

Most important of all, if you have concerns about your own or someone else's mental health and well-being, do not be afraid to seek help. The Parish Nurse can help connect you with community resources.

Karen Watson - 519-578-0660, when the answering service picks up, then press 2 for the confidential line.



May 2016 Healthy Reflections

Body, Mind & Spirit

Let's Be Candid! Mental Health Matters

How can we help?

Mental Health and Well-Being is defined as “a positive sense of well-being or the capacity to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face.” Our mental health and well-being is not a fixed state – it can change from day to day, or even during the course of one day. “It is influenced by life experiences, our relationships, our workplace or other environments, as well as the social and economic conditions that shape our lives.” (quotes from www.cmha.ca)

Current statistics tell us that at least 1 in 5 Canadians will experience a mental health issue in their lifetime. Sadly, depression and anxiety disorders are on the rise in nearly all developed countries. Even with this rising prevalence of mental illness, the stigma associated with these illnesses often prevents people from getting the support and treatment that they need.

As a faith community there are many ways we can help. *

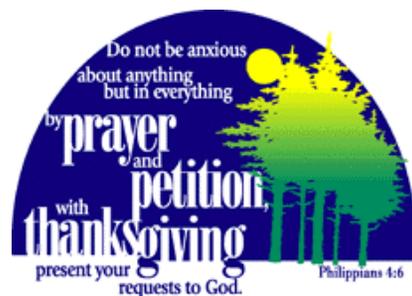
- We can be open to talking about mental illness
- We can learn more about what it is like for those who experience mental health challenges
- We can walk alongside people and families who struggle with the effects of mental illness
- We can remind each other that God welcomes and includes us all as His children



Some Community Resources:

- Shalom Counselling **519 886-9690**
- K-W Counselling **519-884-0000**
- Canadian Mental Health Association web site www.cmha.ca
- 24/ 7 Crisis Line for Mental Health and Addictions 1-844-437-3247
- for Children's Mental Health Services – Lutherwood: 519-749-2932 or www.lutherwood.ca

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”



Philippians 4: 4-7

- We too can welcome and include those who suffer with mental illness
- We can encourage people to seek appropriate professional help (medical or counselling)
- We can pray for healing and for the strength to live with challenges

(*“A Christian Response to Mental Illness” – an MCC publication)

Even children and youth can experience mental health issues. Anxiety, depression, self-harm behaviours, and even suicidal thoughts are struggles faced by many young families and children. If you have a friend or family member who is struggling, here are some ways you can help: *

- Listen lots – encourage them to talk about how they are feeling
- Sit in silence with them if they do not want to talk – do not desert your friendship
- Encourage them to get medical / professional help; if a child, youth or young adult, encourage them to talk to their parents
- Pray for your friend to find the help they need
- Offer to support them and go with them to find help
- Keep their confidence by not sharing their struggles with others, **EXCEPT.....**

..... Remember that if a person is suicidal or self-harming it is important to get them help immediately. Tell the person that you **must tell someone else**, attempt to get a promise from them that they will not harm themselves

without telling you first, and then tell an adult (teacher or parent) or call the crisis help line

(Here 24/7 ... 1-844-437-3247)

(*“Talk About it – Youth & Depression” – an MCC publication)

Mental Health & Well-being is acknowledged as one of the three most important aspects of maintaining our overall good health. Even if we do not have a mental illness, maintaining good mental health is a lot like staying physically healthy. It requires some attention on a regular basis. Here are a few of the key points for keeping mentally healthy:



- Create positive parenting and family relationships
- Make and keep positive and supportive friendships
- Develop coping skills for everyday life – there are always challenges facing each and every one of us
- Learn how to manage stress effectively
- Develop skills for acknowledging and expressing your emotions
- Strengthen your spiritual resources and your social networks

(*Canadian Mental Health Association fact sheet – see Health and Wellness bulletin board.)