

The Pulse

Keeping a pulse on healthcare integration at RBH

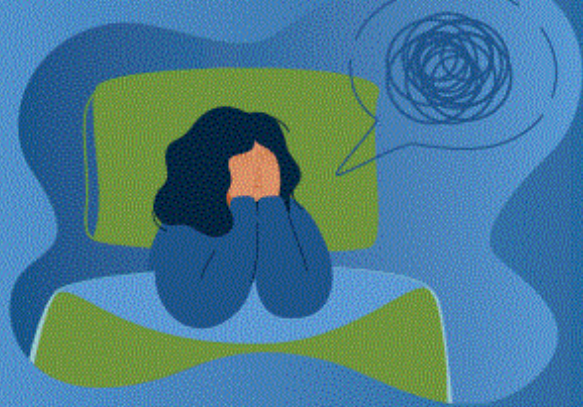


May is mental health awareness month and a great time to show support of individuals living with mental and behavioral health conditions. 22.8% of United States adults experience mental health conditions in 2021 (approximately 57.8 million people). **One in 6 youths aged 6 to 17 years old have experienced a mental health disorder each year in the United States.** 5.5% of adults in the United States have experienced a serious mental health condition such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia. 50% of all lifetime mental health conditions begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24. **Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10 - 14 years old.** 19% of adults living in the United States have an anxiety disorder. Suicide accounts for over 800,000 deaths globally every year. Also, individuals living with serious mental health conditions face an increased risk of having chronic medical conditions. **33.5% of adults in the United States with mental health conditions also experienced a substance use disorder in also** An estimated 21.1% of homeless adults staying in shelters live with serious mental health conditions. **Mental health treatments such as therapy, medication, and self-care, have made recovery a reality for those experiencing mental and behavioral health conditions.** Yearly approximately 47.2% of adults with mental health conditions and 65.4% of adults with serious mental health conditions are getting treatment.

For more information visit the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) website at <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Mental-Health-Awareness-Month>

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I'M SO STRESSED OUT!

From the **NATIONAL INSTITUTE of MENTAL HEALTH**

It's important to manage your stress.

Everyone experiences stress, and sometimes that stress can feel overwhelming. You may be at risk for an anxiety disorder if it feels like you can't manage the stress and if the symptoms of your stress:

- Interfere with your everyday life.
- Cause you to avoid doing things.
- Seem to be always present.



Coping With Stress and Anxiety

Learning what causes or triggers your stress and what coping techniques work for you can help reduce your anxiety and improve your daily life. It may take trial and error to discover what works best for you. Here are some activities you can try when you start to feel overwhelmed:

- Keep a journal.
- Download an app that provides relaxation exercises (such as deep breathing or visualization) or tips for practicing mindfulness, which is a psychological process of actively paying attention to the present moment.
- Exercise, and make sure you are eating healthy, regular meals.
- Stick to a sleep routine, and make sure you are getting enough sleep.
- Avoid drinking excess caffeine such as soft drinks or coffee.
- Identify and challenge your negative and unhelpful thoughts.
- Reach out to your friends or family members who help you cope in a positive way.

Recognize When You Need More Help

If you are struggling to cope, or the symptoms of your stress or anxiety won't go away, it may be time to talk to a professional. Psychotherapy (also called talk therapy) and medication are the two main treatments for anxiety, and many people benefit from a combination of the two.

If you or someone you know has a mental illness, is struggling emotionally, or has concerns about their mental health, there are ways to get help. Find more information on the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) website at www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp.

If you are in immediate distress or are thinking about hurting yourself, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at **988** or chat at 988lifeline.org.

More Resources

- NIMH: Anxiety Disorders (www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders)
- NIMH: Caring for Your Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov/mymentalhealth)
- NIMH: Child and Adolescent Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov/children)
- NIMH: Tips for Talking With a Health Care Provider About Your Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov/talkingtips)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Anxiety and Depression in Children (www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/depression.html)

EnRICHing Lives

Peggy grew up in Rochester, New York. She moved down to Virginia for a brief time when she was 17 years old to help take care of her brother who was physically challenged due to an injury in the service. She moved back in 1991 and has been here ever since. She has 3 children, one grandson, and one great grandson. She got married in August 2021. Her favorite quote is **“Stay focused, motivated, and connected.”** For fun she loves to cook out, spend time with her family, and visit Myrtle Beach. Peggy just celebrated 6 years of recovery on February 25, 2023! “Before recovery, I was just like in a dark place which consisted of a deep depression and substance abuse. I was incarcerated. I told the

judge I had to do something different. **I wanted to do something different, and I knew I needed help.** They offered me treatment. I was placed in RBHA Women’s Residential Treatment Center where I received health and wellness, peer support, and primary care services. Here is where I learned the value of peer support.” When asked about her motivation on her road to recovery, Peggy said, **“My motivation was the peers that helped me through my challenges.** Seeing other people with lived experience. They introduced me to different pathways of recovery. I chose NA as my pathway. There are a lot of different pathways. **Peer services is what motivates me the most because their services were endless. Anything I needed they helped me navigate. They gave me so much support and encouragement. They helped me advocate for myself.**” When asked why she became a peer, Peggy responded, “Because I wanted to give back to individuals like myself. To help them navigate through their challenges like I was helped. I just feel like I can meet them where they are. Like be really intentional. They need that because that’s what I needed. I want to let them know they have choices and they have a voice.” **When asked what is the best part about being a peer, Peggy said excitedly, “Working with individuals with challenges and seeing them thrive.”** Peggy was recently awarded Employee of the Month. “I was surprised. I feel honored and I’m grateful that I have a team I enjoy working with and I know they enjoy working with me. **We have a great time!**” says Peggy. Also, Peggy was asked to speak on a panel with VCU’s Rams of Recovery. “I feel honored with that as well. As far as VCU, I’m still an affiliate. I went



“Recovery has allowed me to be a responsible and a productive citizen in society as well as a mother, sister, wife, and friend.”

through Rams of Recovery. I’m a trainer as well. It’s a great opportunity,” says Peggy. Her future goal is to further her education. When asked what she would say to a person struggling in their recovery to help inspire them, Peggy said, **“First thing I would do is ask them how I can help them, not what happened.** I would ask them to tell me about what’s going on and I may be able to help them navigate their challenges. I would let them know recovery is possible. I would tell them to set some short-term goals.”

ADDICTION RECOVERY SUPPORT WARM LINE

1-833-4PEERVA

(1-833-473-3782)

www.AliveRVA.org

Facebook and Instagram@AliveRVAwarmline

Peer Recovery
Warm Line

*Listening and
Recovery Support*

*Treatment,
Housing, Food &
Health Resources*

*You don't have to
face this alone.*

Call us.

**OPEN DURING
HOLIDAYS**

We encourage those
struggling with
addiction, their loved
ones & community
members to reach out.



Alive RVA Warm Line

8:00 am—12:00 midnight

7 days/week

Talk to trained individuals with lived experience in
addiction recovery. Safe and confidential.

We're here to help.

Alive RVA Project Partners:

Substance Abuse & Addiction Recovery Alliance (SAARA);

Mental Health America of Virginia;

Richmond Behavioral Health Authority.

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