

# MN Health Plans Collaborative

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## Today's Presenters

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- **Jenilee Telander** is a Suicide Prevention Coordinator with the Minnesota Department of Health. She works with healthcare and behavioral health systems across the state, implementing the Zero Suicide framework, and manages community grants.
- **Wil Sampson-Bernstrom (he/they)** is a Suicide Prevention Coordinator at the Minnesota Department of Health. Their work includes community grant management and youth suicide prevention. Wil previously worked as the Regional Suicide Prevention Coordinator for Central Minnesota.

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## Changing the Narrative on Mental Health and Suicide

October 22, 2024

PROTECTING, MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF ALL MINNESOTANS

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## Take Care of Yourself

- We have all been touched by loss at some point in our lives.
- If you are a survivor grieving a suicide, you are not alone.
- If you find that the following information brings up painful emotional memories, take care of yourself and seek support that would be helpful to you.

**YOU MATTER.**  
TALK TO US.

*No concern is too small.*  
People call to talk about: substance use, economic worries, relationships, mental and physical illness, and more.  
Call or text for free and confidential help if you or someone you know is struggling.

Call or text 988

Chat [988lifeline.org/chat](https://988lifeline.org/chat)



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## Changing the Narrative



## What Do We Mean by “Mental Health”?



A state of well-being in which the individual realizes their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community.

—World Health Organization

# What is Mental Health?

## Mental Health

An Umbrella Term

Captures everything from your daily mood to severe mental distress

Exists on a continuum that is always in flux

100% of people have mental health every day

# Language is Evolving

## Mental Illness

A clinical term that describes a specific condition

Impacts mood, thinking, and behavior so that it's difficult to feel emotionally and cognitively well

Can be acute or chronic

50% of people will experience mental illness at some point

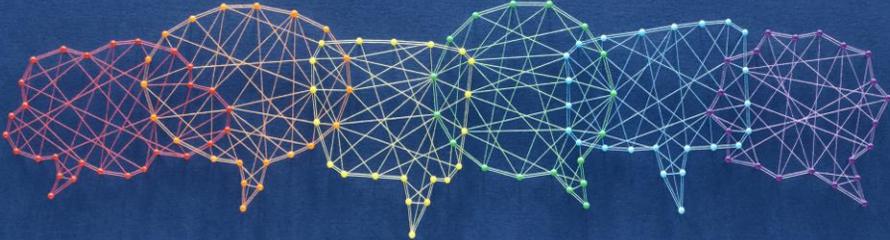
## Mental Wellbeing

Strengths-based term

Describe a sense of emotional and cognitive wellness

Can exist at the same time as mental illness

Is fueled by a sense of belonging, connection and meaning in one's life

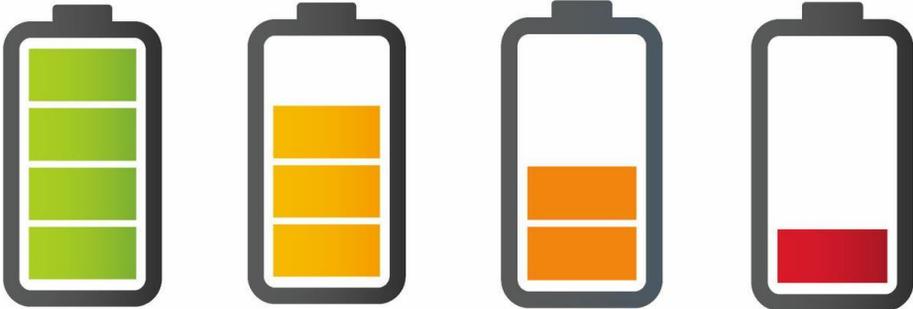


How comfortable do you feel talking about mental health?

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### Mental Health Continuum



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## Mental Health Continuum



Thriving- Things are going well

Managing- I can do things

Struggling- I am struggling

In Crisis- I am not well

## Eight Dimensions of Wellness



## The Eight Dimensions

- **Emotional** – awareness of emotions, managing stress and boundaries
- **Spiritual** – values, belief system that promote sense of purpose
- **Physical** – healthy diet, sleep, activity, preventive care and management
- **Occupational/Vocational** – fulfillment from work, maintain balance
- **Environmental** – connection to the surroundings where work, live and play
- **Financial** – relationship with money, understanding personal finances
- **Social** – developing and maintaining healthy relationships and connections
- **Intellectual** – inspires creativity, desire to learn, and open to new perspectives

## Mental Health Depends on the Person



## Complex Dimensions



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How comfortable do you feel talking about suicide?

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## We All Have Beliefs, Attitudes and Stories

- **Beliefs** of what is right and wrong
- **Attitudes** towards situations and groups
- **Ideas** of why people do what they do
- **Past stories** that provide insight
- **Past stories marked by pain, sadness and anger**

## Having a Positive Narrative

Normalize  
mental  
health

Know there  
is help

Promote  
help seeking

Emphasize  
prevention

Talk about  
hope and  
healing

## Why Does It Matter?

### Talking about mental health and suicide carelessly can:

- Increase the **risk** of an individual with mental health issues.
- Decrease the likelihood that a person at risk will seek **help** when they need it most.

## Having Healthy Conversations

- Encourage **equality** between physical and mental health
- **Talk openly** about mental health
- **Educate** yourself and others
- Show **compassion** for those with mental illness
- **Be conscious** of language

## People First Language

- It **humanizes** and **eliminates stereotypes**
- **Get specific** – the disorders or mental health condition should be referenced whenever possible
  - **Living with** a mental health condition
  - **John** is a person with anxiety.
  - **Jane** has lived experience with depression.
  - **They** are recovering from a substance use disorder.

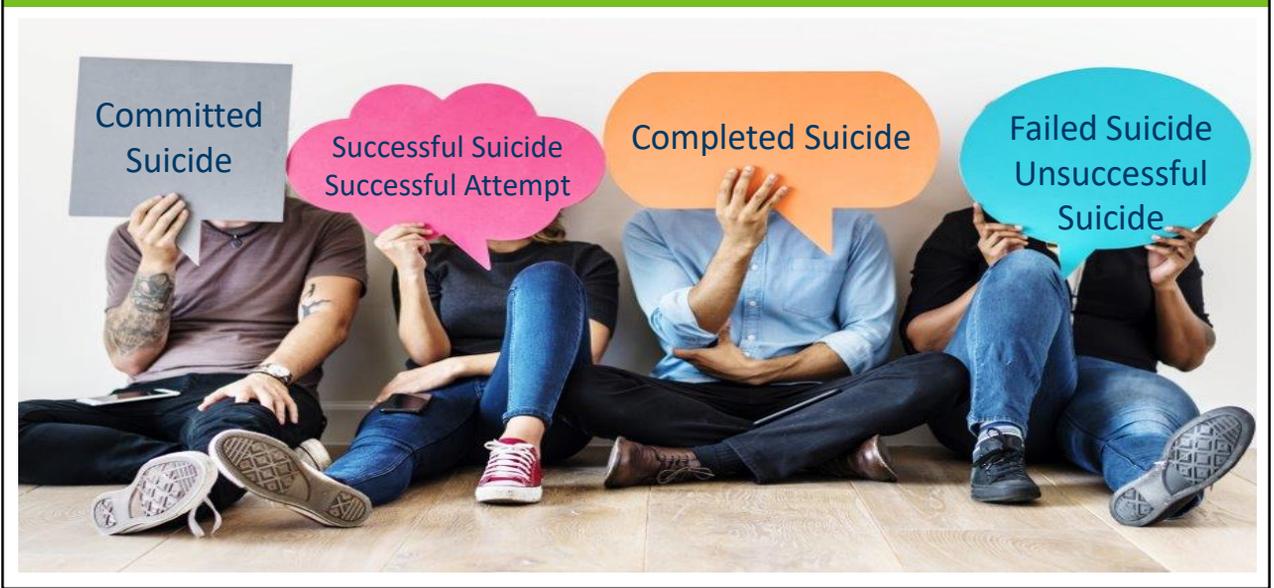
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## Language is Embedded in our Culture - Mental Health



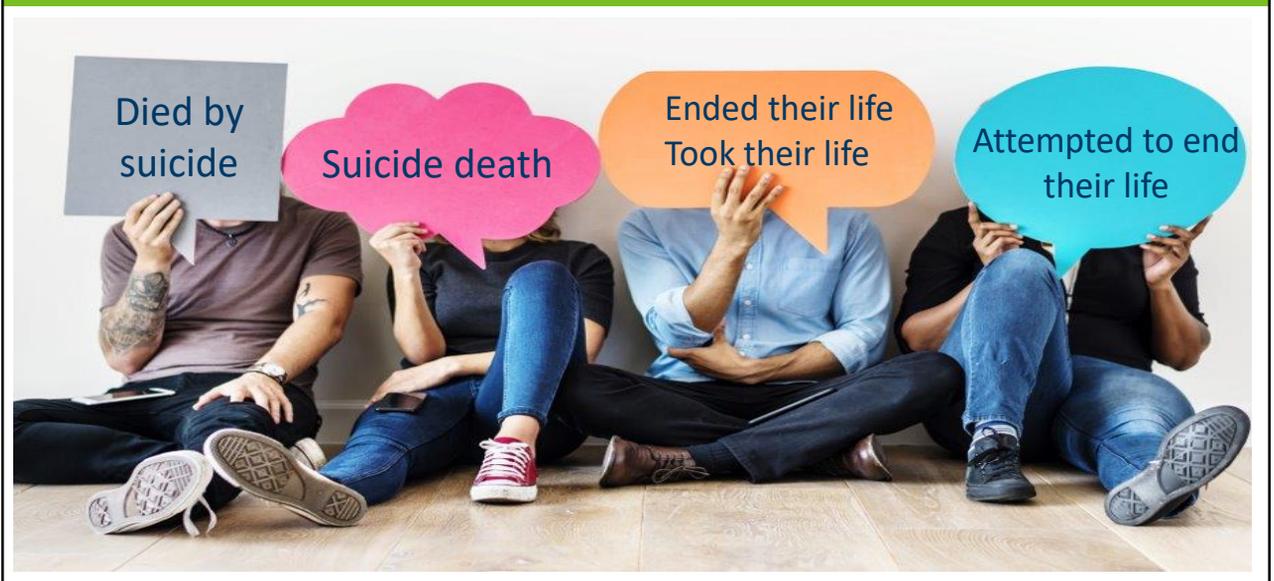
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## Language is Embedded in our Culture - Suicide



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## Alternative Language



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## Avoid the Following

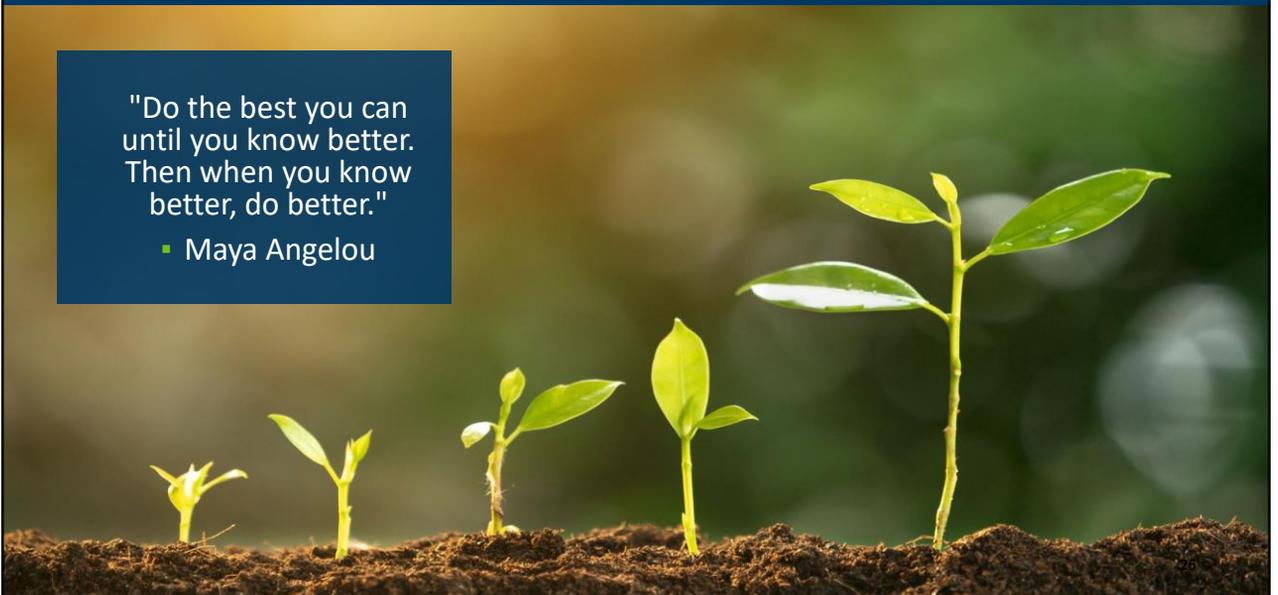
- Glorifying or romanticizing
- Normalizing
- Oversimplifying the cause of suicide
- Focus on personal details of those that have died by suicide
- Detailed descriptions of those that have died by suicide or their methods

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## Be Kind with Yourself and Others

"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."

- Maya Angelou



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## Learn the Signs of Struggle

Don't feel like hangout out as much.	Their mind seems to be somewhere else.	They seem anxious and can't relax.
They are negative about life.	They are not acting like themselves and are more irritable than usual.	They take more risks than usual.
They talk about feeling hopeless.	They are taking more drugs or drinking more.	They are harming themselves.

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## What Causes Suicidal Behavior?



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## Important Considerations

- **Not all risk and protective factors** are equal
- **Multiple risk factors** are usually involved
- **Individual variation** occurs among risk and protective factors
- **Immediate stressors** matter too

## What is Support?



## What It Is Not



- Knowing all the answers.
- Fixing it.
- Absorbing it.
- Making it better.
- All up to you.

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## Embracing Support for Yourself and Others



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## Ask for Support

- **What** type of support do you need?
- **Who** do you feel safest with?
- **Ask** for support.



## Offering Support

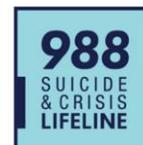
- “Hey, I know we have never talked about things like this before ...”
- “I’m here for you.”
- Embrace the discomfort.
- Help connect them.

## Suicide - Know What to Do

- **LISTEN**
  - Offer non-judgmental listening & support
  
- **ASK THE QUESTION**
  - Be comfortable asking the question and talking about mental health
  
- **GET HELP – FIND RESOURCES**
  - Know the warning signs & resources available

## Know the Resources

- Call [211](tel:211) for help.
- Call or text **988** or to chat visit the [988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](https://www.988lifeline.org/)
- MN Warm Lines –
  - [Mental Health Minnesota \(mentalhealthmn.org\)](https://www.mentalhealthmn.org/)
  - [Wellness in the Woods \(mnwithw.org\)](https://www.mnwithw.org/)
- **Call** your mobile crisis team
- In imminent danger, call 911 or bring to emergency department



## We Want Your Feedback



# Thank you!

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# Questions and Open Discussion

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## Thank You!

**Evaluation** – Please complete evaluation.

**Certificate of Participation** –upon completion of Evaluation

**Recording and resources** - Performance Improvement Project (PIP): Improving Care for People with Co-Occurring Diabetes and Depression - Stratis Health

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