



THE 4 R'S OF MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT® WORKBOOK



GATEWAY TO HOPE

Gateway to Hope is the training program of the **Hope and Healing Center & Institute**. We offer evidence-based, mental health training and ongoing support to faith communities, schools, and workplaces. Our mental health coach training program enhances your comprehension of mental health and empowers you to effectively implement it in practice. These courses will equip you with the tools to compassionately support those in mental distress and help build a community-based response to the mental health crisis.

GATEWAY TO HOPE

gatewaytohope@mentalhealthgateway.org

www.gthu.org

Copyright © 2026, Gateway to Hope.

All rights reserved.

© 2019-2026 The 4 R's of Mental Health Support. All rights reserved.

The Hope and Healing Center & Institution is an expression of St. Martin Episcopal Church's vision to minister to those broken by life circumstances and a direct response to the compassionate Great Commission of Jesus. An independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization housed on the St. Martin's campus, the HHCI is a comprehensive mental health resource serving the Houston community and beyond.

Table Of Contents

01 The First “R” Recognize

Recognizing Mental Distress

02 The Second “R” Refer

Connecting to Appropriate Support

03 The Third “R” Relate

Communicating with Compassion

04 The Fourth “R” Restore

Supporting Recovery and Resilience

05 Conclusion & Notes

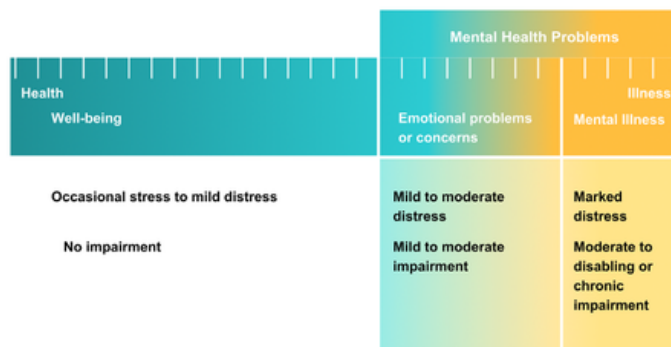


What is Mental Health?

Mental health effects:

- Thoughts
- Feelings
- Behaviors
- Relationships
- Daily functioning

Mental Health Exists on a Continuum



Common Mental Health Challenges

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Trauma
- Substance Use Challenges



7

What Influences Mental Health?

Biological Factors

- Genetics
- Brain chemistry
- Physical health

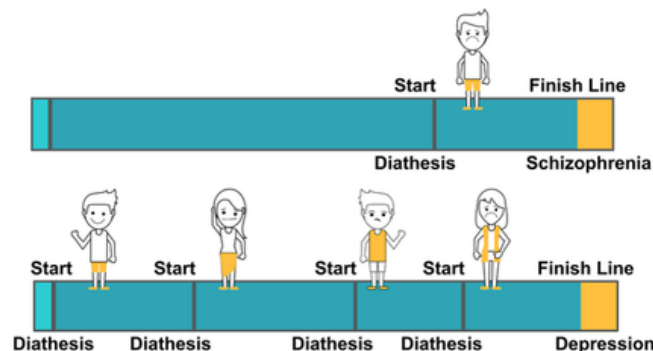
Environmental Factors

- Relationships
- Trauma
- Life events
- Financial stress



8

What Causes a Mental Disorder?



9

Assessing Daily Functioning

The Big Three:

- Work
- School
- Relationships

Impairment in at least one area of daily living is often symptomatic of psychological distress.



Common Warning Signs

- Changes in mood
- Sleep problems
- Withdrawal
- Loss of interest
- Increased substance use
- Difficulty concentrating



Four Different Views of "Mental Health"

- Psychoses or chronic mental illness (e.g., Schizophrenia, Major Depressive Disorder, and Bipolar Disorder).
- Broader set of emotional concerns that may or may not be diagnosable (e.g., severe anxiety, stress, trauma, and situational depression).
- Everyday ups and downs experienced by the general public; emotional challenges arising from negative life events (e.g., divorce, illness, loss of a job, and death of a loved one).
- A state of well-being in which every individual realizes their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community.



Common Symptoms of Mental Disorders

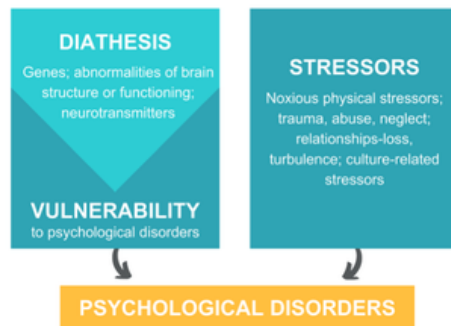
- Feeling sad or down
- Confused thinking or reduced ability to concentrate
- Excessive fears or worries, or extreme feelings of guilt
- Extreme mood changes of highs and lows
- Withdrawal from friends and activities
- Significant fatigue, low energy, or problems sleeping
- Detached from reality (delusions), paranoia, or hallucinations
- Trouble understanding and relating to situations and to people
- Alcohol or drug use
- Major changes in eating habits
- Excessive anger, hostility, or violence
- Suicidal thinking

SOURCE: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mental-illness/symptoms-cause/symc-20374988>



13

What Causes a Mental Disorder?



14

REFER:

Connecting to Appropriate Support



When Should Someone Seek Help?

- Person is a danger to self / others
- Actively misusing alcohol or drugs
- Untreated mental disorder or mental health has declined significantly



Suicide Facts

- 10th leading cause of death in the US
- 2nd leading cause of death for those 10-34
- Women have more suicidal thoughts and attempt at a higher rate
- More men die by suicide (70% of all deaths by suicide)
- More than 90% of those who die by suicide are suffering with a mental illness
- The rate of suicide is highest in middle-aged white men
- Asking the "suicide question" does not increase the risk of suicide and may save a life



Assessing Suicidality

Ask specifically if they...

- (1) are having suicidal thoughts / ideas
- (2) have a plan of action
- (3) have access to the lethal means



18

Barriers to Mental Health Care

Accessibility

- No Transportation
- Serious Lack of Mental Health Facilities
- Too Few Mental Health Professionals

Affordability

- Limited Financial Resources
- No Insurance or Mental Health Coverage

Acceptability

- Stigma
- Cultural Beliefs
- Lack of Knowledge and Education



19

Navigating the System

PROVIDERS	TYPES OF LICENSURE	PROVIDER SPECIFICS
Primary Care Physicians	LPC, LMFT, LCSW, LCDC	Clientele
Counselors	PhD, PsyD	Specialties
Clinical Psychologists	MD, DO	Treatment Approach
Psychiatrists		Insurance, Sliding Scale
Hospitals & Treatment Facilities		Treatment Facilities



20



- Reduce isolation
- Increase trust
- Encourage help-seeking



“Active listening is the practice of preparing to listen, observing the verbal and nonverbal messages that are being communicated, and then providing appropriate feedback in order to demonstrate attention to the message being presented.”



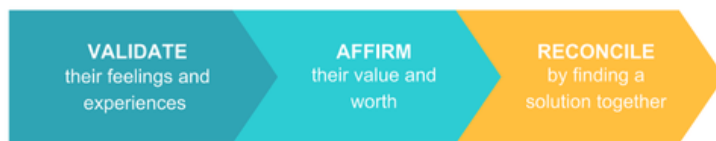
How to Use Active Listening

- Fully concentrate on what the person is saying
- Maintain eye contact
- Demonstrate concern
- Be non-judgmental
- Ask open-ended questions
- Paraphrase or reflect back to show understanding



25

Engage Their Emotions



26

Engage

THINGS TO DO

- Remove spectators and triggering persons
- Give them room to move around
- Place yourself in a position to easily exit. Prevent "cornering" yourself or person
- Address by name
- Speak in normal voice
- Slow things down
- Relaxed body language
- Recognize hesitation (*provides you with an opportunity to make suggestions*)
- Keep suggestions short and simple
- Repeat yourself

THINGS TO AVOID

- Touching the person, even if you know them
- Acting fast without thought
- Asking permission
- "Why?" questions
- Seeming too calm
- Matching energy if agitated or hyperventilating
- Becoming angry
- Telling them to "calm down"



27

De-Escalation

- Assess the Situation
- Use Active Listening
- Maintain Control
- Engage Their Emotions (Validate–Affirm–Reconcile)



28

Assess the Situation

Do not panic or act too fast.	What are your surroundings?
Are they armed or violent?	Pay attention to non-verbal cues.
Do you know the person?	If possible and necessary, make others aware of the situation.



29

Maintain Control



30

Panic Attack

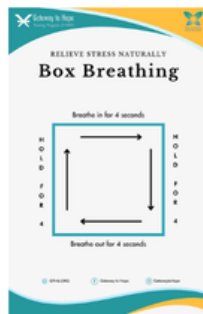
- An abrupt surge of intense fear or intense discomfort
- Four (or more) of the following symptoms may occur:
 - Palpitations, pounding heart, or accelerated heart rate
 - Trembling, shaking, or sweating
 - Sensations of shortness of breath or smothering
 - Chest pain or discomfort
 - Nausea or abdominal distress
 - Feeling dizzy, unsteady, light-headed, or faint
 - Paresthesia (numbness or tingling sensations)
 - Fear of dying



31

Intervention Skills

- Grounding
- De-Escalation



32

Grounding Methods

Play a Game

- Ask the individual a question that has several answers
 - Name as many states or cities as you can
 - Recite the alphabet backwards
 - Practice simple times tables



33



Recovery is Possible

Recovery means:

- Growth
- Stability
- Improved quality of life

Everyone's journey looks different.



Protective Factors for Mental Wellness

- Sleep
- Physical activity
- Social connection
- Healthy coping skills
- Purpose and meaning



37

38

reImagine Workbook

- Designed to help anyone living with a mental health challenge
- Takes a holistic approach to recovery
- Focuses on:
 - Rebuilding self-worth and purpose
 - Symptom management
 - Community support
 - Spiritual growth



Explore Our Evidence-Based Training Programs

- Empower Faith Communities
- Empower Schools
- Empower Workplaces
- © The 4 R's Training
- Mental Health Coach
 - Specialty Trainings:
 - Addiction & Behavioral Health Disorders
 - Aging & Elder Care
 - Child & Adolescent Mental Health
 - Trauma
- Mental Health Champion



All of our trainings are available in English and Spanish



Learn More



GTHU.org

Learning Portal:
Learn.GTHU.org



NOTES

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings visible.

NOTES

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings visible.

GATEWAY TO HOPE



gatewaytohope@mentalhealthgateway.org



346.335.8700

 **HHCI** Hope and Healing Center & Institute

The Hope Line

(832) 831-7337

Relational Issues | Work Stress | Recent Trauma | Mental Health Resources

Open daily, 5 PM - 8 PM CT

www.hhci.org In case of emergency, please call 911.

 Gateway to Hope
Training Program of HHCI

Grace, Friendly AI Assistant

Have questions about mental or behavioral health? Talk to Grace.

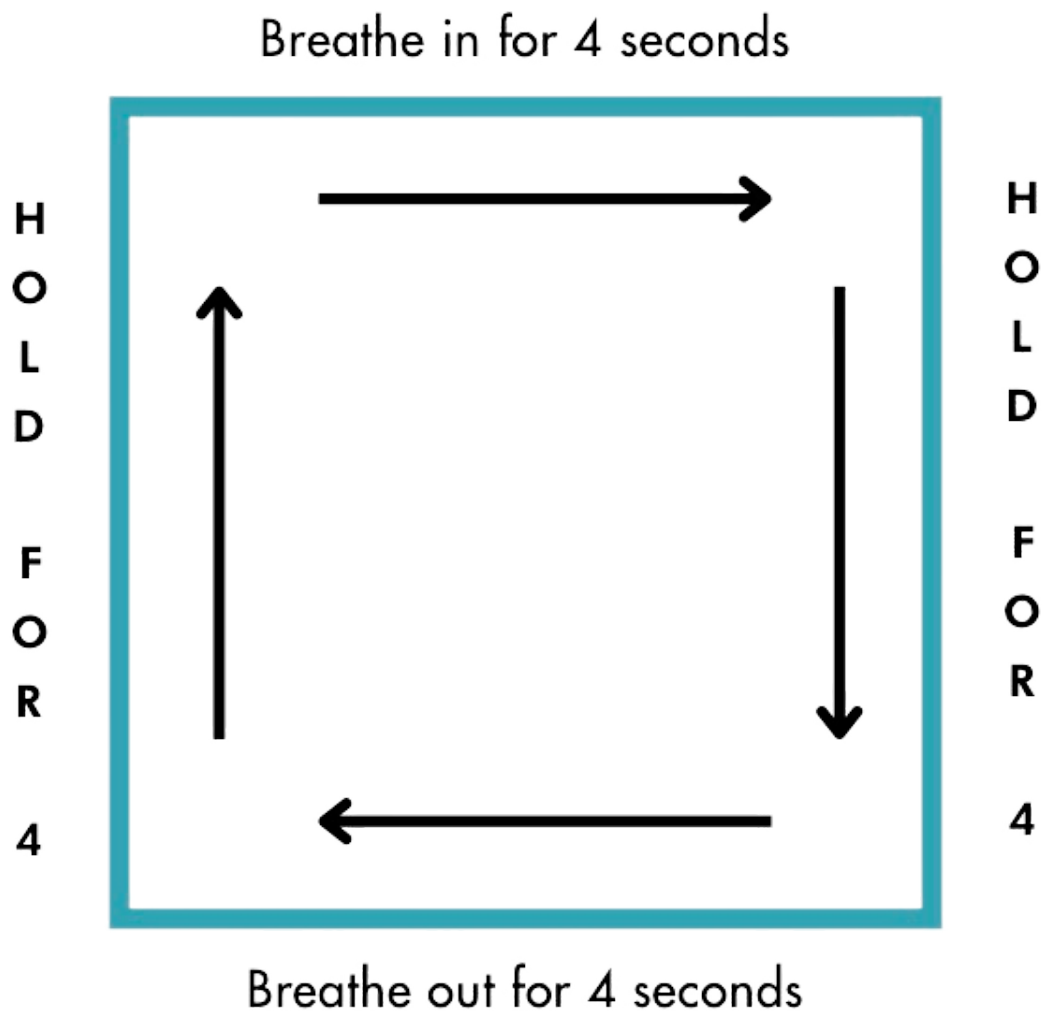
Our friendly AI assistant can guide you in supporting yourself or a loved one.

 **Things you can ask Grace:**
 "Am I depressed? Do I need medication?"
 "Is my child an addict?"
 "What do I do when my family member lashes out at me?"
 And much more!

In case of emergency, please call 911.

RELIEVE STRESS NATURALLY

BOX BREATHING



The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique

Take a deep breath in through your
nose and out through your mouth

Name out loud:

- 5** things you can see
- 4** things you can feel
- 3** things you can hear
- 2** things you can smell
- 1** thing you can taste

