WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

THE TERM "MENTAL HEALTH" IS USED FREQUENTLY, BUT HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU?

Like physical health, mental health is a continuum. Most people move up and down this continuum at different times in their life due to individual habits, external circumstances or genetic predisposition.

Mental Illness
DSM diagnosis of mental disorder and low functioning

Languishing
Low affective wellbeing and low functioning

Mental Wellness
Neither flourishing or languishing

Flourishing
High levels of wellbeing and high functioning

PREVALENCE OF MENTAL ILLNESSES

About 1 in 4 people will move down the continuum to the point they have a diagnosable mental illness. Almost half of all people will develop a mental illness in their lifetime.

Anxiety disorders (including generalised anxiety and specific phobias) are the most common type of mental illness, followed by depressive disorders.

THE PILLARS OF GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

Like physical health, everyone can take positive steps to reduce the likelihood of illness and to flourish (achieve optimal wellbeing).

There are five pillars of good mental health.

› Positive emotions

› Engagement (Experiencing flow)

› Positive relationships

› Meaningfulness

› Accomplishment

The better you do in these five areas the greater your 'mental wellbeing' and 'quality of life' is likely to be.

Like maintaining good physical health, maintaining good mental wellbeing is about the frequency of practising positive behaviours as opposed to the intensity. For instance, going for a 10 hour run once will not maintain your physical wellbeing for life.

So what are you going to do today to optimise your mental health?

DO YOU WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

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