

What is stigma?

Stigma is a negative attitude. It judges someone as being 'wrong', 'inadequate', or so different that they aren't fully accepted.

- Other words for stigma are shame, taboo, labelling or discrimination
- Stigma is often applied to people with mental illness, their carers, family, friends, and mental health professionals
- Stigma can be the result of fear caused by lack of knowledge about mental illness or inexperience with sufferers
- Stigma is learned and can be changed with increased knowledge and understanding

How does stigma affect people?

If people are stigmatised:

- They may feel shame and feel alone in the world
- It may be more difficult for them to go out and seek help, which makes recovering more difficult - if mental illness is treated early, the possibility of recovery is greater
- People experiencing mental illness suffer twice - from their condition and from the stigma towards it



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Stepping Out of the Shadows

Promoting Acceptance and Inclusion

A Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre initiative to reduce stigma and increase mental health awareness in multicultural communities in Queensland



You are invited to participate in

Stepping Out of the Shadows

A free group education program with interactive activities, delivered in a range of community languages. The program consists of four sessions of approximately 2.5 hours each:

SESSION 1

Where does stigma come from?

SESSION 2

What we know about mental health and how we feel about it

SESSION 3

What can we do?

SESSION 4

Working together for a community without stigma

Why a multicultural program?

- Mental illness does not discriminate - it can happen to any person in any culture
- Like physical illness, mental illness can happen to anybody, at any stage of their life
- Every year 1 in 5 adults will experience a mental illness
- Each culture has its own values that can protect against stigma



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An important part of recovering from mental illness is to be accepted and supported by the community, and to be included in community activities

What can we do?

- Think of how a person with mental illness, their family and friends feel when they are stigmatised
- Gain knowledge to understand mental illness
- Be accepting and include people who are experiencing mental illness as valued members of our community
- Be accepting and supportive of people who care for a family member with mental illness

What more can we do?

- Learn more about stigma and how to reduce it by attending the *Stepping Out of the Shadows* education program
- Share what we have learned with other people in our community

