Being Mentally Healthy in the Community
A visual resource supporting critical reflection on mental health and depression in communities in India
Being mentally healthy in the community

A visual resource supporting critical reflection on mental health and depression in communities in India

By Kaaren Mathias and Gabriella Ailstock, Emmanuel Hospital Association

Acknowledgements – Thanks to the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand (Five Steps to Wellness) and to Rochelle Burgess for ideas around collective action. Thanks also for reviews of draft to Gay Andrew, Jeet Bahadur, Rochelle Burgess, Allison (for ideas around collective action). Thanks also to the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand (Five Steps to Wellness) and to Rochelle Burgess.

www.eha-health.org

Illustrations by Christina Guenther

Colouring by Shar Mathias

Graphics by I-Hsin Yang

By Kaaren Mathias and Gabriella Ailstock, Emmanuel Hospital Association

Health and depression in communities in India

A visual resource supporting critical reflection on mental health and depression in the community.
How to use this flipchart resource

This flipchart resource is best used with small groups in the community. Ideally a community based worker will meet with the same group for four sessions, each lasting approximately 30 – 45 minutes to work through this resource.

Suggested outline for sessions

Session One – Introduction: what is mental health, the story of Aruna and spheres of health (Charts 1-3)

Session Two – Spheres of control, and more of the story of Aruna (Charts 4-6)

Session Three – Tension, resilience and sleep (Charts 7–9)

Session Four - 5 Kadam and positive thinking (Charts 10,11)

Session Five – Thinking in a new way about the past – forgiveness and benefit finding (Chart 12)

Session Six - Taking action for my own mental health (Charts 13)

Session Seven – Taking action for mental health in my community (Chart 14)

Session Eight - Depression - what is it and what contributes (Charts 15, 16)

Session Nine - Depression - how can someone recover from depression (Charts 17,18)
Introduction to Aruna and the group – estimated 15 minutes

Start the group by introducing yourself and others. Talk about the purpose of this group and flip chart. Throw a small ball or pen to the next person. Ask them “Introduce yourself – tell us your name, and 2 interesting facts about yourself and your family”. We are following a story of Aruna, and together we will learn from her story and seek to relate it to our lives.

Aruna’s Story - Aruna was 19 years old when she was married to Akshay. After marriage she moved into to live with Akshay’s parents. Akshay used to have a small shop where he fixed cell phones and into live with Akshay’s parents. Akshay used to work as a mechanic. Three years ago Akshay was killed in a bus accident. It was the most sad event in our lives. Aruna was 19 years old when she was married to Akshay. After marriage she moved to live with Akshay’s parents. Aruna used to work as a mechanic. Three years ago Akshay was killed in a bus accident. It was the most sad event in our lives.

Six months after his death, Aruna told her parents she must move out from their home. She returned with the three children to her maternal home 50 km away. Now Aruna lives in a one room quarter in the same town as her mother.

Aruna’s Story - Aruna was 19 years old when she was married to Akshay. After marriage she moved into to live with Akshay’s parents. Akshay used to have a small shop where he fixed cell phones and into live with Akshay’s parents. Aruna used to work as a mechanic. Three years ago Akshay was killed in a bus accident. It was the most sad event in our lives. Aruna was 19 years old when she was married to Akshay. After marriage she moved to live with Akshay’s parents. Aruna used to work as a mechanic. Three years ago Akshay was killed in a bus accident. It was the most sad event in our lives.

Check all in the group are comfortable with the story, then we think about her story, what do we think are thing things in her life story that would impact her mental health, social health and spiritual health. Give the group prompts to think about her story.

Go on to ask as we think about her story, what do we think are thing things in her life story that would impact her mental health, social health and spiritual health. Give the group prompts to think about her story. Then

Check all in the group are comfortable with the story, then do the same with the following prompts:

- Tell us your name, and 2 interesting facts about yourself and your family.
- What is a widow, and does domestic work in three different households. Her eldest daughter, Reeta is 12 years old, the second daughter Priyanka is 14 years old, the youngest daughter, Keeta is 15 years old and the youngest is 9 year old Siddarth. They are all studying in the government school.

Chart 1

Estimated 15 minutes

Introduction to Aruna and the Group –
Introducing Aruna
The Four Dimensions of Health - Discussion

Spiritual and cultural identity

Social

Mind health

Physical

Dimensions

Understanding our mental health in our lives. How do we define mental health? How do we measure mental health?

What else is part of our mental health?

There is much more to our mental health than the absence of pain, sickness, or diseases but most of the time we only think about the physical health.

When we think of our own mental health,

Mentality

Look at the picture with Aruna and four logos

Chart 2

Minutes

and group work - estimated time - 10-12
Chart 2

Physical

Mind

Social

Spiritual

4 Dimensions of mental health
Using the four spheres to think about my own life – 15 minutes

Using the pictures illustrated – discuss the meaning of the different pictures that are shown for physical, mind, social and spiritual health. Take time to talk through the different pictures and what they might mean. Then encourage the group members to take turns to lay a small stone in the area where they are weakest. E.g. someone may say they have lots of tension – so they would mind health as their least healthy area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Mind</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Spiritual/Cultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to good primary health care that gives support and ideas that are not only drugs</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to nutritious food with good variety and lots of fresh fruit and vegetables</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean food/water and food/water security</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean air</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical activity most days</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying away from harmful substances - smoking, drinking, drugs</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genetics/family history of illness</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality, family history of illness</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression, suicide, substance misuse, smoking, drinking</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saying away from bullying</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical activity most days</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean air</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean food/water &amp; food/water security</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having friends we can talk with on our family and friends</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having friends we can talk with on our family and friends</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with support and kindness</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peeling away from people who don’t support us</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peeling away from people who don’t support us</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing forgiveness and compassion towards others</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing forgiveness and compassion towards others</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing forgiveness and compassion towards others</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing gratitude</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing gratitude</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing gratitude</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing gratitude</td>
<td>Having autonomy and being able to make choices about our own lives</td>
<td>Being free to participate in society</td>
<td>Practising your cultural customs and traditions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the pictures illustrated – discuss the meaning of the different pictures that are shown for physical, mind, social and spiritual health. Take time to talk through the different pictures and what they might mean. Then encourage the group members to take turns to lay a small stone in the area where they are weakest. E.g. someone may say they have lots of tension – so they would mind health as their least healthy area.
Chart 3

4 Dimensions of mental health

Physical
Mind
Social
Spiritual
Introducing the Sphere of influence and control – 10 minutes

There are some areas in all of our lives in which we have more or less control over. We can create change in our lives and life satisfaction and happiness.

If we try and focus our time and energy on the problems in our lives which we do have control over, we can create change in our lives and try and increase our life satisfaction and happiness.

The smallest yellow circle in the center represents what we have complete control over. We get to make all of the decisions here and we can determine the outcomes of those decisions. This is the smallest area of our lives. This includes areas like what clothes we decide to wear one day, or whether we will go to the bazaar by bus or by foot. We can change these things whenever we want to. We can also change whether we are eligible for an entitlement (e.g., whether we will go to the government school or not). This includes health issues we have no control or influence over. For example, we can't change whether we have diabetes or not.

Finally we have the largest blue circle which represents issues we have no control or influence over. This includes things like whether we are BPL or SC, or whether we get two meals or zero meals. The smallest yellow circle in the center represents the decisions we can make and do can help determine the outcome. We have complete control over these decisions. Here we can't have some sort of influence over. Here we can't determine the outcome of these decisions. This is the smallest area of our lives. This includes areas like whether we are eligible for an entitlement (e.g., whether we will go to the bazaar by bus or by foot). We can change these things whenever we want to. We can also change whether we are eligible for an entitlement (e.g., whether we will go to the government school or not). This includes health issues we have no control or influence over. For example, we can't change whether we have diabetes or not.

No matter what we do or say if we can't change these even government.

If you had no control or influence over a problem which you had no control or influence over, what problems come to mind? Do you think of a time when you had no control or influence over a problem? Seeing this, can you think of a time when you had no control or influence over a problem? This is the smallest area of our lives. This includes areas like what clothes we decide to wear one day, or whether we will go to the bazaar by bus or by foot. We can change these things whenever we want to. We can also change whether we are eligible for an entitlement (e.g., whether we will go to the government school or not). This includes health issues we have no control or influence over. For example, we can't change whether we have diabetes or not.

Finally we have the largest blue circle which represents issues we have no control or influence over. This includes things like whether we are BPL or SC, or whether we get two meals or zero meals. Therefore we have no control or influence over.

We can pay for tuition, and where we will go for school is one thing that then determines the government school is free and that then determines the schools we decide to send our children to school to a very expensive school and sometimes we decide to send our children to school (because of the cost we can't maybe send our children there). This is the smallest area of our lives. This includes areas like what clothes we decide to wear one day, or whether we will go to the bazaar by bus or by foot. We can change these things whenever we want to. We can also change whether we are eligible for an entitlement (e.g., whether we will go to the government school or not). This includes health issues we have no control or influence over. For example, we can't change whether we have diabetes or not.

No matter what we do or say if we can't change these even government.
Chart 4

Sphere of control

- No Control
- Some Control
- Full Control
Using Sphere of Influence with examples from Aruna’s story – 20-30 minutes

Read aloud - using what we have just learned let's look back at the factors affecting Aruna and her family's health.

Discuss the spheres of control again with the group and give the following examples with a short explanation if not mentioned, linking again to situations that are relevant to the group and to where you are:

**Complete control** - If we think about Aruna, what are the areas of her life that she has complete control over? This might include something like what subzi she cooks for dinner, when she will go to the mandir etc. There are also areas like doing physical activity, staying away from harmful substances, choosing to show forgiveness and compassion towards others, practicing cultural customs and traditions, keeping clean and healthy, etc. Aruna has complete control over these areas.

Ask each group member to discuss 2-3 areas in their lives they have full control over?

**Sphere of influence** - For Aruna this might include areas like where her children go to school, which houses she works at etc. Other areas she has some control over might be speaking up with others in her community when there is a problem, maintaining healthy relationships, being able to face and solve problems in life, being able to give and take support from family and friends. Ask the group to discuss in their own lives what are areas we have influence over? What are areas we'd like to have more control over?

**Sphere of no control** - For Aruna this might include the amount of rent she is charged, whether her in-laws help her with her children's school or clothing costs. However even in these areas where we feel we have no control, we can make a difference. For example, Aruna can negotiate with her landlord about rent increases and helping to build a good landlord, tenant relationship. Community members can also take action to advocate for policies that benefit the community as a whole. The group can discuss what actions they can take to influence these areas where they feel they have no control.

What areas are we able to have some influence over? Are there areas where we can influence others?

Work together and trust each other.

- Charter 5
- Aruna finishes washing the dishes at the house of the Shoe Shop owner and stops at the vegetable shop in the bazaar. She buys onions, harimirch and loki to cook for dinner. She also stops to do puja at the mandir which is on her walk back to her home. At home, Siddarth is playing outside with marbles and his two sisters are inside watching TV. Aruna decides to sit and talk with her next door neighbor Fatima, before starting on cooking dinner. Her landlord has just told her yesterday that the rent will be going up another Rs300 per month after Diwali.

**Chart 5**

- Aruna feels like many things she cares a lot about, she can do nothing to change which increases her tension. Fatima tells her about a group that she knows of where eight women have joined together to make an SHG (Self Help Group). Every month each member gives Rs60 to the group and in return, each member receives Rs50 for their contribution. This way none of them has to pay interest to a money lender and learn to work together and trust each other.

- For Aruna this might include the amount of rent she is charged, whether her in-laws help her with her children's school or clothing costs. However even in these areas where we feel we have no control, we can make a difference. E.g. sit down with your landlord and discuss the increase in rent, or make a plan to help with your children's school fees. Instead of paying a money lender for a loan, you can join a group like the SHG and pool your money together to get a loan.

- Aruna feels like many things she cares a lot about, she can do nothing to change which increases her tension. Fatima tells her about a group that she knows of where eight women have joined together to make an SHG (Self Help Group). Every month each member gives Rs60 to the group and in return, each member receives Rs50 for their contribution. This way none of them has to pay interest to a money lender and learn to work together and trust each other.

- Aruna feels like many things she cares a lot about, she can do nothing to change which increases her tension. Fatima tells her about a group that she knows of where eight women have joined together to make an SHG (Self Help Group). Every month each member gives Rs60 to the group and in return, each member receives Rs50 for their contribution. This way none of them has to pay interest to a money lender and learn to work together and trust each other.
What do we have control over in our community – 20 minutes

10 minutes - Talk about the chart on 5A with lots of pictures in a circle. Go through and circle them with green, yellow or blue to show areas of control over our own lives. What are areas in our own lives that we could try to bring more control? Are there areas we could work together on collectively? Discuss the example of self-help groups.

Are there areas like this a group here can take action?

Take a further 10 minutes or longer to talk about actions we can take to have more control over our own lives: What are areas in our own lives that we could try to bring more control? Are there areas we could work together on collectively? Discuss the example of self-help groups.

In Aruna’s village there was an anganwadi where the teacher and helper only came when it suited them, once a week or less. A friend of Aruna, named Fatima, met together with other mothers of anganwadi children to discuss this situation. Together they decided to take action. Each day one mother kept register on the attendance of the anganwadi worker. After one month a group of mothers went to meet the teacher and discussed this situation. Together they met with other mothers of anganwadi children to discuss this situation. Then they gave the teacher and helper only came when it suited them, a schedule. Go through and circle them with green, yellow, or blue. What do we have control over in our community – 20 minutes

Community – 20 minutes

example of community monitoring of health services.
What do we have control over in our community?
Dealing with tension – 15 minutes

Read aloud the next update on Aruna’s story:

Chart 7

Since the news about her rent going up, Aruna has been having trouble with sleeping. She finds herself going over and over what they will do. She worries that they won’t have enough to buy non-veg food, and she knows about some families who are getting hungry. She wonders if she should go to the doctor and if they will have enough money to buy non-veg food. She thinks about how they will manage with their money, and she knows about some families who are getting hungry and are moving to another room. She thinks about how they could find more work to earn money. She has been having trouble with sleeping, and her stomach is doing strange things. She wonders if she should go to the doctor and if she might have a serious health problem and all the costs that will come with that.

Tension is how the body responds to hard or emotional situations. Many different things can cause tension in our lives. What do you feel and do when you are experiencing tension in your life? Discuss the impact on your physical, mental, social, and spiritual health.

- When tension becomes too much in our life, it can affect our health.
- Small amounts of tension in life are normal. When tension becomes too much, it can affect different people.
- Some people decide to face a difficult situation as a way to show that they are strong, and some may develop a mental disorder.
- Some may start drinking alcohol or smoking more easily, some may start drinking alcohol or smoking more differently. Some may work through the tension quite well. Others feel tense and want to do their best to make things work.
- Others feel things are very unfair and feel unsure what to do and how to cope with this situation. Tension can affect our physical, mental, social, and spiritual health in our lives.

What do we feel and do when we are experiencing tension in our lives, and how does it impact our physical, mental, social, and spiritual health?
Dealing with tension
When people are feeling tension or distress, many people lose sleep and find themselves tired throughout the day. This tiredness can not only cause more tension but hinder you from reducing that same tension. Ask the group to share ideas they have to help someone with sleeping problems—they may take ideas from the pictures shown.

Once their ideas are exhausted, go through the following suggestions one by one. These ideas are simple and may take ideas from the pictures shown. Once their ideas are exhausted, go through the following suggestions to help someone with sleeping problems. Ask the group to keep trying until they find what they need before bedtime. Evening time is when smokers, drinkers, and those who avoid caffeine will have difficulty falling asleep.

1. Try and make your bed comfortably. Do not just before bedtime. Try and make your bed comfortably. Make sure you have taken exercise in the day but not just before bedtime.
2. Keep a regular sleep schedule. Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
3. Relaxation next.
4. Avoid taking naps during the day.
5. Avoid using computers or talking on cell phone or TV before going to bed. We will talk about relaxation next.
6. Avoid using computers or talking on cell phone or TV before going to bed. We will talk about relaxation next.
7. Avoid using computers or talking on cell phone or TV before going to bed. We will talk about relaxation next.
8. Avoid using computers or talking on cell phone or TV before going to bed. We will talk about relaxation next.
9. Avoid using computers or talking on cell phone or TV before going to bed. We will talk about relaxation next.
10. Avoid using computers or talking on cell phone or TV before going to bed. We will talk about relaxation next.

Ask group members to talk to the person next to them about what they find helpful when they are having trouble sleeping. Do any of these ideas helpful? Ask group members to share with the group what they have found helpful for sleeping difficulties.

---

Sleep skills – 20 minutes

- Watching TV just before sleep – it can make the mind more active and less ready to sleep.
- Avoid using computers, or talking on cell phone or TV just before sleep – it can make the mind more active and less ready to sleep.
Chart 8

7 Tips for sleeping well
Resiliency = responding well to tension and hardship – 15 minutes

Read aloud the following update on Aruna’s daughter, Reeta:

We describe those people who can handle tension very well, as resilient people. Resilience is a person’s ability to bounce back and thrive even with difficulties in life. It’s a little like a badminton net – with many strands that are woven together, it can even hold the weight of a man falling into it – and then bounce back to its original shape.

For example; when Aruna’s husband died she suffered very badly. The tension of life became too much for her and she stayed in bed all the time and lost hope about the future. She couldn’t take care of her children or the house, she stayed bedridden. On the other hand, Reeta started taking care of her younger siblings and the house when Aruna couldn’t. She took on the responsibility of the home and continued going to school. Aruna’s daughter Reeta has qualities of a resilient person. Do you know a person like Aruna’s daughter? What qualities do you think make that person resilient? Ask all the group to give one example of qualities that make someone resilient.

Give the following examples with a short explanation if not mentioned:

- Positive thinking – which we will talk about shortly
- Benefit finding – which we will also talk about shortly
- Persistence – keeping on the bright side of things (Optimism)
- Liking yourself and feeling like you are important (Self-esteem)
- Understanding one’s emotions
- Self-efficiency / motivation
- Planning skills
- Self-esteem/motivation
- Positive thinking which we will also talk about shortly
- Problem-solving- which we will talk about shortly
- Resilience - which we will talk about shortly
- Positive thinking - which we will talk about shortly

Aruna’s eldest daughter Reeta is a great help to her. She listens well to her mother’s worries and asks her questions. She also tells her mother how lovely it is when the water comes every morning. She knows her mother is a strong person who refuses to let difficult times get her down. Reeta often talks about how lovely it is when the water comes and how lovely it is that her family has also happened. She comments on how lovely it is that they have a happy family. She tells her mother things that have happened in the family, and she is always happy to help her mother. She has a great help for her mother. She is a great help for her mother. She is a great help for her mother.

We describe those people who can handle tension very well, as resilient people.
Resiliency - responding well to tension

- Planning skills
- Being thankful
- Doing things for other people
- Noticing the good things around you
Using the 5 Kadam to build our resilience – 20 minutes

Give the following examples with a short explanation if not mentioned:
- Discuss each of these and use the pictures on the hand to help group members understand the idea.
- Keep learning – There are many opportunities around us to learn new things. We learn to use your son's mobile phone to cook a new recipe or take a photo of a beautiful Rangoli pattern in front of your house. Ask two people in the group to give an example of something they would like to learn this year.
- Take notice – Meditating, watching sun rise, breathing exercises in the early morning and observing festivals, sitting and watching birds or children playing. Finding benefits and positive thinking are two areas here. Help group members understand the idea.
- Connect – Eating together with people we like, sharing a meal or conversation. The group members are asked to give an example of what they would like to discuss more. Ask two group members what they are planning to learn in the coming months.
- Be active – This might include doing stretches and yoga, or a game of cricket on Sunday's with some other community friends. Gardening for women might mean to play a game of football or small Talk between friends. Ask a friend about what is going well in their lives. Share what you have with others even if it something difficult. Ask three group members to give an example of what they would like to discuss more with their friends, whether it is about their problems or achievements.
- Keep learning – There are many opportunities around us to learn new things. We learn to use your son's mobile phone to cook a new recipe or take a photo of a beautiful Rangoli pattern in front of your house.
Chart 10

Keep Learning
Be active
Take notice
Connect
Give

5 steps for mental health
Positive thinking – 15 minutes

(Discuss positive thinking and ask for examples from the group, asking them to tell of people they know who are good at focusing on the positive things in a situation.)

One way to help us become more resilient and cope with tension is by trying to practice positive thinking. Positive thinking isn't ignoring the negative things that happen in life and being happy no matter what. Rather, it's about taking on life's challenges with a positive attitude/outlook. Many times people think of positive thinking as being optimistic. Positive thinking includes being hopeful and optimistic, finding benefits in negative situations, being grateful for what you have and referring to the good things in your life when feeling down, trying to not only blame yourself for negative situations, but also realizing that there are external factors we can put responsibility for negative things in your life when feeling down.

Regulate your self talk, don't talk to yourself negatively.

Tips for becoming a positive thinker

1. If you're finding it hard to think positive thoughts
2. At the end of each day, think about or talk to someone about the best thing that happened and
3. Regulate your self talk, don't talk to yourself negatively.
4. Being grateful for what you have and referring to the good things in your life when feeling down.

Positive thinkers are people who think of positive thinking includes being hopeful and optimistic, finding benefits in negative situations, being grateful for what you have and referring to the good things in your life when feeling down. They are good at focusing on the positive things in a situation.

Tips for becoming a positive thinker

o Regulate your self talk, don't talk to yourself negatively.

Reeta is a quite cheerful 14 year old girl. Every morning she wakes up and before she gets out of bed she thinks about herself as being optimistic. Positive thinking includes being hopeful and optimistic, finding benefits in negative situations, being grateful for what you have and referring to the good things in your life when feeling down. They are good at focusing on the positive things in a situation.

Tips for becoming a positive thinker

o Regulate your self talk, don't talk to yourself negatively.
Chart 11

Negative Thinking

Positive Thinking
Thinking in new ways about the past

Chart 12

Two important skills we can learn in life are forgiveness and benefit finding. Forgiveness is an action we take to let go of negative feelings toward someone who has hurt us whether they deserve to be forgiven or not. It does not say we forget that we were hurt and forgiving someone doesn’t mean we accept the action that happened to us. Forgiveness is a way to get peace of mind and to allow ourselves to move on with our lives without needing to hold on tightly to the bad thing that was done to us. Forgiveness is something we can learn to do – it is a choice we make which allows us to find healing and gives us long term wellness.

Can you think of a time that you were very hurt by someone and you decided to forgive them. Take 5 minutes to talk to your neighbor in the group about a time when you were able to forgive someone. Discuss with them what was difficult about giving forgiveness and also what positive things you have experienced because of giving forgiveness.

Benefit finding is a skill that is also important for mental health. It is the idea of acknowledging that although it did not work out as planned, we can look for and find benefits that came out of it. However it does not mean that when a bad thing happens we have to accept it and say ‘it is for the best’. We will think of one event in our lives that didn’t go as we could have hoped for but even so we can find positive things that happened. Can you think of an example in your own life when something bad happened but still you found some good things came from that bad event? Story where things went wrong but still we found good things when something bad happened but still we found some good things came out of it. How do we find these good things? Can you think of an example where you found something good came out of a difficult situation?

Often a group takes time to understand this so please share two to three examples of a time in your life where you found some benefits to a situation that didn’t go your way so we can find positive things that came out of it. If anyone else wants to share please encourage them to help all to understand this idea.

Benefit finding is a skill for reducing tension and being resilient.

After the reading from this page, please discuss with your neighbor how you can use this idea in your own life. How can you apply this to your own situation?
Forgiving others and benefit finding
Taking action for my own mental health

- 35 minutes

Discuss with the whole group - 15 minutes

Open the discussion by giving an example of an action that you yourself have started doing to be more mentally healthy. Ask the group:

- What actions can we take for mental health for ourselves personally? Ask group members to talk to a person sitting next to them about what actions they would like to take for their own mental health? What are the ways we do things that could be changed to be more mentally healthy? Ask each person in the group to choose 2 things they would like to try doing differently.

- In pairs, invite them to discuss possible barriers. What do they have to do to make these actions part of their own lives? Ask group members to talk about what actions they would like to take for their own mental health. Ask them to talk about what actions they feel they could do differently.

Look at the picture with 6 different ideas on how to relax and reduce tension. Ask group members to identify what are the actions in each picture and then to discuss with a neighbor for 5 minutes which of these actions they would like to try in the next week to feel better.

Then, after sharing and time for feedback, ask the group to talk together in groups of three about what they could do in their own households or families to increase mental health. Ask them:

- What actions can we take for mental health that could be changed to be more mentally healthy? Ask group members to talk about what actions they would like to take for their own mental health. Ask them to talk about what actions they feel they could do differently.

Resilience = finding new meaning and purpose

- 35 minutes

Reminders about these.

Discuss with the whole group - 15 minutes

Open the discussion by giving an example of an action that you yourself have started doing to be more mentally healthy. Ask the group:

- What actions can we take for mental health for ourselves personally? Ask group members to talk to a person sitting next to them about what actions they would like to take for their own mental health? What are the ways we do things that could be changed to be more mentally healthy? Ask each person in the group to choose 2 things they would like to try doing differently.

- In pairs, invite them to discuss possible barriers. What do they have to do to make these actions part of their own lives? Ask group members to talk about what actions they would like to take for their own mental health. Ask them to talk about what actions they feel they could do differently.

Look at the picture with 6 different ideas on how to relax and reduce tension. Ask group members to identify what are the actions in each picture and then to discuss with a neighbor for 5 minutes which of these they personally find most useful.

After some time, ask the group to come together and talk about what actions they currently take to relax and to each tell the group 2 actions they plan to take up in the next week to get better at reducing their own tension and relaxing.

Then, after sharing and time for feedback, ask the group to talk together in groups of three about what actions they could do in their own households or families to increase mental health. Ask them:

- What actions can we take for mental health that could be changed to be more mentally healthy? Ask group members to talk about what actions they would like to take for their own mental health. Ask them to talk about what actions they feel they could do differently.

Aruna has recently decided that she needs to take actions to be mentally stronger and healthier. She is focusing now on three things that she finds helpful and that she is feeling now to be more mentally healthy. Ask her:

- What actions can we take for mental health for ourselves personally? Ask group members to talk to a person sitting next to them about what actions they would like to take for their own mental health? What are the ways we do things that could be changed to be more mentally healthy? Ask each person in the group to choose 2 things they would like to try doing differently.
Taking actions for my own mental health
Taking action for mental health in our community

In this picture there are actions that people are taking to increase mental health in their communities. What are some of the things that would make this community here more mentally healthy? Ask group members to sit in pairs and to each take 10 minutes discuss action that could be taken if they need suggestions or input talk about the following areas:

- So that people are more accepting and have less negative judgment of people with mental disorders
- To increase people’s knowledge about mental health
- To help ensure people with mental disorders get better access to treatment
- To help increase people’s knowledge about mental health disorders
- To increase people’s knowledge about mental health

Following areas:

- judged as less negative and have less negative judgment of people with mental health disorders
- So that people are more accepting and have less negative judgment

Could be taken – if they need suggestions or input talk about the actions that people are taking to increase mental health in our community.

Chart 14
Taking actions together for mental health
Aruna is depressed – 15 – 20 minutes

Read aloud the next section of the story:

Aruna has depression. There are times of sadness we all have in our lives, but when these feeling start to impact our daily lives and affect our ability to function, we may be experiencing depression.

Depression is a mental health condition that affects how we feel, think, and act. It is estimated that over 300 million people worldwide suffer from depression. The symptoms of depression can vary from person to person, and may include:

- Feeling sad or “down” most of the time
- Losing interest in things that used to make you happy
- Feeling fatigued or a lack of energy or concentration
- Having difficulty making decisions
- Changes in appetite, including weight loss or gain
- Difficulty sleeping or oversleeping
- Feelings of hopelessness or helplessness

When Aruna’s husband died, she was very sad and for some time, she found it hard to do ordinary jobs like housework. She cried every day but after some months she slowly found moments of happiness and although she found it hard to do anything, she still felt happy. However, now, several years later, things seem worse. Aruna is depressed again.

She has lost interest in life and has been doing very little. She finds she has headaches often and different pains in her body. She has also been waking up very early in the morning, around 3am, and she can’t go back to sleep. Last Sunday she stayed in bed all day because she was so tired from not being able to sleep. She has also been feeling that nothing is worth doing any of her usual jobs. She finds it hard to bother with doing any of her usual jobs. She has been feeling that nothing seems to make her feel happy. She has been feeling that she would rather not be alive at all. She even wonders about suicide, but she has never attempted it.

Can anyone describe what may be going on with Aruna?
Aruna is depressed
Spiritual

- Loss of care
  - Caring for someone who is very ill or needs a lot of care

Physical

- Changes in the brain
  - From a stroke
  - From a spouse

Social

- Tie into group but not sure what

Spiritual Weakness

- Personal Weakness
- Laziness

Depression is NOT usually caused by the following things:

- A pastor moves away or family member expelled
- Change of loss of usual spiritual or religious rituals
- Change of loss of usual spiritual or religious rituals

- Members addiction affect your life
- Addiction - personal addiction or having a family member over and over about difficult things
- Extreme tension which makes her keep thinking
- Mind
  - After childbirth
  - Having a child (many women become depressed)

Big life transitions - child moving away, marriage

- Financial tension
- Loss of or loved one or a partner
- Unemployment or overwork
- Debt

Give the following examples if not mentioned about arising

- Contribution to depression
  - And then ask for other ideas from the group about what
  - contribution to arising to become depressed
  - Exposure to arising and what do you think
  - depressed, let's start with arising, what do you think
  - someone's life may increase chance that someone becomes
  - depression due to experiences in their lives, what factors in
  - someone's life may increase chance that someone becomes
  - depression due to experiences in their lives, what factors in
  - someone's life may increase chance that someone becomes
  - depression due to experiences in their lives, what factors in

What contributes to depression? 10 minutes
What contributes to depression?
What can we do for depression? 10 minutes

Discuss the following with the group. There are three main ways we can treat depression. Number 1 is helpful for all people who feel depression, Number 2 is helpful for most people and Number 3 is needed for some people.

1. Building our own mental health skills
   - The most important thing for people who are depressed is to understand this is an illness that affects many people at different times and to look for help. Using the skills we have spoken about before can help us both protect ourselves from depression and also to move away from depression. Ask the group what skills we can use for wellness? Flip back if needed to the 5 Steps picture.
   - Benefit finding, positive thinking, tension management, sleep and relaxation skills, sitting in the sunshine is also good for mental health.

2. Talking treatment
   - While nearly everyone who is depressed can get help by talking to friends or neighbours, there are people especially trained as counsellors who can particularly help a depressed person to find a pathway to wellness. There are some particular kinds of treatment that can help depressed people get help by talking to friends or neighbours. For many people talking to a counselor can help them. If such as CBT and IPT and group therapy these are very useful. There are some particularly trained as counselors who can help depressed people by talking to friends or neighbours.

3. Medication treatment
   - There are times when taking a medicine for depression is needed. Anti-depressant medicines can help set our brains to their right chemical balance. These need to be prescribed by a doctor or by a mental health professional. Most of these medicines are usually safe and effective.
   - Self-help groups can help people sleep better and manage tension and also help people feel better and manage tension and change. These need to be prescribed by a doctor or by a mental health professional. Medications can help set our brains to their right chemical balance. These need to be taken for at least 6-12 months. Sometimes one medication works less well with another than another medicine may need 3-4 weeks to make a difference. Sometimes one medication works less well with anti-depression medicines at first. Ask the group what sorts of medicines we can use for wellness? Flip back if needed to the 5 Steps picture. The most important thing for people who are depressed is to understand this is an illness that affects many people at different times and to look for help. Using the skills we have spoken about before can help us both protect ourselves from depression and also to move away from depression.

Where are local health services or mental health providers?

Where they may be found include counseling and other good forms of treatment. If you or someone you know is depressed, it is important to seek help. For many people talking to a counselor can help them. If such as CBT and IPT and group therapy these are very useful. There are some particularly trained as counselors who can help depressed people by talking to friends or neighbours. For many people talking to a counselor can help them.
Chart 17

1 → Talking therapy → 2 → Talking therapy → 3

Personal skills + Talking therapy + Personal skills

+ Medicine +

Personal skills +
Support people who are depressed - 15 minutes

How many people know someone who they think may be depressed?

Ask for a show of hands.

Looking at this example – what are the order of things?

Give the following examples if not mentioned:

- Ask appropriate questions when listening to them to make them comfortable.
- Encourage the person to get help from a doctor or health worker.
- Support them to get treatment.
- Go over the 5 steps for mental well-being discussed.
- Building personal skills with people.
- Support people who are depressed - 15 minutes.
How to support people who are depressed

- Encourage positive thinking
- Encourage help from an expert
- Support + 4 spheres of health
- Support personal skills in mental health
- 5 kadam to well-being
- Listen well
- Help someone get to treatment