# How to Fight the Mental Health Stigma

Thankfully, the stigmas around mental health have been improving over the years. However, there is still work to do when fighting mental health stigmas. A [stigma](https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/stigma-and-discrimination) around mental health is a negative belief that someone has about people with mental health struggles. These stigmas can be damaging to our society because they encourage shame and discourage people from getting the help they desperately need. We are going to discuss some ways that everyone can help fight the mental health stigmas present in our world.

## Educate Yourself and Others

The first step in improving mental health stigmas is education. This can mean [educating](https://www.mcleanhospital.org/essential/stigma) yourself or educating other people in your community. There are many resources online and in books to learn about mental health challenges and what they entail. It’s best to educate yourself first so that you have accurate information to educate others. It’s important to listen to other’s experiences without holding judgment towards them. Another way to educate others about mental health stigmas is to use [supportive language](https://hbr.org/2022/05/how-to-be-a-mental-health-ally) when referring to mental health conditions. Using words like “crazy” can cause shame for people struggling mentally.

## Be An Ally

Even if you are someone who doesn’t struggle with their mental health, you can be an ally to people who do. One way to do this is to offer support to people in your community who are struggling with their mental health. Another way to be an ally is to advocate for changes within our government and local communities. If you don’t know people in your circle who struggle with their mental health, you can be an ally to people by supporting mental health organizations.

## Support Mental Health Organizations

Supporting mental health organizations is a helpful way to fight mental health stigmas. This doesn’t always have to be monetary support. It can also be volunteering your time to these organizations. These organizations have programs involving outreach and support for people going through mental health struggles. Some main organizations that support mental health are:

1. [National Alliance of Mental Illness](https://www.nami.org/) (NAMI)
2. [Mental Health America](https://mhanational.org/) (MHA)
3. [Anxiety and Depression Association of America](https://adaa.org/) (ADAA)

## Be Compassionate

Possibly, the most important way to fight mental health stigmas is to be [compassionate](https://www.cdc.gov/mental-health/stigma/index.html) to people you interact with. You never know what a person is going through at any moment. Living your life with a compassionate and kind outlook can make all the difference to people struggling with their mental health.

Mental health stigmas are incredibly damaging for people who are struggling. These outdated stigmas believe that there is something wrong with someone if they struggle with their mental health. However, this couldn’t be further from the truth. Mental health is just as important as physical health. People who struggle with their mental health are not weak. When people feel shame regarding their mental health, they will be less likely to seek treatment. Reducing mental health stigmas is imperative for creating a world where people feel empowered to [seek help](https://michiganpsychologicalcare.com/contact.php) for their struggles.

**References**

<https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/stigma-and-discrimination>

<https://www.cdc.gov/mental-health/stigma/index.html>

<https://www.mcleanhospital.org/essential/stigma>

<https://hbr.org/2022/05/how-to-be-a-mental-health-ally>

**Keywords**: stigma, mental health, treatment, therapy