

MODULE 1

Activity #1 Stigma Handout

Defining Stigma

The following are definitions of “stigma” taken from different sources and from different historical periods:

A mark or sign of disgrace or discredit; a visible sign or characteristic of disease.
- *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 1990

An attribute which is deeply discrediting.
- *Goffman, E. Stigma: The management of Spoiled Identity*. 1963

A distinguishing mark or characteristic of a bad or objectionable kind; a sign of some specific disorder, as hysteria; a mark made upon the skin by burning with a hot iron, as a token of infamy or subjection; a brand; a mark of disgrace or infamy; a sign of severe censure or condemnation, regarded as impressed on a person or thing.

- *The Shorter Oxford Dictionary, Fourth Edition*, 1993

Terms Related to Stigma

Stereotype:

“a person or thing that conforms to an unjustly fixed impression or attitude”

Stereotypes are the attitudes about a group of people (e.g. “All people with mental illness are dangerous”).

Prejudice:

“A preconceived opinion”

Prejudice is agreeing with the stereotypes (e.g. “I think people with mental illness are dangerous”) without knowing or understanding, literally pre-judging.

Discrimination:

“unfavourable treatment based on prejudice”

Discrimination is a behaviour that may result from stigma (e.g. “I don’t want people with mental illness around me, therefore I discriminate against them by not hiring them, not being friends with them, etc”).

- *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 1990

* This activity has been adapted from “Talking About Mental Illness, CAMH 2001

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Activity #2

PowerPoint Presentation: Stigma: Myths & Realities of Mental Illness (10 minutes)

Purpose:

- To debunk the myths of stigma against mental illness.
- To help understand different types of stigma against mental illness.

How-to:

- 1) Use the web version of the presentation by logging on to:

<http://teenmentalhealth.org/curriculum/modules/module-1/>

The password is: **t33nh3alth**