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**IDS-402-11153-M01 Wellness**

**2-2 Activity: Topic Introduction**

**Southern New Hampshire University**

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To create a more precise focus, we can shift from "mental health awareness" to terms like "mental well-being" or "mental health care," emphasizing proactive support and the actual state of mental health rather than mere acknowledgment of its existence. Oxford Languages defines “mental” as "relating to the mind." Thus, "mental health" pertains to the state and function of the mind and its faculties. By narrowing our focus to the health of the mind, we can engage more meaningfully in discussions on promoting mental well-being, necessary interventions, and support systems to maintain resilience and balance. This perspective prioritizes the tangible resources required to support mental health as part of overall wellness.

With this refined language, we can concentrate on specific strategies and interventions that directly impact mental health, supported by data on effective care practices, the role of resilience, and the broader effects of mental health on daily life and productivity. Global events like World Mental Health Day play a crucial role in raising awareness, but they risk becoming overly symbolic and commercialized rather than driving genuine change. Established by the WHO and the World Federation for Mental Health, World Mental Health Day was intended to reduce stigma and position mental health as essential to wellness. Yet, as public awareness has grown, it sometimes perpetuates biases that enable companies and organizations to capitalize on these events, turning them into marketing opportunities that dilute the original purpose of combating stigma and improving mental health access.

This trend can obscure the true issues surrounding mental well-being, perpetuating biases against individuals with mental health conditions and diverting attention from critical systemic challenges. Like many conditions without a definitive cure, mental disorders—including mental illnesses, mental health conditions, and psychiatric disabilities—are behavioral or mental patterns causing significant distress and impairing personal functioning. In 2019, the WHO estimated that 970 million people globally were living with some form of mental disorder, and by 2021, nearly 58 million adults in the U.S. experienced some form of mental illness (World Health Organization, n.d.).

Given these challenges, the Social Science lens provides a comprehensive framework to explore how societal factors influence mental well-being. This lens examines how cultural norms, economic structures, policies, and community attitudes shape perceptions of mental health and impact access to care. It highlights the need for societal reform—such as improved mental health policies, workplace support, and community initiatives—to foster an environment where mental health is supported and prioritized.

Thesis Statement: Examining mental health through the Social Science lens reveals how societal factors—such as cultural stigma, economic inequality, and inadequate healthcare policies—impact mental well-being, particularly among marginalized populations, and underscores the urgent need for systemic reforms and community support initiatives that prioritize accessible mental health care and dismantle societal biases. This approach emphasizes the importance of addressing mental health as an integrated component of overall wellness, advocating for policies and practices that reduce stigma and improve access to care, fostering a supportive environment where mental resilience and well-being are actively promoted.

**References:**

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