

THINK ABOUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

*“Don’t be ashamed
of your story. It will
inspire others.”*

-Unknown

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WHAT’S BROKEN
CAN BE MENDED.
WHAT HURTS
CAN BE HEALED.
AND NO MATTER
HOW DARK IT GETS,
THE SUN IS GOING
TO RISE AGAIN.

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DISCUSS HOW SOME OF THESE WORDS ARE CONNECTED TO THE ISSUE OF MENTAL HEALTH



WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

► <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbC9z3-6Gcw>

(copy and paste this link)

DEFINITION OF MENTAL HEALTH: a person's condition with regard to their psychological and emotional well-being

- ▀ What does this definition mean? Discuss

DEMI LOVATO:

In recent years, the singer has produced a documentary about mental health called "Beyond Silence," released a documentary about her own struggles, shared powerful side-by-side photos of her recovery from bulimia, and entered rehab to address her substance abuse issues.



"It's very important we create conversations, we take away the stigma, and that we stand up for ourselves if we're dealing with the symptoms of poor mental health," Lovato told Variety in February. The singer continued: "It is possible to live well and thrive with poor mental health."

Demi Lovato on Mental Health:

DISCUSS WHY YOU THINK DEMI LOVATO NEEDED COUNSELLING

WHAT ISSUES WAS SHE TRYING TO COPE WITH?

DOES SHE HAVE A LOT OF PRESSURE IN HER LIFE? WHY?

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF GETTING COUNSELLING OR THERAPY?

DEMI LOVATO AND MENTAL HEALTH

Lovato is 25, but she's been in the public eye since childhood, kicking off her acting career in 2002, starring in two Disney productions and releasing her debut album in 2008. But she also entered rehab for the first time when she was 18. The list of diagnoses that Lovato has shared is long: depression, addiction, disordered eating and bipolar disorder. While achieving platinum records and starring on The X Factor.

Lovato states - "Like millions of Americans, I am living with mental health problems, but I'm lucky,"

"I had the resources and support to get treatment at a top facility," she continued.

"My dad was an addict and an alcoholic. Guess I always searched for what he found in drugs and alcohol because it fulfilled him and he chose that over a family," she said in the film.

WHY IS YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IMPORTANT?

Discuss some of the ideas listed - what do they mean?
How can good mental health help with each one?



Why is mental health and wellbeing important?

- Healthier lifestyles
- Better physical health
- Improved recovery from illness
- Fewer limitations in daily living
- Higher educational attainment
- Greater productivity
- Greater employment and earnings
- Better relationships
- Increased social cohesion
- **Improved quality of life.**

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

As a class discuss some of the mental health problems.

Do you know what they all are?

Perhaps some of your class could find out about some that you do not know about?



Depression

- ▶ Depression is a low mood that lasts for a long time, and affects your everyday life.
- ▶ In its mildest form, depression can mean just being in low spirits. It doesn't stop you leading your normal life but makes everything harder to do and seem less worthwhile. At its most severe, depression can be life-threatening because it can make you feel suicidal or simply give up the will to live.
- ▶ It feels like I'm stuck under a huge grey-black cloud. It's dark and isolating, smothering me at every opportunity.

There are also some specific types of depression:

- ▶ **Seasonal affective disorder (SAD)** – depression that usually (but not always) occurs in the winter.
- ▶ **Dysthymia** – continuous mild depression that lasts for two years or more. Also called persistent depressive disorder or chronic depression.
- ▶ **Prenatal depression** – sometimes also called antenatal depression, it occurs during pregnancy.
- ▶ **Postnatal depression (PND)** – occurs in the weeks and months after becoming a parent. Postnatal depression is usually diagnosed in women but it can affect men, too.

Anxiety

- ▶ Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid - particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future. Anxiety is a natural human response when we perceive that we are under threat. It can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations.
- ▶ For me, anxiety feels as if everyone in the world is waiting for me to trip up, so that they can laugh at me. It makes me feel nervous and unsure whether the next step I take is the best way forward.
- ▶ Most people feel anxious at times. It's particularly common to experience some anxiety while coping with stressful events or changes, especially if they could have a big impact on your life.
- ▶ Going out of the house is a challenge because I [have a] fear of panicking and feel that I'm being watched or judged. It's just horrible. I want to get help but I'm afraid of being judged

What is the 'fight, flight or freeze' response?

Like all animals, human beings have evolved ways to help us protect ourselves from danger. When we feel under threat our bodies react by releasing certain hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol.

These hormones:

- make us feel more alert, so we can act faster.
- make our hearts beat faster, quickly sending blood to where it's needed most.

After we feel the threat has passed, our bodies release other hormones to help our muscles relax. This can sometimes cause us to shake.

This is commonly called the 'fight, flight or freeze' response - it's something that happens automatically in our bodies, and we have no control over it.

OCD – Obsessive Compulsive disorder

- ▶ **Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)** is an anxiety disorder. It has two main parts: obsessions and compulsions.
- ▶ **Obsessions** are unwelcome thoughts, images, urges, worries or doubts that repeatedly appear in your mind. They can make you feel very anxious (although some people describe it as 'mental discomfort' rather than anxiety).
- ▶ **Compulsions** are repetitive activities that you do to reduce the anxiety caused by the obsession. It could be something like repeatedly checking a door is locked, repeating a specific phrase in your head or checking how your body feels.
- ▶ It's not about being tidy, it's about having no control over your negative thoughts. It's about being afraid not doing things a certain way will cause harm.

A photograph of Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson smiling on a red carpet.

Depression

"Took me a long time to realize it but the key is to not be afraid to open up. You're not alone."

A photograph of Selena Gomez in a black dress on a red carpet.

Depression, anxiety & panic attacks

I started to have panic attacks right before getting onstage, or right after leaving the stage.

A photograph of Adele in a green dress on a red carpet.

Depression

I can slip in and out of depression quite easily. It started when my granddad died, when I was about 10, I have been in therapy, lots.

A close-up photograph of Woody from the Toy Story franchise.

Bipolar - manic depression

I found out recently that I'm manic depressive

A photograph of Michael Phelps waving with his right hand.

ADHD

Diagnosed when he was 9 years old, HE had trouble concentrating in school

A photograph of Elton John wearing orange-tinted glasses and smiling.

Bulimia

Discussing his substance abuse and bulimia, Elton John said he had been "sober and clean" years. "And it was the best thing I ever did. But, you know, those three words -- I need help. If only I'd said them earlier

A close-up photograph of Jennifer Aniston smiling.

Post natal depression

My son, Moses, was born in 2006, and I was plunged into one of the darkest and most painfully debilitating chapters of my life

8 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH TODAY

1 LOG OUT OF FACEBOOK

Although this point could apply to any form of social media, for me Facebook is the biggest culprit of bringing negativity to people's lives. Simply log out, do something else and you will be surprised how much you haven't missed it.

2 GO OUTDOORS

Whether this is a run, jog, walk or a full-blown yoga session. Experiment until you find something that is right for you. Exercise releases endorphins which help boost your mood. Who can say no to that?

3 MINDFULNESS

Meditation doesn't have to be you sat in a field going 'hum' over and over again. Mindfulness is all about taking a few minutes out of your day to relax, de-stress and forget about the world around you.

4 GO TO BED EARLIER

Your body needs sleep! So give it sleep! Sleep has so many benefits upon your body's physical wellbeing but also your mental wellbeing. Leave your phone in the other room, turn your internet off and go to bed half an hour earlier than what you usually would.

5 DISCONNECT

You don't have to be connected to the online world all day. Find a hobby, enrich and enhance your knowledge, listen to music, read a book, play with a pet, draw, create, write- Twitter will always be there when you come back!

6 ACCEPT WHAT YOU CAN'T CONTROL

Most of our worries are built upon things that we can't control. Once you realise that you can't control the weather, other people's actions or bad events happening, you will be more inclined to enjoy life and experience new things!

7 TALK TO OTHERS

Whether this is your GP, family, friends, a pet or friends online. Talking about your troubles is one of the best things you can do to help you get them off your chest. If you haven't got the courage to talk yet- write it all down.

8 PRACTICE GRATITUDE

We are all egocentric in some ways. We only can see the world from one perspective- our own! We think our worries and troubles are huge. Once you learn to understand the scale of your issues you will be able to practice gratitude.

WELLBEING REFLECTION

We can learn to rejoice in even the smallest blessings our life holds.

*It is easy to miss our own good fortune;
often happiness comes in ways we don't even notice.*

*The key is to be here, fully connected with the moment,
paying attention to the details of ordinary life.*

*By taking care of ordinary things - our pots and pans, our
clothing, our teeth - we rejoice in them.*

*When we scrub a vegetable or brush our hair, we are
expressing appreciation: friendships toward ourselves and
toward the living quality that is found in everything.*

*This combination of mindfulness and appreciation connects
us fully with reality and brings us joy.*

yourbeautifullife.org

*“If you must look back,
do so forgivingly. If you
must look forward, do so
prayerfully. However, the
wisest thing you can do
is be present in the
present...Gratefully.”*

-Maya Angelou

Christian approaches to mental health issues:

In the Bible it instructs us in proper thinking to help us with our mental health: “And now, my friends, all that is *true*, all that is *noble*, all that is *just and pure*, all that is *lovable and gracious*, whatever is *excellent and admirable—fill all your thoughts with these things*”

HOW DOES THIS HELP US WITH OUR MENTAL HEALTH?

Conversely the bible also states, “a person without self-control is as defenseless as a city with broken-down walls” This person will be vulnerable and driven frequently by negative emotions.

WHAT DOES THIS TELL US ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

SIXTH FORM CORNER

- ▶ As a class or groups in the Sixth form consider the following

How should CHA tackle mental health?

What do you think we should do to improve our approach to supporting students?

Can students help each other? If so how could this happen?

How much pressure does exam success place on the mental health of students?

Please let Mr Dobbs know if you have any comments from your discussions