SHIFTING STIGMA

Stigma Defined

A mark of shame or discredit: stain
The term "mental illness" is not entirely accurate, because there are many "physical" factors -- including heredity and brain chemistry -- that might be involved in the development of a mental disorder. Mental illnesses are health conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking or behavior (or a combination of these).

People with a substance use disorder may have distorted thinking and behaviors. Changes in the brain's structure and function are what cause people to have intense cravings, changes in personality, abnormal movements, and other behaviors thinking, learning, memory, and behavioral control.

### Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of stigma</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social/public stigma</td>
<td>The prejudice and negative attitudes held by members of the public and/or society (Corrigan and Bink, 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-stigma</td>
<td>Internalisation of prejudice and discrimination from social/public stigma (Corrigan and Bink, 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated stigma</td>
<td>Expectations of bias from others (Stangl et al., 2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived stigma</td>
<td>Perceptions of how the stigmatised group is treated by others (Stangl et al., 2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced stigma</td>
<td>Experiences of being stigmatised by others (Stangl et al., 2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>'The behavioural result of prejudice' (Corrigan and Bink, 2005)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is provider stigma?

Provider-based stigma is defined as the negative attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of mental health providers toward clients they serve. This is often unintentional and unknowingly conveyed.

Stigma brings experiences of...

- Shame and self-hatred
- Humiliation
- Social exclusion
- Isolation and loneliness
- Derogatory labels
- Bullying and physical violence
- Misrepresentation in the media
- Being treated differently than the rest of society
- Discrimination in housing, employment, or services
- The internalized belief that the client will never be able to succeed at life.
• Treatment is compromised.
• Trust is eroded or lost.
• People stop treatment.
• People think the medication/treatment won’t work.
• Self-stigmatization- why bother?
• 60% of those with a mental illness get no treatment. They would rather suffer with the devastating symptoms than be thought "crazy."
• The stigma around mental illness is often worse than the symptoms of the disorder.

STIGMA CAN KILL

• Acuity of clients in community mental health
• Nature of mental illness – chronic, behavioral, affects judgment
• Amount of work and productivity standards
• Secondary trauma, compassion fatigue

The Reality
What compassion fatigue looks like

Compassion fatigue can take a physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional toll on people who experience it. Common symptoms of compassion fatigue include:

- Feeling burdened by the clients
- Blaming clients for their illness
- Isolating yourself
- Loss of pleasure in life
- Difficulty concentrating
- Insomnia and nightmares
- Physical and mental fatigue
- Bottling up your emotions
- Feelings of hopelessness or powerlessness
- Excessive use of drugs and alcohol

The manifestation of provider-based stigma is influenced by the individual worker’s stress threshold and experience of compassion fatigue.

Watch for Stigma Enforcing Attitudes and Language:

Frequent Fliers

“This iconography is ethically and clinically inappropriate for 2 interdependent reasons. First, the icon reinforces and encourages the use of disrespectful and stigmatizing terminology. Second, the icon may frame the clinical interaction in a way that inhibits good diagnostic judgment, potentially placing the patient at increased risk of a poor outcome.”

Shifting perspectives:

Attention Seeking…….. Client with unmet needs panics when ignored

Drug-seeking………….. Client wanting to use what works, having faulty judgment

Borderline…………… Survivor Personality Traits

Non-compliant………… Clients reacting to medication side effects and choosing their services (trust addresses this)

Failing due to relapse... “Abstinence Only” treatment hardly ever works; relapse is part of recovery and should be planned for.

Doesn’t want to get better... Symptoms affecting judgment, insight

Impossible to work with... Opportunity to use your skills

ALWAYS FIGHT STIGMA

• With contact

• With Education

• With protest
THE GOOD NEWS!

As you eliminate stigma in our clinics, peer runs, hospitals and our community you will start to change the % of mentally ill who receive treatment. As you increase the % of mentally ill receiving treatment you will be addressing and improving many problems in our community that will also spread throughout the nation and beyond.

And never forget, you serve the 40%.

One Last Story:

People. Will. Change.
How to contact me:

**Katy Welty**

k.welty@PolaraHealth.com
Cell: (928) 910-0671
Office: (928) 445-5211 ex. 2104

Polara Health
642 Dameron Dr. Prescott, AZ 86301

---

Thank you for your time today!