



MENTAL HEALTH AND AGING IN AMERICA

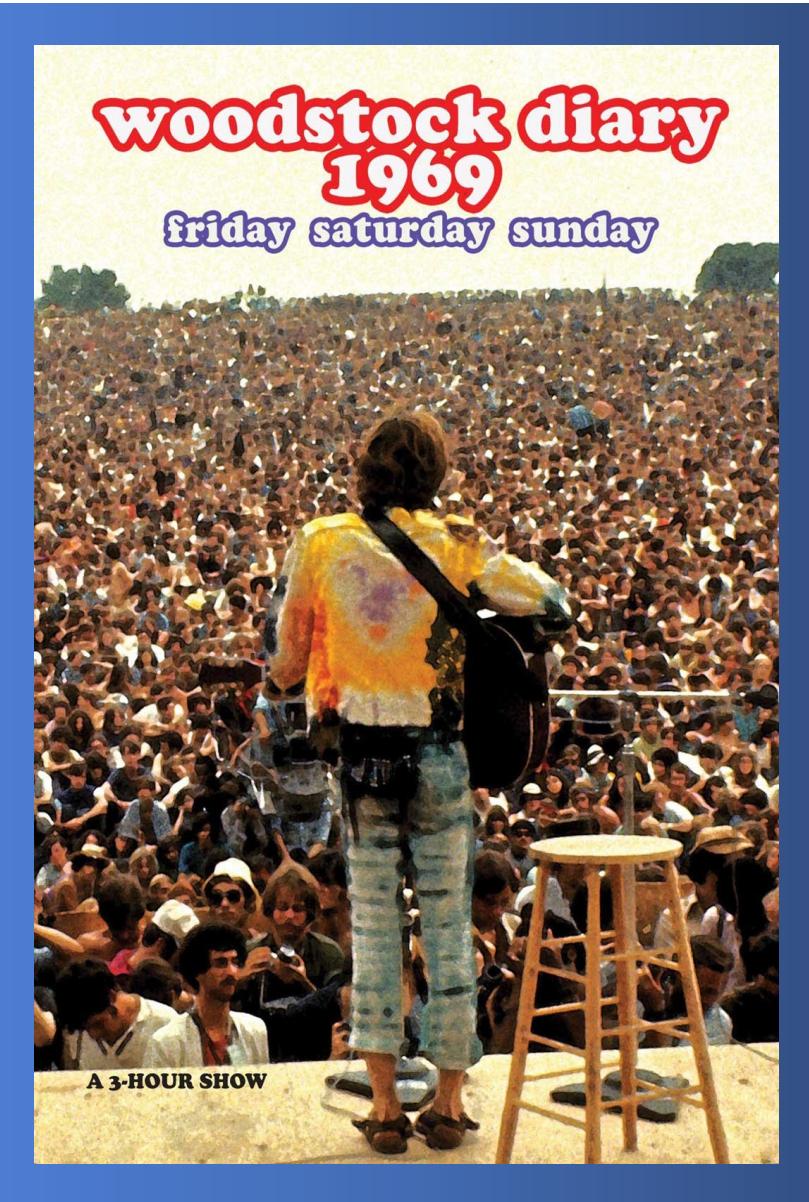
Debbie Meyer &
Julie Cleveland

THIS WORKSHOP IS DESIGNED TO BEGIN A DISCUSSION AND INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Aging, by definition, means to grow older and more mature. Aging is a normal process. However, in today's society, the word "aging", like "mental health" or "mental disorder", can have negative associations.
- There are many incorrect and negative beliefs about what it means to be an older adult, especially one who experiences a mental health condition."

(p. 2, *Mental Health in Later Life, A Guidebook for Older Marylanders and the People who Care for Them*, The Mental Health Association of Maryland)





By 2030 people aged 65 and over, the Baby Boomers, will be nearly 75 MILLION.

In the “mid 2030’s the US Census Bureau predicts that for the first time in the country’s history, there will be more people aged 65 or older than children and adolescents aged 18 or younger”⁽¹⁾

STATISTICS

- 20% of Americans 55 and over will experience some type of mental health concern.
- More than 6.5 million Americans older than 65 will be affected by depression, women more than men in this age group.
- 80% of diagnosed conditions are treatable.
- More than 90% of adults older than 50 did not report a diagnosis of anxiety.
- Adults 50-64 reported a lifetime of diagnosed depression than those 65 and older.
- 50-64 reported a lifetime of diagnosed of anxiety compared to those 65 and older.

SUICIDE



Older adults accounted for 18.2% of suicide deaths in 2016.



Men over 75 have suicide rates nearly double that than any other age.



In this group, Caucasian males have the highest rate of suicide in the US.



20% seek help from a doctor, usually a primary care physician, on the day they choose to die.



40% of older suicide victims see their doctor during the week before killing themselves, according to NAMI.



The CDC states due to social isolation in 2013, over 10,000 older Americans aged 60 and over died by suicide.

RISK FACTORS

- There are challenges facing the growing aging population, especially various types of 'loses', increased vulnerability, and mortality. Trying to tell the difference between what are healthy behaviors and might be signs of a mental illness isn't always easy.
- Depression and anxiety in the elderly frequently go untreated because it is considered part of aging, stigma, or 'not wanting the kids to worry'.

Brains do not become unwell simply by growing old





KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Depression:

**Grief that lasts a VERY LONG TIME
or is unusually severe.**

This may require treatment.

Grief/Bereavement:

**Grief is a normal reaction to loss.
Generally does not require mental
health treatment.**

STIGMA

The dictionary defines stigma as the shame or disgrace attached to something regarded as socially 'unacceptable'.

Many seniors **will not get help** because of the stigma surrounding mental health conditions.



WHAT'S NEXT?



Raise awareness and have a conversation with your own friends, clubs, committees, families.



Ask, observe, decide, act, and document changes.



It's not OK to make fun of anyone with any mental health condition.

We hope to create an atmosphere where the needs and well-being of our loved ones, and ourselves, are taken care of.



If you need additional information and support, you may find the following resources to be helpful:

National Alliance on Mental Illness: NAMI.org

National Institutes of Mental Health: [www:nimhinfo@nih.gov](mailto:nimhinfo@nih.gov), and www.nihseniorhealth.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: Growing Older, SAMHSA.gov

Centers for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/aging and www.chronicdisease.org

1. Mental Health Association of Maryland. *Mental Health in Later Life, Guidebook for Older Marylanders and the People Who Care for Them.*

RESOURCES



THANK YOU!

Debbie Meyer

Board of Directors - NAMI Howard County

Julie Cleveland

Board of Directors - NAMI Maryland