

Minority Mental Health Month

#NotACharacterFlaw

July 2017

Minority Mental Health Awareness Month was founded in 2008 to bring awareness to the unique struggles that underrepresented groups face in regard to mental illness in the United States (US).

While the term 'minority' is traditionally associated with racial, ethnic, or cultural minorities within the US, Mental Health America (MHA) recognizes that identifying as a minority means identifying with a multitude of different experiences and traits. MHA understands that mental health issues need to be addressed with a unique lens when working with individuals and families with diverse values, beliefs, and sexual orientations, in addition to backgrounds that vary by race, ethnicity, religion, and language.

We are complex beings that can't be categorized into neat little boxes – and neither should our experiences.

However, there are shared misconceptions among many minority and/or marginalized communities that we must address to change the way we think about mental illness. Especially, when we begin to recognize that mental illness is often treated as an individual weakness, or character flaw, among these populations.

This July, MHA's Minority Mental Health Month campaign, **#NotACharacterFlaw** will explore stories told by individuals who identify as part of a minority community about their experiences with mental illness and recovery. We hope that sharing these stories will encourage underrepresented communities to speak out about how mental illness affects them and remove the stigma associated with these conditions.

MHA believes it is important to encourage people who are willing to share their experiences with mental health while considering cultural implications and influence.

Hashtags to Use on Social Media:

#MinorityMentalHealth
#NotACharacterFlaw
#MentalIllnessFeelsLike

Sample Tweets:

July is #MinorityMentalHealth Month & we want to share the stories of people living with #mentalhealth conditions of all backgrounds

#MentalIllness is #NotACharacterFlaw. We're sharing our stories to bring light to how #mentalhealth can affect people of diverse backgrounds

Share what #mentalillnessfeelslike this #MinorityMentalHealth Month to show others that #mentalillness is #notacharacterflaw.

Sample Facebook Posts:

July is #MinorityMentalHealth Month and we are sharing our stories to show that mental illness is #notacharacterflaw. Learn more about how mental illness affects people of diverse backgrounds at mentalhealthamerica.net/MinorityMH.

Mental illness is often treated as an individual failing – especially in minority populations that are already facing institutional and structural stressors, and we hope that shared experiences will help encourage communities to speak out about how mental illness affects them. Share your story using the hashtag #NotACharacterFlaw or #mentalillnessfeelslike and visit mentalhealthamerica.net/feelslike to see what others are saying.

Mental illness is #NotACharacterFlaw. Celebrate this July as #MinorityMentalHealth Month and help us fight against stigma by sharing your story using the hashtag #NotACharacterFlaw or #mentalillnessfeelslike. Learn more about mental health in minority populations at mentalhealthamerica.net/MinorityMH

While progress is being made to dissipate stigma around mental health, we still have a long way to go before mental health is acknowledged as being just as important as physical health. Celebrate #MinorityMentalHealth Month by choosing to “fight in the open” and show others that mental illness is #NotACharacter Flaw.

Links to information and infographics:

General Information

[Infographic about Minority Mental Health](#)

[Policy Issue: Health Care Disparities Among Racial and Ethnic Minority Populations](#)

Black and African American Communities

[An Overview of Mental Health Issues in Black and African American Communities](#)

Latino/Hispanic Communities

[An Overview of Mental Health Issues in Latino/Hispanic Communities](#)

Asian American/Pacific Islander Communities

[An Overview of Mental Health Issues in Asian American/Pacific Islander Communities](#)

Native American Communities

[An Overview of Mental Health Issues in Native American Communities](#)

LGBTQ Communities

[An Overview of Mental Health Issues in the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Community](#)

[Bullying and LGBT Youth](#)