



# Crash Course in Mental Health

A guide by George Fernandez

Where does this information come from:

-3 years substance use disorders

-1 year acute psychiatry

-8 years PTSD

-6 years walk in mental health clinic

-3 years Mental Health program mgr

*\*You can totally trust me*





# Intro / Objectives

## **How do we define Mental Health?**

Key word - impairment (clinically)

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs?

## ***Do I know what I'm doing?***

How to deal with people who may be struggling with a mental health issue

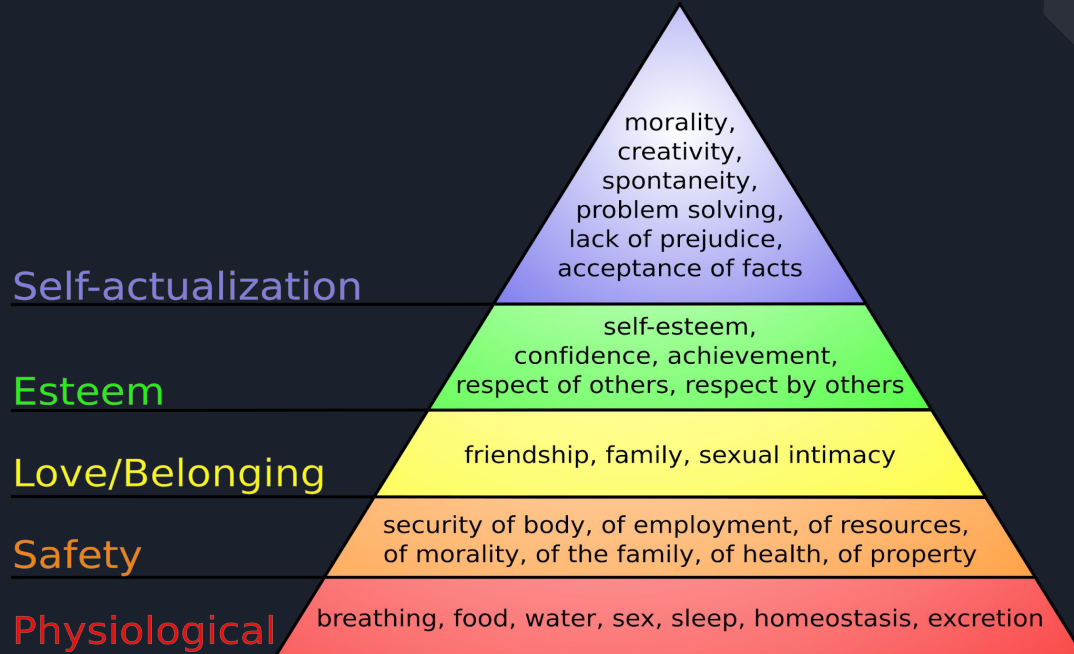
## ***Common conditions and symptoms***

How to spot concerns and refer

## ***Suicide / Homicide***

What to do

# Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



# The dreaded feeling of not knowing what to say or do...

-First, drop the pressure of “having to make them feel better.”

+You don't have to have the answer or solution

-Avoid “putting a bow on it.”

-Forget the “silver lining”

+the above is what most people suffering get

-You want to help the person feel better, but sometimes allowing them to feel *bad* is healing.

-Paradox of not wanting them to suffer but allowing them to feel hurt - it's a challenge to get comfortable with that.

-Others' discomfort can bring up your own discomfort

+Our need to help them may be driven by our own need to get rid of discomfort.



## Tip

Relieve yourself of the pressure of “having to fix” anything. There is nothing you can fix in someone else. It's not about fixing, it's about exploring and giving space.

# No advice?! What to say instead...

-“That must be very difficult...thank you for sharing that with me.”

-STOP, and listen intently

-“That sounds so difficult..I’m sorry you’re going through that.”

-“It’s amazing how you are able to take the risk to share that with me...tell me more.”

-“I wish I could fix that...how have you been dealing with it?”

-“Has this ever happened before?”

-“What have you tried? *What’s going RIGHT?*”


-Paraphrase what is being shared, use feeling words.

-Try to allow for silence..don’t talk over them.



## Tip

Ask them to describe, thank them for sharing it, ask for more details, reflect what they are saying in different words, use feeling words, avoid advice giving.



Time for a video!





# Common Conditions and Symptoms

**Depression, Anxiety (includes OCD and others), PTSD, Bipolar Disorder (I and II), Psychotic disorders, Personality Disorders**



# Depression

- Loss of interest
- appetite changes
- sleep affected
- Low energy
- Feelings of sadness (not situational)
- Feelings of worthlessness
- negative self talk
- hopelessness
- thoughts of self harm (we'll come back to this)



## Anxiety

- Can't stop worry
- "catastrophizing"
- sleep issues
- appetite issues
- feeling nervous, on edge
- trouble relaxing
- so restless, it's hard to sit still

*Story for illustration purposes only*



## Meditation

Can help SO much with anxiety. Highlight this, and offer hope that with consistent practice, anxiety can improve.

# PTSD, Bipolar Disorder (I and II), Psychotic disorders, Personality Disorders

*-Any Specific Questions on these?*



## Tip

You could always ask them if they've ever seen anyone in Mental Health before and if they've ever been diagnosed with any of these conditions.

# Thoughts, Feeling, Behaviors, and gaps

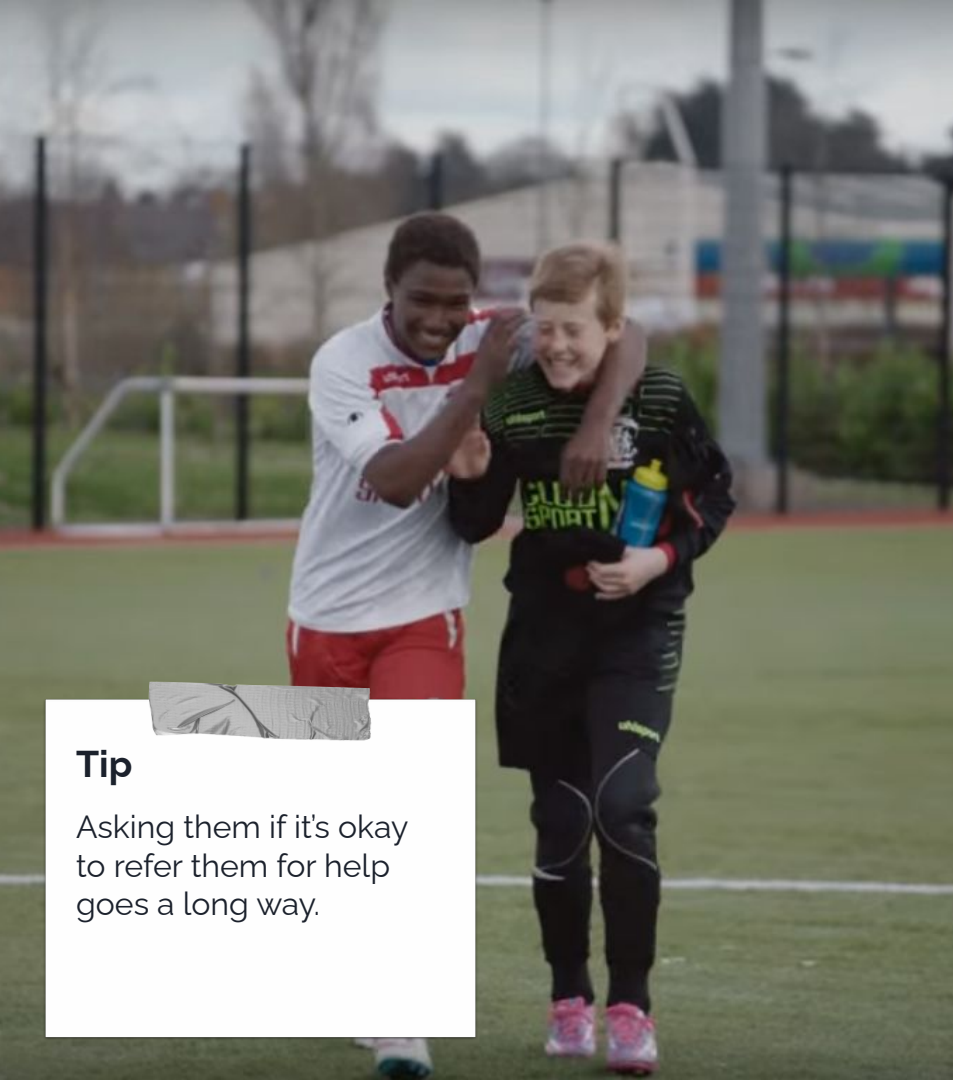
-You can try to assist them in seeing gaps in between.

-"Are all your thoughts true?"

-Acting as if (behavioral)

-Allowing yourself to feel



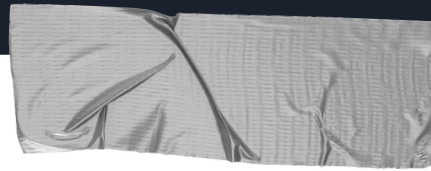


### Tip

Asking them if it's okay to refer them for help goes a long way.

## Referrals

- Refer to other sheet with numbers
- Suicide / Homicide
- Legal ramifications
- Duty to warn
- Ok to admit that current issue is beyond my scope



## Questions???

→ I'll hopefully have answers!