

WalkinOurShoes.org

**Facilitation Guide
for Teachers and Other Educators**

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OVERVIEW

This Facilitation Guide contains lesson plans and other tools for teachers of grades 4 - 8 and other educators to use to augment the content provided by the CalMHSA-supported Walk in Our Shoes website and the Walk In Our Shoes theatrical production. Young people aged 9-13 are only beginning to have awareness of mental illnesses in self or others and have not yet formed strong negative beliefs or opinions. This project provides basic education about mental illness in a context that encourages supportive responses. Through this education process, we hope to inoculate against stigma and predispose this age group to future positive interactions with peers who experience mental health challenges.

We recognize that teachers are not necessarily mental health experts. Yet, chances are you, or someone you know, have witnessed firsthand the effects caused by stigmatizing those with mental health challenges. This guide, and content from the Walk in Our Shoes website, will help you and your students explore, in a safe and interactive manner, a number of important topics. These include: what is mental health, what is mental illness, what are some common mental health challenges, and myths and facts about mental illness. You will also have the opportunity through online recorded stories to hear directly from young people in California who are living a healthy and vibrant life while coping with mental health challenges.

OVERALL GOAL

The overall goal of this guide and the Walk in Our Shoes website is to help diminish attitudes of stigma by increasing students' knowledge of mental illness and encouraging peer-to-peer supportive responses.

HOW IS THIS GUIDE ORGANIZED?

The guide contains 3 sections:

- **Section 1** provides eight classroom lessons focused on helping students understand more about mental health, mental health challenges, and stigma, and how students can be supportive of those who experience mental health challenges.
- **Section 2** provides discussion questions linked to each of the four characters' stories introduced in the Walk In Our Shoes theatrical production. After a class views each of the four stories, these questions can stimulate discussion. This section also contains a sample letter for parents about the video production and intended use in the classroom.
- **Section 3** highlights a number of suggestions for creating a positive classroom environment and group dynamic.



SECTION 1

LESSON PLANS

The eight lessons featured in this guide use a four-step learning process:

- **Engage** - In this first stage of the lesson, a teacher creates interest in the topic through questions or activities.
- **Do/Experience** - This is the heart of the lesson where students participate in an activity that stimulates learning.
- **Reflect** - At this point in the lesson questions are used to help students reflect on feelings, thoughts, what was learned and insights about the material. (What did you learn? How do you think others would feel about what we learned today? Did you have an "A-hah!" moment?).
- **Apply** - The lesson culminates with questions that help students connect what was learned with real life - school, neighborhood, family, friends, etc. (How do you think you would act in this situation? What would make this easy or hard to do? Why do you think what we learned about today is important? What does this have to do with real life?).

Lessons reinforce the content provided by the Walk In Our Shoes website. Access to the Walk In Our Shoes website is required to be able to implement the lessons. Lessons may be used individually but are best taught as a unit. Each lesson has defined student learning objectives that link to the guide's overall goal.

Creating a Safe Learning Environment

Because of the nature of this topic, it is important that teachers create a safe learning environment. Prior to beginning the lessons described in this guidebook, it is a good idea for teachers to discuss with students appropriate rules for activities and discussions. At a minimum, teachers should indicate that if another person shares something personal, what has been said stays in the group and should not be shared with others who have not been part of the group sharing. The teacher may want to emphasize that we are not the "tellers" of someone else's story. This can be labeled keeping things "private" or keeping things "confidential". Students may generate other group rules such as raising hands, sharing ideas, giving everyone a chance to speak. Many teachers may already have these rules in place, or may have some and not others. If the "privacy" rule is not in place, we recommend teachers discuss this before proceeding with the lessons.



In Section 3 of this guide, you can find additional ideas for setting ground rules for discussion under the topic called "Creating Agreements".

A Word of Caution for Teachers

When discussing illness (mental or physical), particularly in a group setting, teachers should anticipate that someone in the group may have some experience with a particular illness; and, if not the student, then perhaps another family member or friend. These could be sensitive discussion topics.

Additionally, teachers may find that students readily relate to the broader group a personal experience or identify a person they know with a particular illness. Teachers should have a few "ready responses" to quell the sharing of details that may become too personal. The following demonstrates how a teacher may empathize with a student's feelings and then redirect the conversation to a less personal topic.

"I can tell you are worried about your mother (showing empathy) and maybe just the two of us can talk more about that later. Right now I think we need to get back to ... (redirect to another topic).



Lesson #1: Learning the Facts

Objectives: (1) Students will understand key characteristics of mental illness.
(2) Students will be able to define stigma.

Time: 30 - 40 minutes

Materials: Small whiteboards with markers for each team
Internet connection and projector
Walkinourshoes.org "What is Mental Health" section

ENGAGE

Ask students "how many of you have been sick in the last year?" How were you sick? How long were you sick? Take 3 - 5 responses. Reinforce that students (1) are describing physical symptoms (headache, fever, chills, upset stomach, etc.); (2) sought help from a doctor; (3) took medicine; and (4) recovered.

DO/EXPERIENCE

(1) Explain that today we are going to learn about mental health and mental illness. Explain that just like being physically ill, persons with a mental illness have symptoms, can seek help, may take medicine, and can recover.

(2) Divide the class into teams comprised of 3 - 4 participants. Tell the class that you will be reading information about mental health and mental illness from the Walk In Our Shoes website and then asking teams to respond to questions about what you read. The team who answers the most questions correctly will be the winner. (You may want to have a small prize for the winning team.)

Give each team a whiteboard and marker to use display answers to the quiz questions. Each team will write on their whiteboard what they think is the correct answer. Points are awarded for each correct answer. Some rounds may be worth extra points to keep the game interesting.

(3) Read the "What is Mental Health"? section of the Walk In Our Shoes website.



After reading the text, have teams respond to the following questions:

- 1) Being healthy includes
 - a. having a body that feels good and works well
 - b. having a healthy mind and body
 - c. not being sick
 - d. all of the above

(Note to teacher: the emphasis is on physical and mental health both being important to overall health. Being healthy includes more than just the physical. Wellness is more than the absence of illness.)

- 2) Mental illness can occur only after a person has reached adulthood.
 - a. True
 - b. False

(Note to teacher: All kinds of people can experience mental illness, including children.)

- 3) Having a mental illness can affect the way that a person
 - a. behaves
 - b. thinks
 - c. feels
 - d. all of the above

(Note to teacher: Explain that some people feel depressed or anxious, some have scrambled thoughts and have a hard time thinking clearly, and others act out or are afraid to act at all. Explain that there are different kinds of mental illnesses and in subsequent lessons we will be learning more about these different types.)

- 4) If a person who is physically sick goes to see a medical doctor, a person who has a mental health problem sees a _____?

(Note to teacher: Accept any of the following answers: mental health professional, counselor, therapist, psychiatrist, psychologist, or social worker. You may also explain that someone may initially see their medical doctor who may help with a referral to a mental health professional).

- 5) What causes mental illness?



- a. diet
- b. catching it from someone else
- c. being violent
- d. no one knows

(Note to teacher: Researchers generally think mental illness results from a mix of what's going on in your body and what's happening around you. Some people may have a certain predisposition or tendency for a certain illness, yet also need to have certain things happening in their environment for the illness to develop).

6) Another way to talk about mental illness is to say

- a. mental health challenge
- b. mental wellness
- c. mental malfunction
- d. disordered mentality

(Note to teacher: Part of what we want to convey to young people is the notion that mental illness is a part of life. It is a challenge. Some do refer to a mental illness as a mental disorder, but disordered mentality is not a correct answer).

7) What does the term "diagnosis" mean?

- a. to have a feeling that you know what is wrong
- b. to meet with your medical doctor who gives you a prescription for medication
- c. to meet with a mental health professional and he or she gives what you are experiencing a name
- d. to be told you have a mental illness
- e. all of the above

(Note to teacher: A mental health professional will be able to tell if someone has a mental illness based on the person's feelings, how often the person has them them, and how they affect the person's life. If a mental health professional thinks a person has a mental illness, he or she will give what the person is experiencing a name, such as depression or anxiety, and this is called a diagnosis).

8) What is the *least* effective way of dealing with a mental health challenge or mental illness?

- a. keeping feelings bottled up inside
- b. telling a trusted adult how you feel



- c. staying at a hospital for a brief period of time
- d. meeting with a mental health professional

(Note to teacher: Seeking help is to be encouraged. Some young people may worry about how they think, feel or behave and wonder if they could have a mental illness. Encouraging them to share how they feel with a trusted adult or to seek help from a mental health professional is a good way to alleviate or lessen their anxiety).

9) If a person with a mental illness or mental health challenge experiences "stigma", what does that mean?

(Note to teacher: Generally we want students to get the idea that stigma means labeling someone in a negative way because they may be different than you. Accept any of the following answers: labeling someone in a negative way; saying bad things about a person; believing things about a person that aren't true and then making fun of the person; making someone feel different or picking on someone because they aren't like you; calling someone names like "crazy").

- 10) People with a mental illness will always be ill.
- a. True
 - b. False

(Note to teacher: With help and support from family, friends and mental health professionals, people with a mental illness can recover and lead productive, fulfilling lives).

At the end of the quiz, sum up points and indicate which team won.

REFLECT

Who can tell me one thing they learned today about mental illness that they did not know before this class began?

APPLY

Explore with students how they might act in the following situations, helping them see how they might apply the knowledge from today's lesson:

- What would you do if you found out your friend had been diagnosed with a mental illness?



- What would you do if you witnessed someone at school making fun of a person with a mental illness?

(Note to Teacher: Students are apt to answer with responses they think that you may want to hear. Challenge them to consider what they really would or would not do and why doing the "right" thing might not always be so easy. Accept all answers, even those that suggest actions that are not consistent with acceptance of another person. If this happens, probe deeper to find out why someone would ignore an incident where a classmate was the victim of bullying or not want to be with a friend with someone who has been diagnosed with a mental illness. Ask students if in fact their response has to do with stigma. Find out what it would take for those who are hesitant to change their behavior).



Lesson #2: You Have to Learn It to Teach It

Objective: Students will understand that there are different types of mental illnesses.

Time: 40 minutes

Materials: Large chart paper
Markers
Tape
Scissors
Descriptions of mental health challenges from the Walk In Our Shoes website
"What is Mental Health" section
9 envelopes

Preparation

Before introducing the activity, print out the content on the Walk In Our Shoes website under the "Mental Health Challenges" tab. Cut out the descriptions of each of the mental health challenges (*ADHD, Anxiety, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Bi-Polar Disorder, Depression, Eating Disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Schizophrenia*) and place each description in a separate envelope.

Before beginning the Do/Experience section of the lesson, create 9 different workstations using 9 sheets of large chart paper taped to the wall. Number each station 1-9.

ENGAGE

Write on the board the following:

- ADHD
- Anxiety
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Bi-Polar Disorder
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Schizophrenia



Reading item-by-item, asking the class if anyone knows what each term means? Let the students know that today's lesson is going to focus on learning something about each of these mental health challenges.

(Note to teacher: You might indicate to the students that they might know someone who has experienced one of these challenges, but remind them that this is not about telling someone else's story, but more about just understanding what each term is about).

DO/EXPERIENCE

(1) Divide the group by numbering each student 1 through 9. Have each student go to the workstation that has his or her number. "All the ones to the one station, etc."

(2) Hand out one envelope containing one of the 9 mental health challenges to each group.

(3) Instruct the groups to read the paragraph and put the name of their mental health challenge at the top of their chart paper. Using the content in their paragraph, each group should create 4 - 5 bullets or short sentences that describe the mental health challenge assigned to their group. Let the groups know that their list should also include some positive aspect related to the challenge. (See note to Teacher regarding take away messages under the Reflect section).

(4) Give each group 2-3 minutes to present to the other groups what they have learned about their group's mental health challenge.

(5) When the groups are ready, have each group present on their topic.

(Note to teacher: Before the presentations tell students that you want them to listen not only for the details that distinguish one mental health challenge from the other, but that you also want them to listen for what can be something positive about such challenges (see note to teacher under Reflect section). As groups present, circle the bulleted content that has the positive statement so that it is more visible and later when summarizing students can visually see what may be a positive commonality across all challenges -- e.g. people can be helped... people still want friends, etc. Teachers may have to help the groups identify what is a positive).



REFLECT

Who can tell me one thing they learned today about mental health challenges that they did not know before this class began?

Ask students to look at the positive characteristics that are circled. Ask, "as we look at the positives that are circled, are there any similarities across the different challenges"? Help student identify these as needed.

(Note to Teacher: Big take away messages to reinforce with students are

- people facing mental health challenges are just like everybody else in that they want to be a friend and have friends
- with help people with mental health challenges can get better and live normal lives)

APPLY

Ask students to select a mental health challenge described here today and tell why it could be difficult to befriend that person. What is it that presents a barrier? How could you get over this barrier or what would it take to get over this barrier?



Lesson #3: Myth vs. Fact

Objective: Students will be able to distinguish myths from facts related to mental illness

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: envelopes for each pair of students
one myth and fact sheet per student, with myths and facts cut into individual pieces and placed in the envelope. Each student pair will have an envelope that contains 12 myths and 12 facts
Internet access to the Walk In Our Shoes.org website + projector

Preparation

Before introducing the activity, use the myth/fact sheet at the end of this lesson to prepare the envelopes for students.

ENGAGE

Ask the students -

Who can tell me in their own words what a *fact* is?

Can someone else share what a *myth* is?

(Note to teacher: A *fact* is a concept whose truth can be proved. For example, it is a fact that there are x number of boys and x number of girls in this classroom.

A *myth* is a traditional story often accepted as a fact even though it is **not**. For example, it is a myth that boys with blonde hair are better students than boys with brown hair.

DO/EXPERIENCE

(1) Put students into working pairs.

(2) Give each pair an envelope with the 24 myths and fact cutouts.



(3) Instruct the students to take all 24 cutouts and together decide which ones are myths and which ones are facts. Let them know this is not a test.

(4) Tell them to put all the myths in a column on the left of their desk and all the facts in a column on the right side of their desk.

(5) Give students 10 - 15 minutes to complete the task.

(6) After students have completed the task, go to <http://walkinourshoes.org/myths-vs-facts> to review the answers to the assignment.

(7) Review each myth and fact.

REFLECT

Ask the students -

Who can share with me again what is the difference between a myth and a fact?

Why do you think it is important to know the myths and facts about mental illness?

How could it be hurtful for people to think that the myths of mental illness are facts?

(Note to teacher: Some things to emphasize include - the more we know the differences about the myths of mental illness and the facts, the better we can help and support the people in our lives who are living with mental illness.)

APPLY

What can you do to make sure that people know the facts of mental illness and not think that the myths are true?

(Note to teacher: Challenge students about whether they would or would not do the things that they suggest. What are the stumbling blocks? Is stigma a part of their hesitation?)



Lesson #4: Checking Ourselves

- Objectives:**
- (1) Students will understand the perspective of a person with mental illness and the hurt that comes from unkind responses.
 - (2) Students will learn about responses that are helpful to someone struggling with a mental health challenge.

Time: 30 - 40 minutes

Materials: List of Slammer Scenarios

Preparation

Print the Slammer Scenarios at the end of this lesson so that each student pair will have a copy.

ENGAGE

Slam the door!

Ask the students -

How many of you have ever slammed a door?

How many of you have ever had a door slammed in your face?

How did it make you feel?

(Note to teacher: The emphasis is on how a slammed door makes someone feel left out, not included, angry, etc.)

DO/EXPERIENCE

(1) Divide students into pairs.

(2) Give each pair the list of "slammer" scenarios.

(3) Tell the students that just like having a door slammed in your face, words can act as "slammers". Explain that each of the scenarios has a "slammer". Their job is to construct helpful responses to take the place of the "slammers".

(4) Review the first scenario as a whole group to help students identify the characteristics of what makes a helpful response. Ask students, "What makes this a "slammer"?"



Then ask, "If we wanted to provide a helpful response, what are some things we could consider that make a response a positive one"? (Make a list of these characteristics on the board so students can refer to them when working through the other scenarios).

Next ask students, "how could we change this response to make it a positive one"?

(Note to teacher: some of the things to emphasize about what makes a helpful response include -, letting the person know you are worried about them, asking how the person feels and how you might help, empathizing with the other person's feelings, just listening, refraining from labeling or name calling, suggesting an activity that might help put a more positive spin on the situation, just letting them know you care, and in some cases sharing your concern and seeking help from a trusted adult).

(5) Provide time for students to work through the remaining scenarios, writing positive responses instead of "slammers".

(6) Review responses with the whole group.

REFLECT

Ask students -

How was it coming up with something better than a "slammer"?

Who found it difficult?

Who thought it was easy?

APPLY

Let's suppose you were the person who is anxious in social situations. You feel extremely shy. It's hard for you to meet people, yet you want to be social. How could someone respond in a way that suggested acceptance of you and help you feel more connected in your classroom? What would you tell the person to do or say?



Lesson #5: Making a Difference

Objective: Students will respond in a helpful way to someone struggling with a mental health challenge.

Time: 30 - 40 minutes

Materials: Skits to hand out to each team (see material at the end of the lesson plan)
Computer with web access (<http://walkinourshoes.org/giving-and-getting-help>)
Projector

Preparation

Print the Skits at the end of this lesson and cut into separate skits to distribute one per team.

ENGAGE

Review the previous lesson, focusing on what makes a helpful response.

- Ask students - who remembers what we talked about in our last lesson?
- Who remembers what some of the things were that we identified about what makes a helpful response? (letting the person know you are worried about them, asking how the person feels and how you might help, empathizing with the other person's feelings, just listening, refraining from labeling or name calling, suggesting an activity that might help put a more positive spin on the situation, just letting them know you care; and in some cases sharing your concern and seeking help from a trusted adult).
- Did anyone try to be helpful since our last lesson? How did it go?

DO/EXPERIENCE

(1) Let the students know that today's lesson is going to focus on practicing helpful responses. Today the class will not just write a response but actually try out how making those responses during role play skits.

(Note to teacher: Role play is an excellent way to get students to practice new ways of behaving. It can also stimulate silliness or over the top drama. Before dividing the group into smaller acting groups, consider reviewing what makes a good role play. For example: sticking to the point of the role play, not being overly dramatic or silly, treating the topic seriously, having a skit that has a beginning, middle and end, and in this case actually demonstrating what makes a good response.).



(2) Divide students into role play groups. Provide each group with a skit. Allow 5 - 10 minutes for the groups to develop their role play.

(3) Have each group act out their skit.

(4) After each skit, ask the broader class to identify what the actors did that made the response a helpful one.

REFLECT

When all of the skits are completed, discuss:

Did anyone find it difficult to create a skit around helping someone with a mental health challenge? Why?

Who found it to be easy? What made it easy?

How realistic were these skits? What are the risks involved in making helpful responses?

(Note to teacher: The intent in identifying "risks" are to get students to reflect on the things they may worry about should they reach out to someone who may be different in some way from their group of friends. These risks could be things such as: being afraid that they might get labeled or teased; that they might not say the right thing; that their other friends might leave them out; that the person they are trying to help might not understand or might rebuff them. After thinking about these risks, ask the students how realistic these risks really are and if the "risks" are too great to "take a chance" on being helpful).

Go to (<http://walkinourshoes.org/giving-and-getting-help>) and read the content about Helping Others and Taking Care of Yourself.

APPLY

Say to the students, "quietly, just to yourself, visualize someone you know who could benefit from a helpful, kind response. Think about what that response might look like. Think about when and where you might say something helpful".



Lesson #6: Matt's Story

Objective: Students will understand how one young person deals with his mental illness in a positive way.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Computer with web access <http://walkinourshoes.org/our-stories/matt> and speakers
Projector

ENGAGE

Let students know that today we are going to hear from a young man, Matt, who has a mental illness called bi-polar. Ask if anyone remembers from the earlier lesson what bi-polar is? (see <http://walkinourshoes.org/mental-health-challenges/>)

(Note to teacher: characteristics to note about bi-polar include: mood fluctuations; intensity of feelings; intense feelings of happiness or mania or manic episode; intense sadness or depression; difficulty thinking clearly; difficulty sleeping.)

DO/EXPERIENCE

(1) Write the following questions on the board. Let the students know that you will be asking them these questions after they view Matt's story. These questions are a "heads up" so they know what to listen for specifically.

- How does Matt describe his bi-polar?
- When did he have a manic episode? What did he say he experienced during that time?
- Who are some of the people that helped Matt?
- Do you think Matt did the right thing telling his new friends about his mental illness? Why or Why not?
- What has he done to deal with his bi-polar and live a happy life?

(2) Go to <http://walkinourshoes.org/our-stories/matt> and play Matt's story.



REFLECT

Ask the students what they thought of Matt's story. Then review the questions you had written earlier on the board.

APPLY

Return to the Walk In Our Shoes website and as a class take the 4-item survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MattStory>

Answers:

#1 True

#2 True

#3 False

#4 Mental Retardation



Lesson #7: Walk in our Shoes

Objective: Students will identify characteristics that make them special.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Computer with web access <http://walkinourshoes.org/shoes/gallery>
Projector
Sheets of drawing paper for each student
Assorted pens, pencils, crayons, markers

Preparation

In this lesson students will create shoes that best reflect characteristics about themselves. They will be asked to write below the shoes 2-3 phrases that best describe who they are and qualities that make them special. Teachers should prepare their own shoes ahead of time to share later with students.

ENGAGE

Ask the group to think about an adult in their life that they have a relationship with and that they look up to. This could be a parent, aunt or uncle, older sibling, coach, pastor, teacher, neighbor, etc. Ask students to think about what this person would say makes "you" special? Ask if anyone would like to share what they think would be said about them?

DO/EXPERIENCE

(1) Go to the walkinourshoes.org website to demonstrate to the students what types of shoes others have created to reflect characteristics and qualities about themselves.

<http://walkinourshoes.org/shoes>

Click through all three pages - shoes, words and finished products, creating a "class shoe" as you move through the pages and the create a shoe exercise.

(2) Let the students know that today they will be making their own shoes. Distribute paper, markers, crayons, etc. Ask students to draw a shoe of their choice and to identify 2 - 3 phrases that best describe who they are. These qualities should be written on the drawing paper after the shoes have been drawn.



(Note to teacher: You may want to project again the "choose your shoe page" and "pick your words" page to help with ideas).

REFLECT

After students have completed their shoes, ask for volunteers to share what they have done. You can model what you want students to do by being the first to share your shoe and the phrases that best describe you.

Ask -

- How did it feel to choose a shoe that best describes you? and to choose the words that best describe you?
- What made it difficult or easy to share good things about you?
- Did anyone hear any surprises or things they didn't know about someone?

(Note to teacher: You may want to summarize by noting the commonalities across the phrases students have chosen and what were the differences. Note that all of us have things we share in common and things that make us special and unique. No one can truly know what it is like to walk in another person's shoes. Yet, sharing who we are helps people see us in a positive way, making it harder for people to stigmatize us).

APPLY (This could be a homework assignment)

Have students write a paragraph about what they think the phrase "walk in our shoes" means and why it is an appropriate term to use when learning about mental health challenges.



Lesson #8: Let's Ace This Test

Objective: Students will demonstrate knowledge of mental illnesses.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Index cards to use for A,B,C,D answer cards
Small prizes for correct answers
Quiz questions and answers (see end of lesson plan)
Three Things I Learned about Mental Health Challenges Worksheet with copies for each student

ENGAGE

Ask if students have ever wanted to talk or share answers while taking a test. Let them know that today they will be taking a test in groups to see how much they have learned about mental health challenges.

DO/EXPERIENCE

- (1) Divide students into groups of three.
- (2) Provide each group with 4 large index cards and have group members label cards with A,B,C,D
- (3) Read questions aloud
- (4) Have each group raise their answer card on the count of three.
- (5) Share the correct answer.
- (6) Award prizes to the winning team.

REFLECT

Discuss with students:

- Why is it important for us to know more about mental health challenges?
- How many of you feel you have learned more about mental health than when we first started this unit?

APPLY

Have students complete the Three Things I Learned About Mental Health Challenges Worksheet. Review responses.



Let's Ace This Test! Questions

1. What is not considered a mental health challenge?
 - a. Anxiety
 - b. Anger**
 - c. Depression
 - d. Eating Disorder

2. Which particular race has a higher rate of mental health challenges?
 - a. Latino's
 - b. Whites
 - c. African American's
 - d. There is no evidence to suggest that a certain race or cultural group is more susceptible to having mental health challenges**

3. What is an example of someone trying to get better from a mental health challenge in a healthy way:
 - a. Ignoring the symptoms
 - b. Buying headache medicine
 - c. Seeing a mental health professional**
 - d. Joining a gym to get plenty of exercise

4. When someone is often nervous and experiences panic attacks, it is called:
 - a. An eating disorder
 - b. Depression
 - c. Anxiety**
 - d. Autism

5. When someone feels very sad all of the time it could be:
 - a. Autism
 - b. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
 - c. Depression**
 - d. Extreme Sadness Disorder

6. When someone finds it hard to finish things and finds it hard to sit still and focus his or her thoughts it could be:
 - a. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**
 - b. Nervous Leg Syndrome
 - c. Eating Disorder
 - d. Attention Deficit Syndrome



7. A term that could describe the mental health challenge of someone who finds it hard to know what is real and what is not real is:
 - a. **Schizophrenia**
 - b. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
 - c. Anxiety
 - d. Dream Anxiety

8. When someone sees or lives through something very scary and they keep being afraid even after the event is over it is called?
 - a. Post Trauma Fear Disorder
 - b. **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**
 - c. Depression
 - d. Autism

9. Which is not a symptom of Bipolar Disorder?
 - a. **Over eating**
 - b. Extreme happiness
 - c. Extreme Sadness
 - d. Not thinking clearly

10. True or false: Medication and therapy can be helpful in dealing with a mental health challenge.
 - a. **True**
 - b. False

11. True or False: Children are too young to develop a mental health illness, like depression or anxiety.
 - a. True
 - b. **False**

12. Having a mental illness is the same as being mentally disabled (sometimes called mental retardation).
 - a. True
 - b. **False**

13. People with mental health challenges have to take a special test to get a job or buy a house.
 - a. True
 - b. **False**

14. You cannot cause someone to get a mental illness.
 - a. True



b. False

15. If you have a friend or family member with a mental health challenge you should:

- a. Not refer to them “crazy” or “mental”**
- b. Leave them alone while they work out their problems
- c. Gossip with your friends about their problems

Three Things I Learned About Mental Health Challenges

Write something you learned about mental health challenges next to each picture.





WALK IN OUR SHOES



Example: I learned that people with mental health challenges can live healthy, happy and productive lives.

WALK IN OUR SHOES

SECTION II

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

FOR USE WITH THE FOUR STORIES FROM THE
WALK IN OUR SHOES THEATRICAL PRODUCTION

And

SAMPLE LETTER FOR PARENTS





The **Walk In Our Shoes** theatrical production introduces four characters (Hanna, Ethan, Daniella and Diego), each of whom has a story to tell related to one of four mental health challenges: bipolar disorder, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, anorexia nervosa, and post traumatic stress disorder. Through the telling of each person's story, students learn that mental health challenges are common and can be experienced by anyone. There are different types of mental health challenges, and people can recover and live normal, successful lives. Students are also introduced to the term "stigma" and learn that stigma comes from negative or incorrect beliefs a person may have about another person, and how these beliefs can affect how that person is treated.

For more information on the theatrical production and the video prepared from the theatrical production for use in classrooms, check out the two webinars for administrators, faculty and other educators at this [link](#). These webinars provide more details about how to use the video in a classroom setting and provide access to the video. Access to the video requires prior completion of Webinar #1 and you will instructions on how to access the full-length video performance at the end of the webinar. Webinar #2 is an optional resource for teachers to use before showing the video in the classroom.

The following discussion questions link to each of the four character's stories and are to help facilitate discussion after students view each of the story segments.

Discussion questions for Hanna's story:

- How did Hanna feel having two more talented siblings? (invisible, loser, sad)
- How did Hanna feel about the pressure from her parents? (isolated, depressed, wanted to be left alone, as well as hyperactive, out of control)
- What ended up helping Hanna and her family? (professional help; a diagnosis that explained her behavior and what Hanna was feeling)
- Do you agree with Hanna that the only reason people say mean things is because they don't understand? Why or why not?
- How did Hanna and her friend define stigma?
- How do labels hurt?
- Why do labels make it hard to ask for help?



Discussion questions for Ethan's story:

- What does Ethan mean when he says that you have to fall down before you get it right? (Making mistakes is OK and part of how you learn something new.)
- Can you talk about a time when you "fell down" or made a mistake and learned something new?
- We see that Ethan gets labeled as "emo". How does that make Ethan feel? (Sad, left out, unhappy, depressed.)
- Ethan calls getting labeled "emo" a crack in the sidewalk. What does he mean by this? (Something that takes him by surprise, something he can't control.)
- Why do you think the other kids are calling Ethan "emo"?
- How does Hanna turn things around? (She tells the others it is not OK to label people.)
- What does it look like once the other kids take a "walk in Ethan's shoes"? (They try to get to know him instead of calling him names.)

Discussion questions for Daniela's story:

- How was Daniela feeling when the kids in her class started teasing her for being a "new" kid?
- Have any of you had the experience of being the new kid? How did you feel? So you know how it feels to walk in Daniela's shoes.
- When the others called Daniela fat, how did she feel? What did she tell herself? (I can't control where I live or my name, but I can control being "fat".)
- How did this thinking get her in trouble?
- What helped Daniela?
- What does Daniela mean that a "healthy me" emerged?
- How can making unfair assumptions about people hurt others? What unfair assumptions were made about Daniela?

Discussion questions for Diego's story:

- Can you describe the relationship Diego has with his Uncle Esteban? (friend, trusted advisor)



- Why was Diego worried about Esteban? (He didn't want him to go overseas where he would be posted to a dangerous war zone and his safety might be in jeopardy).
- Who else could Diego talk to when Esteban is gone? (older sibling, aunt, uncle, parent, teacher, school counselor)
- When Esteban came home the second time, what does he tell Diego is going on with him? (PTSD)
- What happens when someone has PTSD? (They relive a traumatic incident, they keep feeling afraid even after the danger is over.)
- How does Diego convey empathy to Esteban? (He tells Esteban that he cares about him and that "we love you". He asks Esteban to let him know if there is anything he can do to help.)
- As the play ends each character asks us to remember some bigger facts about mental health. Do you remember what any of these facts were? (It's OK to talk about mental health challenges; if you are having a hard time talk to someone you trust; our body and mind are connected; most people experience challenges and it helps to know you are not alone.)



SAMPLE LETTER FOR PARENTS

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I want to inform you that next week our class will be spending time learning about the important topic of mental health, the harmful effects of stigma, and how students can be supportive of others who may experience a mental health challenge. Our curriculum includes a video adaptation of the Walk In Our Shoes musical play developed for 9 to 13 year olds as part of the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) statewide campaign to reduce stigma and discrimination associated with mental health challenges. Initially, the play was implemented as a live production in a limited number of schools in California. Because of the interest and positive reviews by school personnel and students, a video-taped production was created for classroom use.

The video follows the lives of four high school students and their experiences with mental health challenges and the negative effects of stigma. Students will become familiar with four mental health challenges: Bipolar disorder, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity disorder, Anorexia Nervosa, and Post Traumatic disorder. Although students will learn information about these mental health challenges, the more important lessons are learning that mental health challenges are common and something anyone can experience, that name calling and bullying because of differences can be hurtful, and that by seeking help a person can recover and feel better.

I invite your participation in these lessons by following up at home with your child. Consider asking your child next week how he/she liked the video and what he/she might have learned. This is an excellent opportunity to open the door to conversation about bullying and teasing and how you feel about such behavior. You might want to ask your child to relay the experiences of the story characters and then ask how this fits or does not fit with their own life experience and that of their friends.

You can also help by reinforcing the key messages of the video and campaign - that mental health challenges are common, that people can recover and lead normal lives. That the vast majority of people with mental health challenges are as predictable and nonviolent as anyone else, and that talking about mental health challenges is not something to fear.

If you would like more information about what your child will be learning, please feel free to contact me. Also please visit the campaign website www.WalkInOurShoes.org (or www.PonteEnMisZapatos.org for Spanish) where you can find more information about mental health and how to speak with your child.

Sincerely,

Classroom Teacher



SECTION 3

SUGGESTIONS FOR CREATING

A POSITIVE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND GROUP DYNAMIC





CREATING AGREEMENTS (or Group Norms)

WHAT ARE AGREEMENTS?

- Agreements are group-generated ground rules, or norms, for how we will work together and treat each other.
- Agreements make us feel **safe** because they allow us to predict what is going to happen.
- Agreements make things explicit (or clear) which we assume are explicit but often are not.
- Agreements are NOT rules (i.e. everyone must bring pencil and paper). Instead they are entirely about creating emotional and physical safety for your group.

HOW ARE AGREEMENTS CREATED?

Creating agreements can take time and the process may need to be broken up over a few sessions. Even when “complete,” agreements should be revisited, adjusted, added to, etc, as required by the group. The following steps guide the process for creating agreements.

1. Brainstorm agreements in small groups of 4-6 people. Each group creates a list. (“What do you need to feel safe/comfortable?” “How would you like to be treated?” “How will we treat each other?”)
2. Each group is asked to pick the one or two most important agreements from their list to go on one large paper as a working list.
3. Discuss these agreements thoroughly to make sure that:
 - a. All agreements are clear to everyone.
 - b. There are no redundant or overlapping agreements.
 - c. Everyone can agree to uphold and be bound by these agreements.
4. Next, hold a discussion about how agreements will be upheld—these suggestions should also be charted. Help the group come up with ways that they (and not just the facilitator) can help uphold these. Keep the strategies positive and non-confrontational (example: gentle reminders)
5. Agreements need to be signed/initialed to show commitment from everyone.



WHAT ARE SOME STRATEGIES FOR UPHOLDING AGREEMENTS?

- Review at each meeting (have a student read them, ask students to rate how they are doing with each one, ask for changes or modifications). Also review the chart: “How we will uphold.”
- Thank students specifically or in general, when agreements are being upheld. However, do not publicly call out someone for not upholding agreements.
- Hold group discussions when necessary to address agreements that they are having difficulty with. Stay positive and ask for students' help in strengthening this particular agreement.
- Have private one-on-one conversations with anyone who struggles to uphold them.



HELPFUL FORMATS FOR STRUCTURING GROUP DISCUSSION

Small Group Discussion

The large group is broken down into smaller discussion groups to allow for more interaction, more active sharing and listening.

Great for: groups who crave social time, or varying the modality when there has been a lot of full group time.

Pair/Share

Pair participants and give each pair a question or prompt to think about. They share their responses with each other. Follow-up: Pairs share their responses with the full group.

Great for: slowing down an over-eager group, or allowing more shy participants to engage in a smaller less-threatening format

Active Listening

Participants in pairs work from structured format (below). If necessary, facilitator can structure activity by signaling when to move to next step.

Step 1: Person A speaks and person B listens actively, for a set period of time.

Step 2: Person B summarizes what they heard.

Step 3: Person A confirms whether B has summarized accurately and/or makes corrections.

Step 4: Switch roles.

Great for: sensitive issues, calming and focusing a large group, and teaching listening skills.

Simulation or Practice Activities

Group members practice skills they have just learned with a partner and/or small groups.

Great for: evaluating whether participants have learned a particular skill during a training, or allowing participants to practice skills in a lower-stress way.



Role Plays/Skits

Group members take on made-up roles in imagined scenarios to explore or demonstrate ideas.

Great for: Dramatic or attention-craving people, or bringing the “fun” into a room.

Carousel/Gallery Work

- Write questions or prompts on paper and hang in different areas (or stations) around the room.
- Assign participants in small groups to start at different stations, spending a few minutes responding to the prompt.
- Facilitator signals when groups rotate to the next station.
- Eventually, all groups work their way around to all stations, responding to all prompts.
- To close, people can share their flipchart with the full group (Share “highlights” if there are too many ideas).

Great for: Gathering a lot of information or responses from the group, or getting people out of their seats

Jigsaw

This is a two-part format requiring individuals to carry knowledge from one small group to the next.

Part 1:

- Small groups A, B, C, D, E each learn a critical piece of information, skill, or explore a specific topic.
- Group A’s topic is different from Groups B, C, D, and E. Group B’s topic is different from Groups A, C, D, and E, etc.

Part 2:

- New groups are formed. Each group has one member from Group A, one member from Group B, one member from Group C, etc.
- New groups must put together all of their information towards a larger goal, project, or question.

Great for: allowing all participants to feel some “expertise” and/or take a small role of responsibility



Full Group Discussion

Round Robin or “Round the Horn”

Seeking responses from everyone in the group by moving across the group (or around the circle), from one side to the other.

Great for: ordering discussion, and/or limiting ‘overtalkers’ to one response.

Tips

Allow the option of a ‘pass’ to reduce pressure on individuals.

Remind participants that duplicate answers are okay.

Popcorn

Seeking responses from whole group, whoever wants to shout out.

Great for: high energy information-gathering, or allowing more reserved individuals to step back if they feel anxiety about whether they will participate.

Tips

Coaching: ‘What about responses from those of you who haven’t spoken yet?’ OR

‘Let’s make sure everyone who wants to has had a chance to speak.’



DEBRIEFING

Debriefing is a process whereby the facilitator helps the group focus on the real meaning that underlies a group exercise or activity.

The facilitator may find the following 3-step process to be of help:

1. The facilitator uses questions to help students discuss what they observed during the activity or lesson. (Process)
2. The facilitator uses questions to help participants reflect on feelings, thoughts, what they learned and/or moments of insight. (Reflect)
3. The facilitator uses questions to connect learning to school, the program, and life. (Apply)

Note use of open ended questions: How? What? Why?

Process	Reflect	Apply
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened? • What did you see or hear? • What did you observe? • What did you experience? • How was that for you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you learn from this experience? • What did you learn about this topic? About yourself? • What "aha" moments did you have? • How did you feel during this experience? • How might others feel about this idea or experience? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this relate to your program? • What did you learn from this activity? • What does this have to do with real life?

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