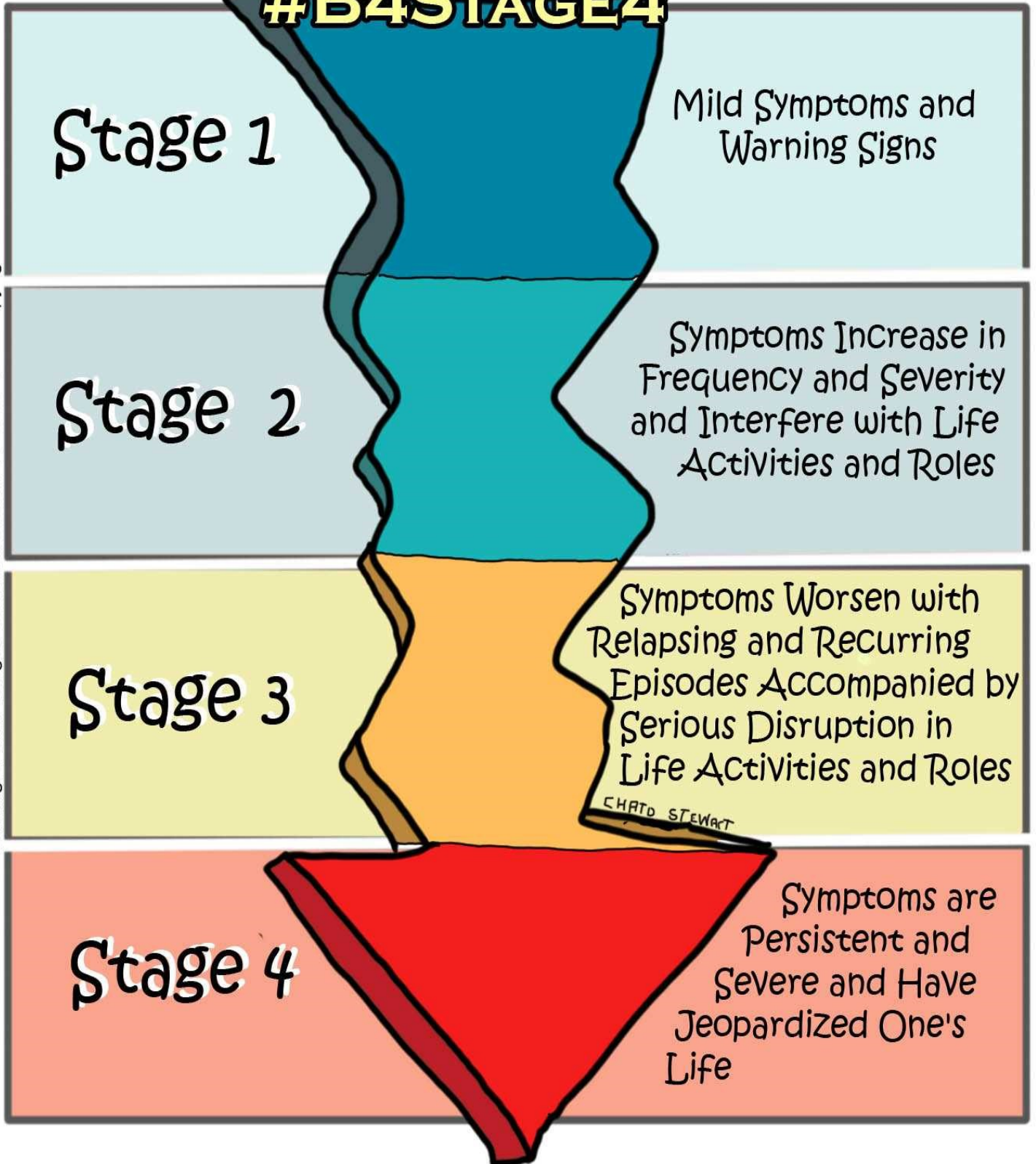
If you or someone you know is in crisis now, seek help immediately.

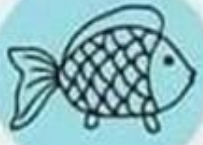
Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) to reach a 24 hour crisis center or dial 911 for immediate assistance.

Stages of Mental Health Conditions

#B4STAGE4

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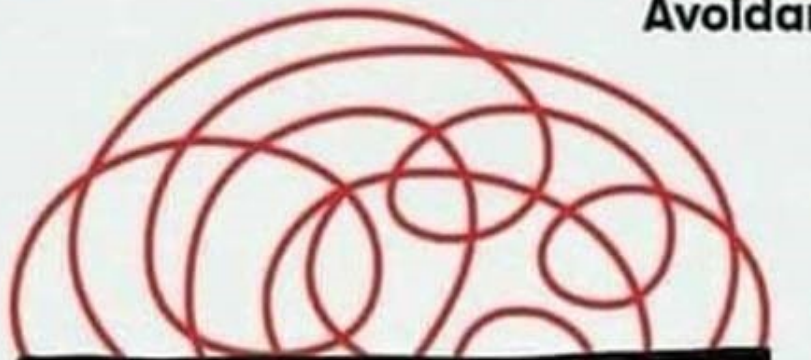
Memory Issues



Overthinking



Avoidance



HOW TO RECOGNIZE ANXIETY IN YOURSELF AND OTHERS



Insomnia



Sweating



Rapid heartbeat



Stomach Issues



Headaches



Panic attacks



Trouble breathing



Needing reassurance



Procrastination



Constant worrying



Lack of patience



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION



DIFFICULTIES CONCENTRATING



PHYSICAL ACHES AND PAINS

FINDING NO PLEASURE IN LIFE OR THINGS YOU USUALLY ENJOY



FEELING GUILTY

CHANGES IN APPETITE OR WEIGHT



RESTLESS, AGITATED OR IRRITABLE

FEELING TIRED ALL THE TIME



LOSS OF INTEREST

FEELING WORTHLESS



LACK OF ENERGY

LOW SELF ESTEEM



EMPTYNESS

FEELING TEARFUL



LOW SEX DRIVE

INDECISIVENESS



NO MOTIVATION

LOW MOOD



DESPAIR

FEELING HOPELESS

NO SELF CONFIDENCE



DIFFICULTY TO SPEAK CLEARLY

FEELING NUMB

AVOIDING SOCIAL EVENTS



INSOMNIA OR HYPERSONNIA



@BELIEVEPHQ

Suicide WARNING SIGNS

**MAKING
SUICIDE**
threats

**NEGATIVE
VIEW
of SELF**



A sense of
HOPELESSNESS
OR
NO HOPE
for the
FUTURE



ISOLATION
or
**FEELING
ALONE**



**AGGRESSIVENESS
and
IRRITABILITY**

**Possessing
LETHAL
MEANS**



**FEELING LIKE A
BURDEN**
to others

DRASTIC
changes in
MOOD
and
BEHAVIOUR



**FREQUENTLY
TALKING**
about
DEATH



**SELF-
HARM**
like
CUTTING
behaviours



**ENGAGING
in "risky"
BEHAVIORS**



SUBSTANCE
abuse

GIVING
things **AWAY**

**Making funeral
ARRANGEMENTS**



PREVIOUS
suicide
ATTEMPTS

History of
SUBSTANCE
ABUSE



Physical
DISABILITY
or
ILLNESS



RELATIONSHIP
PROBLEMS

Some
Important



RISK
FACTORS
for suicide

Losing a
FRIEND or
FAMILY MEMBER
to **SUICIDE**

ACCESS to
HARMFUL
MEANS



Recent
DEATH of a
FAMILY
MEMBER

or a

CLOSE
FRIEND



MENTAL
HEALTH
CONDITION

Ongoing
EXPOSURE to
BULLYING
behavior



Warning Signs: Eating Disorders

People with eating disorders risk premature death due to medical complications.



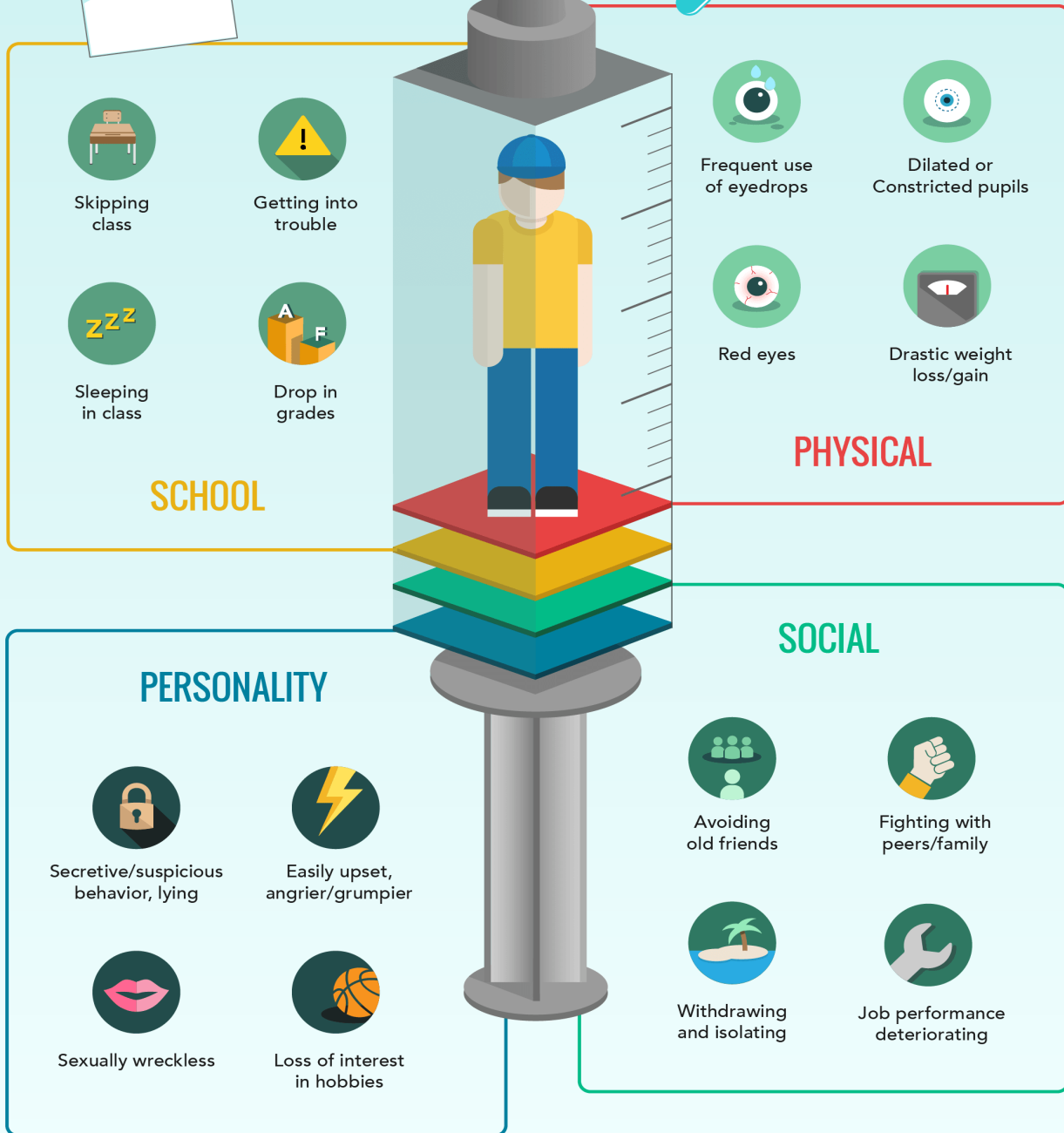
- Low self esteem and body image
- Dramatic weight loss
- Preoccupation with weight, food facts, meal rituals
- Routine bathroom trips immediately after eating
- Binging on and hoarding large amounts of food
- Increased use of laxatives, diuretics or diet pills
- Compulsive exercising
- Withdrawn from friends and activities

Source: National Eating Disorders Association

WebKazoo graphic

TEEN ADDICTION

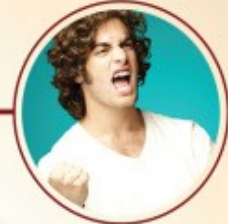
Warning Signs



7 Warning Signs *for* Underage Drinking

MOOD CHANGES

temper flare-ups, irritability, and defensiveness



SCHOOL PROBLEMS

poor attendance, low grades, and/or recent disciplinary action

REBELLION

rebellious and not following family rules



CHANGE OF FRIENDS

switching friends and a reluctance to let you get to know the new ones

“NOTHING MATTERS” ATTITUDE

sloppy appearance, a lack of involvement in former interests, and general low energy



ALCOHOL PRESENCE

finding it in your child's room or backpack or smelling alcohol on his or her breath

PHYSICAL OR MENTAL PROBLEMS

memory lapses, poor concentration, bloodshot eyes, lack of coordination, or slurred speech



For more information, visit

talk
they hear you

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
SAMHSA
www.samhsa.gov • 1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727)

HOW TO TELL IF YOU ARE A PROBLEM GAMBLER

Do you use gambling as
an escape?



Do you stay in denial about
your problem?



Do you miss school
or work to gamble?



Do you withdraw
from family?



Do you neglect
relationships
to gamble?



Do you continue to
gamble despite
consequences?



Do you face financial
troubles because
of gambling?



Do you feel incapable
of stopping?



Do you feel at risk of losing
your job?



addictions.com

LEADING THE WAY TO RECOVERY