

10TH OCTOBER

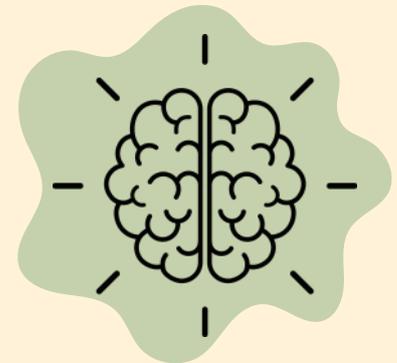


World Mental Health
Day
Special Edition

ACCESS TO SERVICES – MENTAL HEALTH IN CATASTROPHES AND EMERGENCIES

SIMPLE STEPS TO SUPPORT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

In times of crisis—natural disasters, conflicts, pandemics—mental health support must not be sidelined. People affected by emergencies often endure trauma, loss, displacement, and prolonged stress. The theme emphasizes the urgent need to ensure mental health and psychosocial support are integral in emergency responses.



We must remember:
During and after any crisis, there is no health without mental health.

BREAK MYTHS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

1

Myth 1: “Only ‘weak’ people struggle with mental health issues.”

TRUTH: MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES CAN AFFECT ANYONE—REGARDLESS OF STRENGTH, STATUS, AGE, OR BACKGROUND.

2

Myth 2: “Therapy and counseling are only for severe problems.”

TRUTH: COUNSELING AND THERAPY ARE HELPFUL AT ANY STAGE—WHETHER TO PREVENT ESCALATION OR SUPPORT ONGOING GROWTH.

3

Myth 3: “You can just ‘snap out of it’.”

TRUTH: MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS ARE NOT A MATTER OF WILLPOWER. THEY OFTEN REQUIRE CARE, SUPPORT, AND SOMETIMES PROFESSIONAL HELP.

TRUTH: OPEN, NON-JUDGMENTAL CONVERSATIONS OFTEN REDUCE ISOLATION AND ENCOURAGE HEALING.

4

Myth 4: “Talking about mental health makes things worse.”



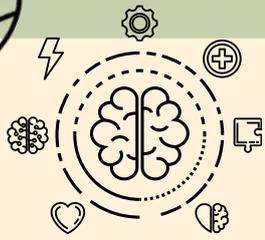
WARNING SIGNS TO NOTICE (IN SELF OR OTHERS)



- Persistent sadness, irritability, or emotional “numbness”.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed
- Sudden changes in sleep (insomnia or sleeping too much).
- Appetite or weight changes not linked to diet
- Fatigue, low energy, or feeling slowed down
- Difficulty concentrating, making decisions, or remembering.
- Feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or self-blame.
- Unusual or excessive fears, worries, or anxiety.
- Social withdrawal, avoiding friends or family.
- Self-harm, or suicidal ideation
- Physical complaints without clear cause (aches, pain, digestive issues).
- Increased use of substances (alcohol, drugs).

NOTE: IF YOU NOTICE SUCH SIGNS IN YOURSELF OR SOMEONE ELSE, DON'T WAIT—REACH OUT TO A TRUSTED PERSON, HELPLINE, OR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL.





QUICK STRESS BUSTERS



Technique	How to Do it	Why it Helps
Deep Breathing / Box Breathing	Inhale 4 counts, hold 4, exhale 4, hold 4. Repeat 3-5 Cycles	Activates the parasympathetic nervous system and calms your body.
5-4-3-2-1 Grounding	Name 5 things you see, 4 things you feel, 3 things you hear, 2 things you smell, 1 thing you taste.	Anchors you in the present and breaks cycles of rumination.
Movement / Stretch Break	Walk for 5-10 minutes, stretch arms/legs, do gentle yoga.	Physical activity releases mood-boosting chemicals (endorphins).
Mindfulness / Body Scan	Sit comfortably and slowly shift attention through body parts, noticing tension or sensations.	Builds awareness and helps release involuntary stress.
Sensory Distraction	Listen to calming music, use a favorite scent (essential oil), hold a comforting object.	Redirects neural focus and soothes emotional arousal.
Journaling / "Brain Dump"	Write down all thoughts, worries, or plans—no order or grammar needed.	Clears mental clutter and gives perspective.

NATIONAL HELPLINES

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