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**Is Mental Health Still A Taboo?**

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**Abstract:**

This article explores the prevalence of mental health awareness in present times. Mental health and illness has been a topic of interest and research since long, yet there exist social stigma, misconceptions and myths regarding the same. The age old concepts of madness as the subject matter of psychiatry and the stereotypes associated with it have been discussed here. The significance of the mind body relationship, basic tenet of health psychology, holistic approach towards health and the role of psychological factors in overall health and well-being has been delineated in the article as well. The global burden of mental illness, worldwide prevalence of mental health disorders and mental health scenario in India has been put forward.

The myths, taboos and stigma surrounding mental illness, with special emphasis on the male gender and also on the medical fraternityhave been discussed in the article. The authors havesuggested a few simple steps that an individual can abide by whenever they require guidance regarding how to seek help for mental health issues. These steps are appropriate and easy to implement for all populations, irrespective of sociocultural or educational background. Guidance has also been provided on how to approach, support and interact with people having mental illness and measures have been suggestedthat may be taken by us to help someone in need.The role of empathy while dealing with individuals facing mental health issues and the right kind of statements to use in such situations has also been discussed.

**Keywords:**

Mental health, taboo, stigma, help seeking, empathy, suicide