



African American Communities and Mental Health

February 2024

In honor of Black History Month

For free and confidential counseling, contact your local ESSP Representative or
CDRs: Hourly – Caron Behavioral Health: 800-227-9622; HMSA: 800-550-7200
Salaried – Lyra Health: 1-877-207-9822



Common mental health misconceptions within minority communities

1. **Therapy isn't for minority people.**
 - a. Therapy is for everyone.
 - b. Diverse mental health providers are available and increasing.
2. **Therapy is only for people with severe mental illness.**
 - a. Mental health is a range. Everyone can receive help.
 - b. Seeking professional help is not a sign of weakness but an act of strength.
3. **Therapy is too expensive.**
 - a. Ford provides this benefit for employees and eligible family members through EAP.
 - b. Ford also provides this through the Ford healthcare plans.

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Breaking the Stigma in the African American Community

6 Things You Can Do to Reduce Stigma

- **Know the facts:** Educate yourself about mental illness including substance use disorders.
- **Be aware of your attitudes and behavior:** Examine your own judgmental thinking, reinforced by upbringing and society.
- **Choose your words carefully:** The way we speak can affect the attitudes of others.
- **Educate others:** Share facts and positive attitudes; challenge myths and stereotypes.
- **Focus on the positive:** Mental illness, including addictions, are only part of anyone's larger picture.
- **Support people:** Treat everyone with dignity and respect; offer support and encouragement.

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[Addressing Stigma | CAMH](#)



How to Thrive with Stress



Reclaim your choice: Focus on the things that you have control over.

Set helpful boundaries: You can out of conversations or interactions that feel draining, unhelpful, or overwhelming.

Establish a care routine: Engage in activities like laughter, sleep, nutrition, and exercise.

Connect with others: Connecting with others with similar experiences can help you feel validated and supported.

Celebrate achievements: Acknowledge and celebrate personal and professional achievements (the small and the big wins).

