

How do we define
Mental Health?

Having mental health does not mean having NO problems but being mentally well or healthy implies that we have the ability to recognize our problems and the ability to deal with them before they get out of hand



We are mentally healthy when we can cope with the demands of everyday life in a positive way

Indicators of a Healthy Mind

see handout

7 of 10
Canadians
report excellent
or very good
mental health

mentally healthy people generally observe and understand what is going on around them

they are aware of their own motives & feelings and can control their behaviour



they judge their own reactions & capabilities realistically

while they may not always behave as society expects, they do so deliberately & with a reason

they appreciate their own worth and feel accepted by others in their lives

while they may have stress or problems to deal with, it is not affecting them to the point that it interferes with regular daily activities

they may sometimes act without thinking about consequences, but they can restrain their impulses when necessary

they are capable of forming close and satisfying relationships with others and of being sensitive to others' needs as well as their own

Defining “Normal”

is Normality in
the Eye of the
Beholder?

HOW DO WE DEFINE NORMAL



‘normal’ is a difficult concept or term to establish

‘normal’ varies from culture to culture & from time to time

1. The way others see it
2. The way you see it
3. Statistics
4. Failures in Socialization
5. It’s all about Context

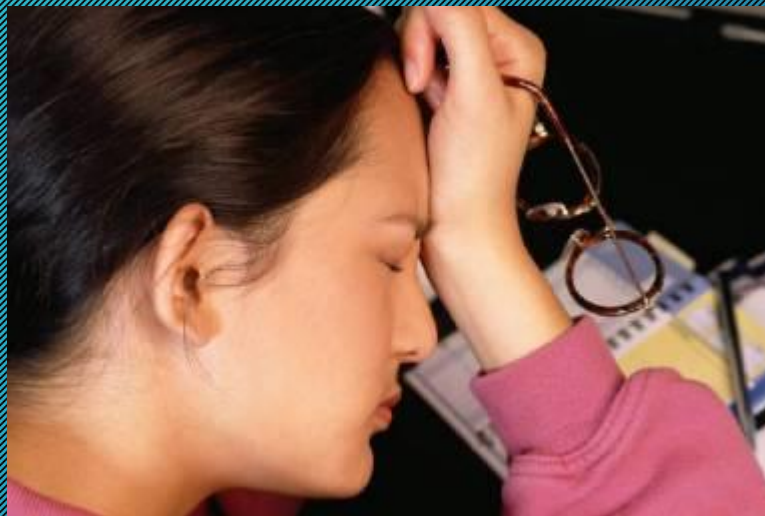
1. The way others see it

- ‘normal’ based on fitting in and the way others see it
- a person who has attitudes and behaviour patterns that conform to the group that the person spends time with
- like beauty, normalcy is in the eye of the beholder



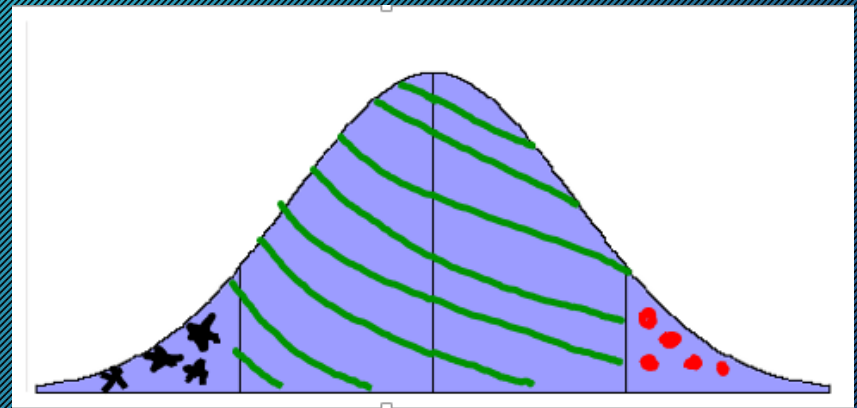
2. The way you or themself sees it

- subjective discomfort
- is the client comfortable and happy and do they report feeling emotionally well?



3. Statistics

- statistical definition
- using the ‘bell curve’ determine whether the client fits
- where the majority of the population fits
- example... anxiety levels



Below
average

average

Above
average

4. Failures in Socialization

- social nonconformity or failures in socialization
- when a client displays behaviour that is not considered appropriate and behaviours that will not help them succeed



5. It's all about Context

- context
- what is considered “normal” behaviour in one context may be entirely inappropriate in another situation
- example...
- if you take off your clothes in a doctors office – normal
- if you take off your clothes at the football game – not normal

