

A-Z Glossary

Abuse: to use something for the wrong purpose in a way that is harmful or morally wrong.

Acute: means that something (usually a disorder or a symptom) has come on quickly with a high degree of impact on a person.

Addiction: is a condition in which a person is unable to stop using a substance or engaging in a behaviour.

Agoraphobia: fear of being in situations where escape might be difficult or that help wouldn't be available if things go wrong.

Anhedonia: is the inability to feel pleasure.

Anorexia Nervosa (commonly referred to as Anorexia): is an eating disorder characterized by an abnormally low body weight, an intense fear of gaining weight and a distorted perception of weight.

Antidepressants: are medications used to treat major depressive disorders, some anxiety disorders, some chronic pain conditions, and to help manage some addictions.

Antipsychotics: drugs used to treat people with schizophrenia and other psychoses. They are the type of psychiatric medicines which are used to treat psychosis, mostly mental problems that have symptoms of some kind of psychotic experiences.

Anti-social personality disorder: is a mental health condition in which a person consistently shows no regard for right and wrong and ignores the rights and feelings of others.

Anxiety: feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome.

Anxiety Disorders: are a group of common mental disorders. People with an Anxiety Disorder will experience things like mental and physical tension about their surroundings, apprehension (negative expectations) about the future, and will have unrealistic fears (see anxiety). It is the amount and intensity of the anxiety sensations and how they interfere with life that makes them Disorders. Some common types of Anxiety Disorders are: Social Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorders, Separation Anxiety Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, etc. Anxiety Disorders can be effectively treated with psychological therapies or medications.

Anxiolytic: is a medication or other intervention that reduces anxiety.

Appreciation: recognition of the good qualities of someone or something.

Asperger's Syndrome: a form of autism spectrum disorder, is a developmental disorder.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD): is a term used in the past to diagnose what is now called ADHD (see Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder).

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): is a mental disorder that is usually lifelong and associated with a delay in how the brain matures and how it processes information.

Atypical antipsychotics: are newer types of medicines that help treat psychosis. Sometimes they can be used to treat mood swings (such as severe depression or mania) or extreme behaviours (such as aggressive outbursts). See Antipsychotics above.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): is a life-long mental disorder in which the person suffers with significant abnormal development of social interaction, verbal and non-verbal communication. A person with Autism has trouble understanding the feelings of others (empathy) and usually does not understand many social norms (rules that tell us what is socially acceptable).

Avolition: means having little or no motivation or drive to do things. For example, not getting dressed or not wanting to go out with family or friends. This is not the same thing as “lazy”.

Axon: is the long, fibre like part of a nerve cell (neuron) in the brain or spinal cord by which information is carried to other nerve cells.

Balanced diet: a balanced diet contains an adequate amount of all the nutrients required by the body to grow, remain healthy and be disease-free.

Benzodiazepines: a type of drug used to relieve anxiety and insomnia (trouble sleeping).

Bipolar: a mental disorder that causes unusual shifts in mood, energy, activity levels, concentration, and the ability to carry out day-to-day tasks.

Bipolar Disorder (manic depression): is a mood disorder. People with Bipolar Disorder have experienced at least one full depressive episode and at least one manic episode.

Bipolar Disorder type 2 (hypo-manic depression): is a mood disorder. People with Bipolar Disorder type 2 experience at least one full depressive episode and at least one hypo-manic episode.

Borderline personality disorder (BPD): is a personality disorder. People with borderline personality disorder have difficulty in regulating their emotions and can experience intense bouts of anger, depression, and anxiety that may last from hours to days or longer.

Brain: is the centre of: adaptation, exploration, procreation and civilization. It is the master control of you and your body.

Bulimia Nervosa: is an eating disorder often just called Bulimia characterized by excessive uncontrollable eating (binges of large amounts of food) over a short period of time, which is then followed by actions that try to get rid of the calories consumed.

Burnout: is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress which results in distress. Burnout is an occupational phenomenon that is caused due to chronic workplace stress arising from unmanaged tasks or compromised output levels in the workplace.

Calorie (also known as kilocalorie): a unit of measurement to calculate heat expenditure or energy.

Child abuse: physical, sexual, and/or psychological maltreatment or neglect of a child or children.

Chronic: means something that is there most of the time for a long time. Often used to describe a disorder that lasts for years or more.

Circadian Rhythm: is the body's biological clock with a cycle of about 24 hours. It helps control our sleep and wake cycle as well as temperature and hormone variations.

Clinic: is a setting where various health professionals work directly with patients.

Clinical: an activity that takes place between a health provider and a patient (for example: diagnosis, treatments, etc.).

Cognition: the mental processes associated with thinking, learning, planning, memory etc.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: is a form of psychotherapy (often referred to as talking therapy), designed to help treat various mental disorders. This is mostly considered as the talking therapy because it involves talking one's way out by changing the way people behave. It is mostly used to treat all forms of anxiety or depression. It helps to deal with problems that are overwhelming to one by dividing them into bits and pieces to make it simpler.

Cognitive Symptoms: are disruptions in normal thoughts. Some medical disorders can interfere with cognition. For example: negative thoughts in depression ("I am a useless person") or delusions (see below) in psychosis ("The FBI is plotting against me") or difficulties in planning or problem solving, etc.

Community treatment: this means providing various kinds of treatments and services in the community instead of in the hospital. For example: in the doctor's office, in a health clinic or health centre, in a school, etc.

Comorbidity (also known as dual diagnosis): describes the presence of two disorders that may be associated in a person. For example, someone who has been diagnosed with a Substance Abuse Disorder of Alcohol and Depression.

Completed suicide: is the death of a person following a purposeful self-inflicted act with the intent to die. It is important not to confuse self-harm with suicide attempts, because an act of self-harm that results in death is not the same as completed suicide.

Compulsions: are repetitive behaviours used to suppress (push out of thought) obsessive thoughts or to follow strong urges. Some types of compulsions include: counting, checking, tapping, etc. While mild and occasional compulsions are common, severe and persistent compulsions can be part of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

Computed Axial Tomography (CAT) Scan: is a special kind of X-ray that creates a picture of the structures of the brain – what the brain looks like.

Concussion: a concussion is a brain injury that is caused by a blow to the head or body that may lead to problems with brain function due to brain damage.

Conduct Disorder (CD): is a disruptive behaviour disorder. The individual with CD shows a persistent pattern of aggressive behaviours lasting over 6 months that are unacceptable to society. Examples include stealing, fighting, starting fires, etc. Young people with CD often get into difficulty with the law.

Confusion: uncertainty about what is happening, intended, or required.

Consent: means to give approval or permission to someone to do something. For example a patient must give consent to receive treatment or to be a participant in a research study.

Cope: ability to deal effectively with something difficult.

Counselling: give professional help and advice to (someone) to resolve personal or psychological problems.

Courage: ability to do something that frightens one.

Deep breathing: the action of breathing deeply, especially as a method of relaxation.

Delusion: is a disturbance of cognition where a person has fixed false beliefs that something has occurred or will occur that is not real. A common delusion is the belief that someone is trying to harm them, even though nobody is. Delusions are often associated with psychosis.

Dendrite: are the specialized fibres that extend from a neuron's cell body and receive messages from other neurons (nerve cells).

Depressant: any substance (medication or drug) that slows down a person's thinking and/or physical functioning. Examples include some pain killers and alcohol.

Depression: common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act.

Depressive Episode: describes a period of depression in Major Depressive Disorder or Bipolar Disorder. It includes at least 5 or more of these symptoms being present most of the time, mostly every day for 2 or more weeks: depressed mood, a clear decrease in interest or pleasure in most or all (once enjoyable) activities, a significant weight gain or loss without dieting or loss of appetite, unable to get enough sleep or too much sleep (insomnia or hypersomnia), slow movements or purposeless movements from mental tension such as nervousness or restlessness which is observable by others (also known as psychomotor agitation or retardation), feeling tired or having less than a normal amount of energy, feeling worthless or a lot of inappropriate guilt, diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness (have difficulties making decisions), recurrent (happening again and again) thoughts of death, suicidal ideation (thoughts and/or ideas about death or dying), suicide plan, or suicide attempt.

De-stigmatization: the action or process of removing the negative connotation or social stigma associated with something.

Development: is physical and psychological (emotional and cognitive) growth throughout life.

Diagnosis: is a description that identifies a medical or mental disorder or illness. In North America a diagnosis is determined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and by the International Classification of Diseases (ICD). A diagnosis is a medical act provided by doctors, psychologists and others trained in diagnosis. A diagnosis is not a label.

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM): is a diagnostic manual published by the American Psychiatry Association that names and describes mental disorders. It divides mental disorders into categories called diagnoses based on lists of criteria (signs and symptoms).

Difficulties: a thing that is hard to accomplish, deal with, or understand.

Discrimination: making unjustified distinctions between people based on the groups, classes, or other categories.

Disorder: an abnormality in mental or physical health; disorder is often used as another name for illness.

Distress: is mental or physical suffering that occurs when there is excessive stress. Stress itself is a part of normal life. Distress is not a mental disorder but a reaction to excessive stress and could lead to depression, anxiety and other mental health disorders. The process of distress occurs when stress takes a toll on an individual for a prolonged period of time. Both stress and distress have potential number of complications and must be addressed with some huge potentially positive experiments.

Dizziness - Range of sensations, such as feeling faint, woozy, weak or unsteady.

Double Depression: is a mental disorder which is characterized by the presence of both Major Depressive Disorder and a less severe depression known as Dysthymic Disorder in one individual.

DSM IV –TR: see Diagnostic and Statistical Manual. The IV-TR refers to the version of the manual as it is updated over time.

Dysthymic Disorder: is a mood disorder. People with Dysthymic Disorder experience persistent low mood for two or more years (or one year for children) but experience fewer depressive symptoms than in Major Depressive Disorder. This low grade depression can result in many difficulties at home, school, work, with family and friends. Dysthymia can be effectively treated with psychology therapies or medication.

Eating Disorders: are a group of mental disorders related to eating. People with (an) eating disorder(s) excessively control their eating, exercise and weight. These disorders include Bulimia, Anorexia Nervosa, Binge Eating Disorder, and Eating Disorder Not Otherwise Specified.

Effect: Is the emotional experience that someone feels inside of themselves that can be recognized by others. For example: if you are looking/acting sad you can be recognized by someone else as you are feeling sad.

Electro Convulsive Therapy (ECT): is a form of treatment for mental disorders in which improvements in the disorder are produced by the passage of an electric current through the brain.

Electro-Encephalography (EEG): this is a technique that measures the electrical activity occurring in the brain by putting electrodes on top of a person's scalp. It is often used to assess sleep disorders or to diagnose epilepsy.

Emotional Wellbeing: means feeling good. Being happy, experiencing positive emotions like love, joy or compassion, and feeling generally satisfied with life.

Emotions: an emotion is a feeling such as happiness, love, fear, anger, or hatred, which can be caused by a situation.

Empathy: ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Euphoria: this word means a much exaggerated sense of happiness or joy. In a mental disorder this can be found in Bipolar Disorder.

Evidence Based Medicine (EDM): is the standard of medical care that happens when the health provider uses the best available scientific information to provide the kind of care the patient needs.

Extraversion: this is personality type where someone is very outgoing and sociable. People with this personality feature are often called “extroverts”.

Family Therapy: a type of therapy focused on improving relationships and behavioural patterns within a family and individuals in the family. Various forms of treatment and models of therapy are used in family therapy.

Fatigue: extreme tiredness resulting from mental or physical exertion or illness.

Financial wellbeing: financial Wellbeing occurs when people feel calm, secure and tranquil from a financial perspective.

Friendship: friendship is a relationship of mutual affection between people.

Functional Impairment: is a state in which a person is not functioning as they usually would or not functioning well in one or more area of life (i.e. family, friends, intimate relationships, work, school, etc.).

Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI): this is a method for studying how the brain is working. Pictures are taken of different changes that are created when blood flows through different parts of the brain.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD): is a mental disorder which is characterized by excessive anxiety and worry about numerous possible events (not any single, specific event) that leads to problems with daily functioning.

Genetic disposition: this describes the probability that a disorder may be due to genetic factors passed on from parents to their children.

Grandiosity: is having a highly exaggerated and unsubstantiated belief in your importance, ideas or abilities. Unrealistic amounts of grandiosity can be found in Mania and Hypomania.

Gratitude: being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

Grief: is normal emotional suffering experienced by a person from a loss of a loved one (e.g. it is experienced when a family member dies). It is different from a depressive disorder. Grief is not a mental disorder.

Hallucination: is a disturbance of how your brain perceives the world. A person with a hallucination experiences senses that aren't real (i.e. sound, sight, smell, taste, or touch). For example, a person with psychosis is hallucinating if they hear voices that aren't occurring in reality.

Happiness: feelings of joy, satisfaction, contentment, and fulfilment.

Health: is a state of physical, mental, social, and spiritual wellbeing and not just the absence of disease or infirmity. It includes mental health.

Health Care Professionals: are the trained professionals who help with the care of people who are sick or who help people and communities stay well. Examples include: doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, occupational therapists, social workers, etc.

Holistic: is used to describe a type of care that focuses on the whole person, who takes into account their physical and mental state as well as their social background, rather than just treating the symptoms of an illness alone.

Hormones: are chemicals formed in one part of the body and carried to another body part or organ where they have an impact on how that part functions.

Hospitalization: being kept or staying in a hospital as a patient for doctors and other health care professionals to decide on a diagnosis and implement a treatment plan for the patient.

Hypomanic Phase (hypomania): is a milder form of a manic phase. It is usually a part of bipolar disorder. Hypomania can be effectively treated with medication and psychological therapies.

ICD: see International Classification of Diseases of the World Health Organization (ICD).

Illness: has the same meaning as disease. However, being ill can mean you have one disease or multiple diseases.

Intellectually disabled: is the below-average general mental functioning that can be first noticed during childhood and is associated with problems in adjusting to different environments because of the lack of intellectual capacity.

International Classification of Diseases of the World Health Organization (ICD): is a book that classifies medical conditions (disorders and diseases) and groups of conditions. These conditions are determined by an international expert committee. This system is used worldwide for all medical diagnoses including mental disorders.

Interrupted sleep: is when a person wakes up for prolonged periods at least four times over the course of about eight hours.

Introversion: means to look inward, for a person to mostly focus on their inner selves and less on their social surroundings. People that have this personality characteristic are often called “introverts”.

Involuntary status: is a term used to describe someone who has been admitted into a psychiatric facility (usually a hospital) against their will or without their consent, under the authority and protection of the law.

Isolation: the state of being in a place or situation that is separate from others.

Kindness: being friendly, generous, and considerate.

Knowledge Translation: is similar to changing a document from English to French. It is usually used in reference to changing scientific information into a format that can be easily understood for a specific group of people (e.g. children, adolescents, teachers, adults not in a scientific professional setting, etc.).

Life satisfaction: the extent to which a person finds life rich, meaningful, full, or of high quality.

Manic Phase: is one of the two phases of Bipolar Disorder (the other is Depression). It is a period of time during which the person with mania experiences very high energy and excessive activity elevated to the point where they may have difficulty controlling themselves or acting in an expected manner.

Medication: is considered as a drug that is used in order to treat, diagnose or cure some person and also prevent an individual from any kind of disease. They are classified into various types like prescribed drugs, over-the-counter drugs.

Meditation: a practice in which techniques are used – such as mindfulness, or focusing the mind on a particular object, thought, or activity – to train attention and awareness, and achieve a mentally clear and emotionally calm and stable state.

Mental Disorder: is a disturbance of brain function that meets internationally accepted criteria (DSM or ICD) for a diagnosis. Mental disorders occur as a result of complex interaction between a person's genetic makeup and their environment.

Mental Health: defined as a state of wellbeing in which individual realizes his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community.

Mental Health Issue: is a broad term used to describe mental distress, mental suffering, mental illness or mental disorder. It is so broad that many researchers and health professionals think it is meaningless. We advise not using this term, but instead being clear about what you are talking about.

Mental Health Nurse (clinical nurse with a specialty in psychiatry): is a registered nurse who specializes in the maintenance of mental health and the treatment of mental disorders.

Mental Health Professional: is a broad category of health care workers who work to help other people improve their mental health or treat mental disorders.

Mental Health Promotion: these are activities that try to improve the mental health of people or try to reduce risk for the development of various mental health or social problems.

Mental Illness: refers to a wide range of mental health conditions — disorders that affect your mood, thinking and behaviour.

Mental Wellbeing: is the state of thriving in various areas of life, such as in relationships, at work, play, and more, despite ups and downs.

Mindfulness: state of being conscious or aware of something, including focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations.

Mood: a temporary state of mind or feeling.

Mood Disorders: are a group of mental disorders related to problems in how the brain is controlling emotions.

Mood stabilizers: medicines used to help normalize mood. They are usually used to treat Bipolar Disorder. Some of these are: lithium, valproate, carbamazepine.

Narcissistic: is a quality or trait of a person who interprets and regards everything in relation to their own self and not to other people. It is associated with an unrealistic and highly inflated self-worth.

Nausea: is a diffuse sensation of unease and discomfort, often perceived as an urge to vomit.

Negative symptoms: are symptoms of Schizophrenia and other psychoses that follow a lessening of executive functioning (conscious choice, intention, decision making; problem solving) in the brain. The person either has less of something (for example energy) or is unable to do something (for example, unable to get out of bed). These symptoms include: inertia (inability to get one's self going), lack of energy, lack of interaction with their friends and family members, poverty of thought (significantly fewer thoughts), social withdrawal, and blunted affect (less emotionally responsive). The positive and negative symptoms are considered as the medical terms for two groups of the psychotic problem of schizophrenia. For positive it brings in symptoms like hallucinations, delusions and repetition of moments which becomes very difficult to control. For the negative, they mostly take away capabilities like emotions and talking abilities, cause apathy and also disturb relationships and situations. The third group of this symptom is called the cognitive symptom that is related to thinking capacities, memory problems or disorganized thoughts.

Neurodevelopment: is how the brain grows and changes over time.

Neuron (nerve cell): is a unique type of cell found in the brain and the spinal cord that processes and transmits information within the nervous system.

Neuroscience: is the scientific study of the brain and the nervous system.

Neurotransmission: is the process that occurs when a neuron releases special chemicals called neurotransmitters that relay a signal to another neuron across the synapse (a gap between parts of nerve cells).

Neurotransmitters: are chemicals used to communicate messages that are being sent from one brain cell to another in the spaces between those cells.

Nutrition: is about eating a healthy and balanced diet.

Obsessions: are repetitive, persistent, unwanted thoughts that the person cannot stop and which cause significant distress and impair the person's ability to function.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD): common, chronic, and long-lasting disorder in which a person has uncontrollable, reoccurring thoughts (obsessions) and/or behaviours (compulsions) that he or she feels the urge to repeat over and over.

Occupational Therapist: is a trained health professional that focuses on increasing a person's independent functioning, improving social skills, and preventing disability using self-care, employment, and recreational (fun) activities.

Panic: sudden uncontrollable fear or anxiety, often causing wildly unthinking behaviour.

Panic Attack: is a sudden experience of intense fear or psychological and physical discomfort that develops for no apparent reason and that includes physical symptoms such as dizziness, trembling, sweating, difficulty breathing or increased heart rate.

Panic Disorder: is a mental disorder. A person with panic disorder has panic attacks, expects and fears the attacks and avoids going to places where escape may be difficult if a panic attack happens.

Patient advocate: is a person who helps a patient (or a patient's family) with problems and complaints in relation to care or help that they are getting from any agency or institution (hospital, clinic, psychiatric clinic, etc.). Patient advocates can speak on behalf of the patient (or family) and can often be helpful during times of disagreement between the patient (or family) and health care professionals.

Perception: is the mental process of becoming aware of or recognizing information that comes from the five senses: sight, sound, smell, touch or taste. Proprioception (knowing where your body parts are without looking) is also a type of perception.

Personality Disorders: is a general term for a group of behavioural disorders characterized by lifelong behaviour patterns. People with Personality Disorders don't adjust or function well in changing social environments.

Phobia: is an ongoing intense fear or anxiety of a certain object, animal, activity, or setting that poses little to no actual danger.

Physical Wellbeing: is the ability to maintain a healthy quality of life that allows us to get the most out of our daily activities without undue fatigue or physical stress.

Positive mindset: practice of focusing on the good in any given situation.

Positive symptoms: are symptoms found in psychosis, often in Schizophrenia. They include hallucinations, delusions, loose associations (unclear connections between ideas or disorganized flow of moments, and often repetition of movements that are very hard to connect.

Positive Thinking: approaching unpleasantness or other life challenges in a more positive and productive way.

Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scans: a technique using radioactive substances for studying how the brain is working by measuring different chemicals involved in the brain's work.

Postsynaptic neuron: is the nerve cell (neuron) that receives messages from other neurons across a synapse.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): is mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event – either experiencing it or witnessing it.

Prescription drug: a pharmaceutical drug that legally requires a medical prescription to be dispensed.

Presynaptic neuron: is the nerve cell (neuron) that sends messages to other neurons across a synapse.

Prognosis: is an educated guess, based on previous evidence and scientific study, of how a disorder will affect the person over time.

Prosperity: prosperity is the flourishing, thriving, good fortune and successful social status.

Protective factor: is anything that decreases a person's chances of getting a disorder or having a negative outcome. Protective factors can be aspects of a person's health, lifestyle, genetic makeup, or environment, such as a supporting family or community.

Psychiatrist: is a doctor who specializes in the practice of psychiatry (the treatment of people who have a mental disorder and the prevention of mental disorders). Psychiatrists are medical doctors who have had many years of additional training in psychiatric medicine.

Psychiatry: is the medical specialty focused on understanding, diagnosing and treating mental disorders.

Psychologist: a person who specializes in the study of mind and behaviour or in the treatment of mental, emotional, and behavioural disorders.

Psychomotor: describes the mental process that helps put physical movements into action. For example, a feeling of fatigue may lead to walking very slowly or resting on a couch.

Psychomotor agitation: are movements that happen because of mental tension. It is often described as a way of relieving mental tension. For example, pacing back and forth and peeling or biting skin around fingers.

Psychomotor retardation: are slow thoughts as well as movements that are slowed down.

Psychosis: is an abnormal condition of the mind that results in difficulties determining what is real and what is not real.

Psychotherapist: a person who specializes in the practice of psychotherapy, particularly when based on regular personal interaction.

Psychotherapy: the process of treating psychological disorders and mental distress through the use of verbal and psychological techniques, to help a person change behaviour, increase happiness, and overcome problems.

Receptor: is a special part of a neuron where different chemicals from other neurons (neurotransmitters) or medicines attach, leading to messages going between neurons being sent or blocked.

Recovery: is when a person with a mental disorder is doing as well as they can be and is feeling mentally healthy – even if they still have a mental disorder.

Recreation Therapist: is a professional that is trained in the specific area of therapy that uses recreational and leisure methods, such as games and activities, to improve a person's physical, mental, emotional, and relationship functioning.

Recreation Therapy: is a type of therapy that uses methods such as games and group activities to improve a person's physical, mental, emotional, and relationship functioning.

Relapse: is when a person with a mental disorder who has been in remission or recovery gets sick again.

Relaxation techniques: involve refocusing your attention on something calming and increasing awareness of your body.

Remission: is when a person's symptoms decrease, and they return to their usual state after having an active phase of a disorder.

Research: is the in-depth study done on a topic to find an answer to a question (e.g. a study on what is the best treatment for Depression). There are many types of research approaches used (for example observational, analytical, experimental, theoretical, and applied). Not all research is of the same value.

Resilience: is the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult life events.

Respect: feeling of deep admiration for someone or something caused by their abilities, qualities, actions or achievements.

Restlessness: the inability to rest or relax as a result of anxiety or boredom.

Results: are the outcomes of a study that support or do not support what the researchers had thought. They are used to guide practice or support further research.

Risk factor: is anything that increases a person's chances of getting a disorder (can be aspects of a person's health, genetics, lifestyle or environment).

Safety: the position of being safe and free from the risk of occurrence of injuries, danger or loss.

Schizoaffective Disorder: is a psychotic disorder that has symptoms of both Schizophrenia and a major mood disorder.

Schizophrenia: a serious mental illness that affects how a person thinks, feels, and behaves.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD): is a type of Depressive Disorder that comes and goes in a seasonal pattern. SAD is sometimes known as "winter depression" or "winter blues" because the symptoms are usually more apparent and more severe during the winter. With the passing of winter SAD can cause depressive occurrence in spring or early summer. Some people with SAD may have symptoms during the summer and feel better during the winter.

Selective mutism: is an anxiety disorder in which a person who is otherwise capable of speech becomes unable to speak when exposed to specific situations, specific places, or to specific people, one or multiple of which serving as triggers.

Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs): are a group of medications used to treat depression. These medications work mainly in the serotonin system of the brain.

Self-Care: taking action to preserve or improve one's own health.

Self-esteem: is a confidence and satisfaction in oneself.

Self-harm: deliberate injury to oneself, typically as a manifestation of a psychological or psychiatric disorder.

Separation Anxiety Disorder: is an Anxiety Disorder that can be diagnosed in children which makes it very hard for them to be away from their parent. People with Separation Anxiety Disorder can be helped with psychological treatments.

Serotonin: is a neurotransmitter that helps in regulating many different brain functions, including mood, anxiety and thinking.

Sexual assault: unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature.

Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography (SPECT): is a technique that is used to study how the brain is functioning.

Social connection: is the experience of feeling close and connected to others.

Social Phobia (also known as Social Anxiety Disorder): is an anxiety disorder regarding the fear of having to be in social situations. A person with Social Anxiety Disorder also avoids the situations that make them feel anxious. Examples include fear of public speaking, fear of going to a party because other people are “judging” them, fear of performing in front of other people.

Social skills: is the ability to interact with other people in ways that are commonly accepted and appropriate to the situation/culture.

Social Wellbeing: sense of belonging to a community and making a contribution to society.

Social Worker: is a professional who is educated to deal with social, emotional, and environmental problems that may be associated with a disorder or disability. Services provided by social workers may include case management (connecting patients with programmes that meet their needs), counselling, human service management, social welfare policy analysis, and policy and practice development.

Sociopath (or psychopath): is a person with antisocial personality disorder.

Sociopathy: are the behaviour patterns and personality traits a sociopath displays such as superficial (fake) charm, having a lack of remorse (doesn't feel badly/guilty about doing something wrong), and others.

Somatic: describes the physical body. For example: sore muscles, fatigue, and headache are all somatic (also known as physical) sensations.

Specific Phobia: is an Anxiety Disorder. A person with a specific phobia experiences fear in the presence of an object or situation, snakes, fear of heights, fear of the dark, etc. Specific phobias often do not need to be treated. If they do, behaviour therapy is usually used.

Stigma: a set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something.

Stimulants: are a group of medications that improve various aspects of brain function: such as: alertness, concentration, etc. They are often used to treat ADHD.

St. John's Wort: is an herb that some people think can help treat Depression. It is not approved by some health authorities (e.g. Health Canada) for use in treating mental disorders.

Stress: normal state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances. Stress is the inferred internal state that happens due to the occurrence of some situation that becomes difficult to handle. It is the feeling of emotional and physical tension which leads to feeling frustrated, nervous or angry. There are two types of stress, acute and chronic stress. Excessive stress causes distress and the capacity of handling stress differs from person to person, sometimes it has a positive effect because a number of people perform better under stress (e.g. elite athletes).

Substance abuse: is an unhealthy pattern of drug, alcohol or other chemical use that may lead to relationship, education, work, mental and/or physical problems.

Substance dependence: is a pattern of actions, physical, and mental symptoms that develop from abuse of a substance (drug).

Substitute decision maker: is a person who is given the authority to make care or treatment decisions on behalf of an involuntary patient.

Suicidal Ideation: refers to thoughts, images or fantasies of harming or killing oneself.

Suicidal intent: is the commitment and expectation of death by suicide. (Future tense: the person intends to take their life. Past tense: the person intended to take their life).

Suicidality: refers to any thoughts or actions associated with the desire or intent to die. We do not recommend using this term as it is so broad that it cannot convey clearly what a person means. For example: a passing thought about death or an attempt to die are both examples of suicidality.

Suicidal Plan: is the mentally created plan to attempt to end one's life.

Suicide: the act of taking one's own life voluntarily and intentionally.

Suicide Attempt: a purposeful act with the intent to end one's life that does not cause death.

Supported decision making: is the process in which a vulnerable person is provided advice, support, and assistance by their support network so they can make and communicate their own decisions.

Symptom: is an occurrence of any type experienced by a person that differs from their normal in structure, behaviour, sensation, emotion or cognition that indicates illness or disease.

Synapse or synaptic space: is a space between neurons (nerve cells). Neurons release chemicals into this space that regulate how messages in the brain operate.

Syndrome: is a collection of signs (what a person observes about another person) and symptoms (what a person experiences) that describes a disease.

Systematic Desensitization: is a type of psychological treatment which gradually introduces things that a person fears so that they gradually overcome their fears.

Teen mental health: is a teen's state of emotional and spiritual wellbeing and not just the absence of disease. Focusing to improve the mental health and ability of teens' academic, social, physical, and other functioning will, in turn, increase their ability to contribute to society in the short term and in the long term in meaningful ways. It is based on the brain's ability to adapt.

Tense: unable to relax because of nervousness, anxiety, or stimulation.

Therapist: is a person who is professionally trained and/or skilled in the practice of a particular type of therapy.

Therapy: is the treatment of disease or disorder by any method.

Tolerance: is when a person becomes less responsive to a medication or other treatment over time.

Trauma: group of emotional and behavioural problems that may result from childhood traumatic and stressful experiences.

Treatment: medical, psychological, social or surgical management and care of a patient.

Trichotillomania: is a mental disorder. People with Trichotillomania pull out their hair over and over again leaving noticeable hair loss.

Violence: is emotional, sexual and/or physical abuse towards someone usually in an effort to gain power or control of another person or group of people.

Voluntary admission: is being admitted as a patient to a mental health unit for treatment (usually in a hospital) based on a person's agreement to be admitted.

Voluntary patient: is a person who stays in a psychiatric facility (usually a hospital) by their own consent or with the consent of the substitute decision maker.

Withdrawal: is the self-directed avoidance of social contact.

Work / Life Balance: refers to the level of prioritization between personal and professional activities in an individual's life and the level to which activities related to their job are present in the home.

Workplace Wellbeing: relates to all aspects of working life, from the quality and safety of the physical environment, to how workers feel about their work, their working environment, the climate at work and work organization.