

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

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Mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness. Good mental health and well-being are a combination of feeling good and functioning well as stated by Newby, J., & Rosenbaum, S. (2020, May 26). The World Health Organization (WHO) conceptualizes mental health as a state of well-being in which an individual realizes their own abilities can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to their community. Moreover, achieving and maintaining good mental health is much more than just being happy and staying positive all the time.

According to Masanda, A. (2020), the following characteristics below portray what makes one mentally healthy:

Uses life skills which include skills that make you enjoy your life to its fullest and in turn enable you to reach your fullest potentialities and use them to contribute to others. Certainly, various life skills may be engaged from personal to interpersonal skills. These life skills may include stress management skills which display the ability to handle demanding situations that test your abilities to remain calm, resolute, and even functional. As humans, we are constantly challenged by an unending and ever-widening variety of stresses. The ability to handle and deal with them effectively is indeed a very useful life skill that preserves and even improves one's overall mental health.

Another characteristic of good mental health is feeling comfortable with other people, which means having a good sense of company with other people. At the same time, you can have an equally comfortable reflective moment with yourself within your

social relationships. Being comfortable with others also means gaining a certain degree of acceptance or tolerance of their individualities and differences. This further suggests that you can work effectively in diverse situations with various people.

Being able to meet the demands of everyday life is also a characteristic of a mentally healthy person. Knowing how to prioritize, synergize, and optimize most tasks that are required of the person. A mentally healthy person can integrate all aspects of their career or studies, family, community, and personal life into meaningful strategies that best work for them and the people around them.

Expression of emotions in healthy ways. Every emotion, no matter how good or bad they feel, must be expressed. But we should be mindful of how we express our emotions. Doing so makes us constantly in check of our emotions across various situations and circumstances which is a vital step in attaining and maintaining good mental health.

Being generally optimistic. Optimism is not the absence of negativity, but the ability to transform it into positive opportunities. Being generally optimistic may help you recognize the negatives but choosing to focus on the positives. Developing a wider perspective relative to its concern which includes discussing the negatives and turning it into positive opportunities for development.

Feeling good about oneself. Feeling good about oneself doesn't mean you have to be the most attractive, wealthiest, or smartest person you know. It only requires that you see yourself as you truly are and be completely okay with it. Beauty and all sorts of attractiveness are all relative and only socially constructed. This idea gives us a chance to better appreciate ourselves because feeling good is a feeling and not a physical representation. A mentally healthy person can feel good about themselves without having a sense of entitlement.

Uses “I” messages. Stating your opinions, ideas, and most especially feelings about certain topics and situations using a first-person viewpoint indicates that you are taking responsibility for it. That is exactly the value of using “I” messages whenever you communicate with other people. Taking responsibility for yourself indicates taking guidance on how you deliver your messages to the people around you.

A mentally healthy person copes and adapts with change. We are relentlessly subjected to a never-ending array of changes from across all aspects of our lives. These continuous challenges may cause us a great deal of stress and difficulties in adjustment. However, your ability to cope with the challenges and your adaptability to a changing environment is a great buffer to make you stay psychologically functional and resilient.

Displays Assertiveness. Having a balanced degree of passiveness and aggressiveness leads to a much more productive characteristic which is assertiveness. This means you are courageous enough to speak for yourself and never allow others to take advantage of you or let anyone harass you, while at the same time remaining congenial and approachable to others. Many people do not realize that being assertive is a good characteristic to have. Being assertive requires you to be completely self-assured in the sense that you demand what you deserve while safeguarding other people.

Ability to be part of a team or group. A mentally healthy person knows when to act and pitch in their leadership qualities and ideas and when to decelerate and yield to someone in authority to do the role and execute from therein. A mentally healthy person also works effectively as part of a team or group.

How many of the ten characteristics of good mental health do you possess? And how many of these characteristics need more improvements in yourself? Good mental health entails having at least eight or more of the ten characteristics. This stringent standard is based on the idea that achieving and maintaining good mental health requires more than the usual criteria of being just happy.

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