



2024 BIPOC MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT

In commemoration of Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month



This effort is supported with contributions from:



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INTRODUCTION



Since our founding in 1909, equity has been a north star for Mental Health America as we promote well-being and access to needed care for all. Our commitment to upstream prevention and early intervention means supporting mental health at the community level – especially in those communities that have been historically marginalized, oppressed and discriminated against. Because these communities face unique structural barriers to care, it is vital that we champion approaches informed by lived experience as well as other factors such as identity, geography, and access to basic resources that drive positive mental health outcomes.

Despite the historical injustices faced by Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), the good news is that there are abundant reasons for hope. BIPOC communities have time and again demonstrated strength, resilience, and ingenuity in the face of adversity. They have also been consistently on the front lines of equitable social change and progress.

This month's namesake, Bebe Moore Campbell, is just one powerful example of a leader who paved the way in advocating on behalf of her community's mental health, and as such we are honored to commemorate Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month each July. A trailblazer, advocate, and extensive author, Moore Campbell used her work to explore themes of living with mental health conditions and how it intersects with racial identity, family dynamics and other critical aspects of life. Building upon her devotion to the mental well-being of minoritized communities, we continue to advance her vision for a better future for people of all backgrounds.

In this 2024 BIPOC Mental Health Toolkit in commemoration of Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Health Awareness Month, you will find a wide range of resources to help you and members of your community recognize the unique challenges faced by BIPOC individuals – along with tools to help break down those barriers and foster constructive dialogue around mental well-being. These include a cross-generational conversation guide; myth-busting some common cultural stereotypes related to BIPOC mental health; and a worksheet to help communities cope when they are under attack, just to name a few.

We hope you find this toolkit useful and affirming in its reflection of the strength and example of BIPOC and minoritized communities as well as a reflection of the remaining barriers to equity that we must confront. Beyond BIPOC Mental Health Month, we work to advance all that Bebe Moore Campbell stood for in her work and in her character. Please stay tuned for more information about upcoming webinars and other cutting-edge related programs.



Schneider Shikoring

President & CEO, Mental Health America



CONTENTS



Mental Health America's 2024 BIPOC Mental Health Toolkit provides free, practical resources to help navigate mental health stigma, bridge generational differences, dismantle mental health myths, and encourage meaningful conversations, including:

- Key messages
- Sample newsletter article
- Sample social media messages and images
- Outreach ideas
- Resource list
- Factsheet: Breaking down mental health stigma in BIPOC communities
- Factsheet: BIPOC mental health myth-busting
- Factsheet: Sharing generational wisdom
- Worksheet: Coping when your community is under attack
- Poster: Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month
- Poster: Screening

We will be reaching out in mid-August to ask about your outreach and impact. Make sure to keep track of your efforts by doing things like:

- Counting how many handouts you distribute;
- Tracking media hits and analytics for social media posts throughout July;
- If you do an event, keeping count of how many people attend and/or visit your booth; and
- Conducting a pre/post survey to see how you've increased knowledge about mental health issues among those you reach. Set up a quick survey of up to 10 questions for free online using SurveyMonkey.com.

QUESTIONS?

Want to know how you're allowed to use the materials in this toolkit? Visit mhanational.org/permissions.

If you have additional questions about the BIPOC Mental Health Toolkit, please contact Danielle Fritze, Vice President of Public Education, at dfritze@mhanational.org.

Check out past years' campaigns here:

- [2023: Culture, Community, and Connection](#)
- [2022: Beyond the Numbers](#)
- [2021: Strength in Communities](#)
- [2020: Impact of Trauma](#)
- [2019: Depth of My Identity](#)
- [2018: My Story My Way](#)





THE LEGACY OF BEBE MOORE CAMPBELL

Each July, we honor the legacy of author, advocate, and trailblazer Bebe Moore Campbell by recognizing Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month (also known as BIPOC Mental Health Month).

Moore Campbell's ability to tell impactful stories highlighting themes of racism, mental health, and family left a lasting mark on this world and is a foundation for much of the work that continues in support of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) mental health.

Throughout her work, Moore Campbell did not shy away from the realities of what it meant to live as a Black person in America. Her book, "Your Blues Ain't Like Mine," was inspired by the murder of Emmett Till and deemed as one of the most influential books of 1992 by the New York Times. Moore Campbell continued to write of real events that impacted Black and marginalized communities, such as her work in "Brothers and Sisters," which takes place in Los Angeles following the Rodney King riots. By highlighting these issues, Moore Campbell brought themes of environmental impact, race, and community connections to the forefront of American literature.

Her early books drew attention to the harsh realities of racism and the way that this continued trauma can show up in everyday life. Her later books continued with similar themes and included strong ties to mental health, as well as the importance of community bonds, leaning on family and friends, and finding support during an individual's treatment and recovery journey. Additionally, through her advocacy efforts, Moore Campbell continued to engage with community members, connect individuals to support networks, and create spaces that were truly inclusive for those within them.

Moore Campbell passed away on Nov. 27, 2006, but through her powerful storytelling, advocacy, and strong community roots, fellow advocates continued her fight. Mental Health America honors her unforgettable legacy each July by releasing an outreach toolkit and campaign that gives individuals throughout the country the tools they need to educate themselves and others. Her legacy lives on, providing a powerful foundation for marginalized communities to thrive and be known.

Books by Bebe Moore Campbell

- **72 Hour Hold (2005)**
- **Brothers and Sisters (1994)**
- **Singing in the Comeback Choir (1998)**
- **Successful Women, Angry Men: Backlash in the Two-Career Marriage (1986)**
- **Sweet Summer: Growing Up With and Without My Dad (1989)**
- **What you Owe Me (2001)**
- **Your Blues Ain't Like Mine (1992)**

Children's Books

- **I Get So Hungry (2008)**
- **Sometimes My Mommy Gets Angry (2003)**
- **Stompin' at the Savoy (2006)**

OUTREACH IDEAS



What Individuals Can Do

- Share the BIPOC Mental Health Campaign and supplemental materials on social media and with your networks by linking to mhanational.org/july and encouraging others to do the same.
- Use the shareable images and messages to spread awareness
- Print content from the campaign and post in high-traffic areas. For example, hanging factsheets in school hallways, places of worship, libraries, recreation centers, barber shops, salons, and other community-centered places can make this content more accessible to those who may not have consistent internet access or who may otherwise be unaware of these resources.
- Spread the word about screening. Encourage individuals in your community to check in on their mental health by taking a free, private mental health test at mhascreening.org.
- Check-in on your own mental health at mhascreening.org. Remember – when we begin to heal ourselves, we heal our communities.
- Identify BIPOC community-owned businesses that you can support instead of large retailers.
- Call or email your elected officials and let them know why you think the mental health of BIPOC communities should be a priority. Find contact information for your senators at Senate.gov (search feature in the top left) and your representatives at House.gov (search by ZIP in top right).
- Ask your local government to declare July as Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month and commit to supporting the mental health of BIPOC communities.
- Check out our most recent State of Mental Health in America report and find out where your state ranks and share with your elected officials: mhanational.org/issues/state-mental-health-america.
- Share detailed data about suicidal thinking, depression, psychosis, and trauma across your state and county from mhanational.org/mhamapping/mha-state-county-data.





What Organizations and Businesses Can Do

- Share the BIPOC Mental Health resources in this toolkit on social media and with your networks by linking to mhanational.org/july and encouraging others to do the same.
- Include Mental Health America's screening program in resources for your staff or audiences. Encourage individuals to check in on their mental health by using mhascreening.org.
- Provide consistent and accessible community-led support systems, such as employee resource groups and identity-specific services or resources.
- Plan events and services with – not just for – community members. Understand the power of community-initiated programs and prioritize representation in the voices your organization chooses to highlight.
- Provide ways for community members, employees, and other stakeholders to share feedback on a regular basis.
- Make connections in the community by engaging in community events, meeting with community members, and funding or supporting community initiatives.
- Host a mental health screening or other educational event at a local venue (e.g., town hall, firehouse, school, house of worship, or community center). Have computers or tablets available for people to go to mhascreening.org. Make sure to have a printer so that people can print their results. If an in-person event isn't possible, host a webinar or live social media event.
- Plan an advocacy event. This could be a day at your state capitol or an email campaign. Invite advocates, consumers, concerned citizens, and community and business leaders to reach out to policymakers to discuss your community's mental health needs.
- Team up with other local mental health and wellness organizations to host a community meet-and-greet. Connecting with community organizations on a regular basis can encourage stronger systems of support and collectivism.
- Connect with one of Mental Health America's affiliates and bring a speaker into your workplace. Find your local affiliate by visiting arc.mhanational.org/find-affiliate.
- Shop the Mental Health America Store, store.mhanational.org, for gifts that can be used to reward workers and spread awareness about BIPOC mental health.



KEY MESSAGES



Feel free to supplement these key messages with the assorted statistics and tips included on the fact sheets.

General

- July is Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month—a time to focus on the unique strengths and challenges that Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) face when it comes to mental health.
- Bebe Moore Campbell was a journalist, teacher, author, and dedicated mental health advocate for the Black community and other underrepresented groups. National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month was established and named in honor of her work.
- Mental Health America has created its BIPOC Mental Health Toolkit to help BIPOC communities reduce mental health stigma, facilitate intergenerational conversations, and address mental health myths.

Navigating Stigma/Cultural Differences in BIPOC Communities

- Many BIPOC individuals face internal and external judgment regarding their mental health.
- Whether it's cultural beliefs, fear of judgment, or lack of access to information and resources, stigma can manifest itself in many ways. It can look different based on culture, family values, and community views.
- Mental health struggles can be viewed as personal failures or weaknesses in some communities, which makes seeking help more difficult.
- Breaking the silence around mental health is crucial for healing.
- Open and honest conversations, while respecting cultural beliefs, can break down barriers and prioritize mental health.

Generational Differences

- Beliefs about mental health are often influenced by generational differences.
- Each generation has unique experiences that have shaped their mental health and wisdom to share when it comes to taking care of their own well-being.
- Starting conversations about mental health may feel challenging, but these conversations can bridge generational gaps and promote healing in individuals and communities.

Talking About Your Mental Health

- In BIPOC communities, there is often a history of overcoming adversity which can make talking about mental health struggles uncomfortable, but it's okay to need help.
- Sharing your mental health story takes strength and can help others feel understood and empowered to take action.
- Listening to and learning from BIPOC stories can increase awareness and promote conversations about mental health.

Seeking Support

- Taking the first steps can feel hard, but addressing and improving your own mental health has an impact on the wellness of the community at large.
- Therapy can be beneficial for anyone, and finding a provider who looks like you may help you feel more understood.
- Discussions about mental health don't have to happen only with professionals; they can take place in the settings and with the people that make you feel the most comfortable.
- Changing where and how we talk about mental health can foster support and healing in BIPOC communities.

Screening

- Life can be challenging, but every day shouldn't feel hard or out of your control. If it does, there is help. One free, anonymous, quick, and easy way to determine whether you are experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition is to take a mental health test at mhascreening.org.
- After you take a mental health screen, you will be given resources and tips to try on your own, ways you can connect with others or find a provider, and learn about treatments.
- Your screening results can be used to start a conversation with your primary care provider or a trusted friend or family member.
- A mental health test is a great way to begin planning a course of action for addressing your mental health.



SAMPLE NEWSLETTER ARTICLE



July is Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to highlight the unique strengths and challenges faced by Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) in relation to mental health. Named in honor of Bebe Moore Campbell, a journalist, teacher, author, and mental health advocate, this month is dedicated to continuing her legacy by focusing on the mental health needs and experiences of BIPOC communities.

Fear of judgment, cultural beliefs, generational differences, and lack of access to resources often prevent people of color from addressing struggles openly and seeking the help they need. To overcome these barriers, it is essential to foster open and honest conversations about mental health. Breaking the silence is a crucial step toward healing and prioritizing mental wellness.

This July, we encourage everyone to take steps towards improving mental health in BIPOC communities. To support these efforts, Mental Health America has created a free BIPOC Mental Health Toolkit. The toolkit contains handouts, outreach ideas, social media assets, and other resources to help combat stigma, break down myths, and encourage conversations about mental health.

By sharing stories, listening to others, and supporting one another, we can create a more inclusive and understanding environment where mental health is prioritized for everyone. Let's work together to promote mental health awareness in all BIPOC communities.

For more information, explore the BIPOC Mental Health Toolkit provided by Mental Health America at mhanational.org/july and visit the BIPOC Mental Health Resource Center at mhanational.org/bipoc.



SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES & IMAGES



All of the following sample messages are under the 280-character limit for X.

MHA Resources

- July is Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. Learn more about BIPOC mental health at mhanational.org/july.
- Download Mental Health America's #BIPOCMentalHealth toolkit to learn about mental health in BIPOC communities: mhanational.org/july.
- The 2024 #BIPOCMentalHealth Toolkit is now available! Celebrate Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month by downloading your free copy at mhanational.org/july.
- Looking for #BIPOCMentalHealth resources? Check out Mental Health America's BIPOC Mental Health Resource Center at mhanational.org/bipoc.

Bebe Moore Campbell

- This July, join us in honoring the memory of Bebe Moore Campbell, an American author, journalist, teacher, and mental health advocate who worked to shed light on the mental health needs of the Black community and other underrepresented communities. mhanational.org/bebemoorescampbell.

Stigma, Myths, and Generational Wisdom

- Expressing your feelings and needing help is not a sign of weakness – it's a sign of strength. Learn more about stigma and mental health myths in the BIPOC community at mhanational.org/july.
- Myth: Mental illness is a white people problem.
Reality: We ALL have mental health and deserve proper care.
Learn more about BIPOC mental health at mhanational.org/bipoc.
- Stigma feeds on silence. In honor of Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, Mental Health America has tools to help you break down stigma around #mentalhealth in BIPOC communities. Learn more at mhanational.org/july.
- Storytelling is one of the most effective ways to fight mental health stigma in BIPOC communities. When people who live with a mental health condition share their stories, it can help others feel less alone and reduce shame. #BIPOCMentalHealth
- Different generations in #BIPOC communities may face unique mental health challenges, but all age groups have unique wisdom to share. Learn more about sharing generational wisdom at mhanational.org/july. #BIPOCMentalHealth

Screening

- The first step in navigating your wellness journey is to check in on yourself. Take a free #mentalhealth test at mhascreening.org. #BIPOCMentalHealth
- Taking a mental health test is one of the easiest ways to check in on your #mentalhealth. Get screened at mhascreening.org. #BIPOCMentalHealth

Crisis

- If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org. You can also reach Crisis Text Line by texting HELLO to 741741.

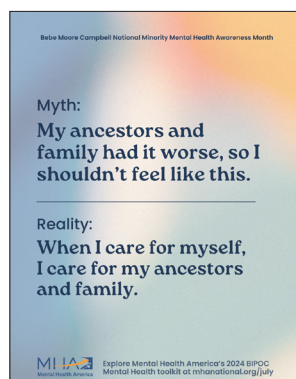
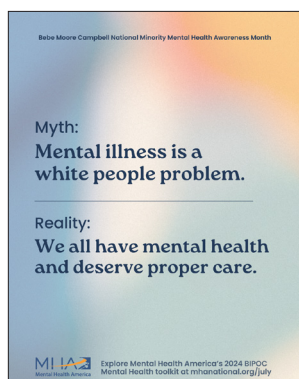
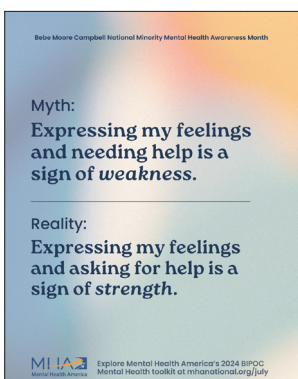
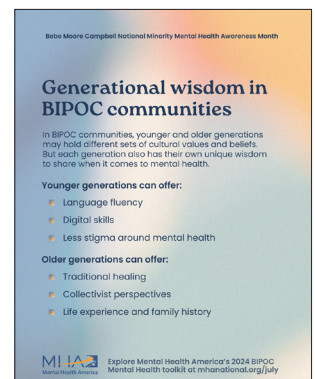
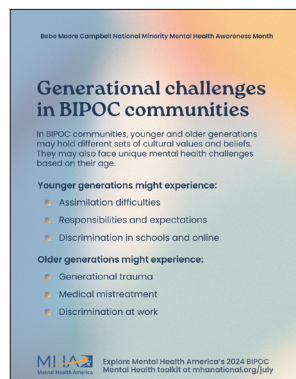
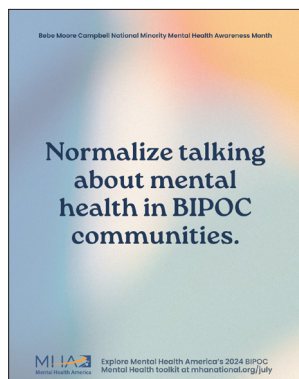
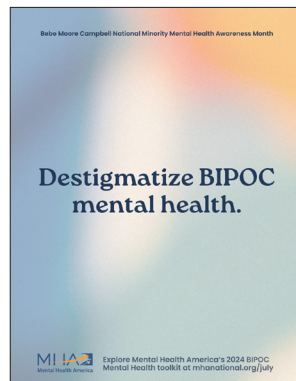
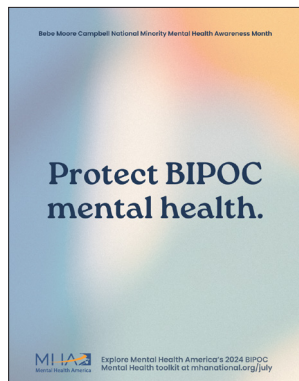
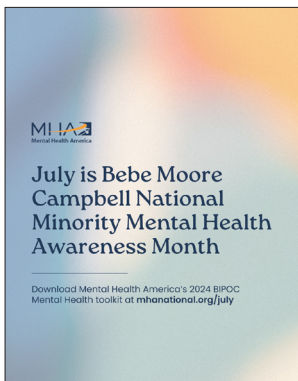
Hashtags

- #BIPOCMentalHealth
- #BebeMooreCampbell

Links

- mhanational.org/july or mhanational.org/bipoc/mental-health-month
- mhanational.org/bipoc
- mhascreening.org

To download these images, please visit mhanational.org/bipoc/mental-health-month-toolkit.



BIPOC MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES



Resources for Immediate Assistance

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals in the United States.

Phone: 988 (Spanish and English help available)

TTY users: 1-800-799-4889

Hours: 24/7

Website: 988lifeline.org

Crisis Chat: 988lifeline.org/chat

Crisis Text Line is a free text-enabled support program that provides crisis-related assistance.

Text: HELLO to 741741 for English or AYUDA to 741741 for Spanish.

Hours: 24/7

Website: crisistextline.org

Call Blackline is a community resource to promote social justice in crisis interventions for BIPOC communities. This resource also provides people with an avenue to report harmful, physical, and inappropriate contact with police and vigilantes.

Phone: 1-800-604-5841

Website: callblackline.com

Project LETS offers a Trans Lifeline to provide support to individuals in crisis or approaching a crisis without police involvement to prevent ongoing systemic disparities for trans populations.

Phone: 877-565-8860

Website: projectlets.org/crisis-support

Warmlines are non-crisis lines that individuals can reach out to speak with someone about their issues.

Most often, warmlines are operated by consumer-run organizations that exist in various states. You can find a list of warmlines at warmline.org.

Spanish-language Assistance

The **American Psychiatric Association's** La Salud Mental program provides a collection of mental health resources on specific conditions/topics in Spanish and English.

Website: psychiatry.org/patients-families/la-salud-mental

The **National Alliance for Hispanic Health** Su Familia program provides free, reliable and confidential health information in Spanish and English for families and individuals.

Phone: 1-866-783-2645

Hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 6 PM

Website: healthyamericas.org/help-line

The **National Institute of Mental Health Resource Information Center** assists individuals with specific mental health-related questions. They also have free publications that people can order, including Spanish language publications.

Phone: 1-866-615-6464 (Spanish and English help available)

Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM – 5 PM EST

Website: infocenter.nimh.nih.gov/publications/espanol

Resources from Mental Health America

General Resources:

- [Find ways to connect.](#)
- Take a mental health screen at mhascreening.org.
- [MHA's BIPOC Mental Health Resource Center \(mhanational.org/bipoc\)](https://mhanational.org/bipoc) is a collection of articles, videos, and blogs that provide information about mental health in BIPOC communities while elevating the voice of lived experience.
- [MHA's Inspire Community](#) provides a space where those with lived experiences of mental health conditions, their loved ones, and community stakeholders are encouraged to use this space for support and inspiration. We recently added our BIPOC Mental Health community topic where you can share personal experiences, ask questions, and connect with others.
- [MHA Peer Programs](#)

En Español:

- [Recursos en Español](#)
- [Prueba de Ansiedad](#)
- [Prueba de Depresion](#)

Additional Reading:

- [How to find an anti-racist therapist](#)
- [Will my new therapist understand my needs?](#)
- [I have trauma from racism](#)
- [Is my therapist being racist?](#)
- [Talking to your loved ones about mental health](#)
- [Choosing the right mental health care for you](#)
- [Creating a community safety and connection plan](#)
- [Advocating for better community spaces](#)
- [Alternatives to calling the police in a crisis](#)

Additional Trusted Resources

General:

- [AAKOMA Project](#) works to build the consciousness of intersectional youth and young adults of color and their caregivers on the recognition and importance of mental health, empower youth and young adults of color and their families to seek help and manage mental health, and influence systems and services to receive and address the needs of youth and young adults of color and their families.
- [Calathea Wellness](#) helps first-generation Latine professionals embrace their bicultural identity to elevate their confidence, deepen their connections, and amplify their individual and professional fulfillment.
- [Future of SEL](#) helps people develop mindful work habits, make better business decisions, and build positive relationships to retain talent and create well spaces for all so that owners, leaders, and employees are living and leading well.
- [Human Rights Campaign](#) works alongside lawmakers and groups at the state and local levels all over the country to fight for LGBTQ+ equality.
- [Inclusive Therapists](#) works to make the process of finding a therapist simpler and safer, centering the needs of BIPOC and LGBTQIA2S+ intersections (QTBIPOC). Their mission prioritizes the voices and expressions of neurodivergent and disabled communities of color.
- [Informed Immigrant](#) has become both a digital hub and offline network offering the most up-to-date and accessible information and guidance for the undocumented immigrant community.
- [Nalgona Positivity Pride](#) is an unconventional eating disorder awareness organization that shines a light

on the often-overlooked societal factors that perpetuate unrealistic and oppressive beauty and health standards. NPP offers a vital space for BIPOC individuals to celebrate and embrace their bodies and identities.

- [National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights \(NNIRR\)](#) works to defend and expand the rights of all immigrants and refugees, regardless of immigration status.
- [National Queer and Trans Therapists of Color](#) advances healing justice by transforming mental health for queer and trans BIPOC individuals.
- The [Office of Minority Health Resource Center](#) is a one-stop shop for minority health literature, research, and referrals.
- [Project LETS](#) builds peer support collectives, leads political education, develops new knowledge and language around mental distress, organizes and advocates for the liberation of our community members globally, and creates innovative, peer-led, alternatives to our current mental health system.
- [Radical Mental Health First Aid](#) is mutual aid. RMHFA is harm reduction. RMHFA is non-carceral. RMHFA is imbued with the energy and spirit of Teranga (“we invite you in with open arms. what affects you, what ails you, what reinforces you also affects me and my community. you are not alone. we breathe as one”).
- [Recovery Dharma Online](#) (RDO) is an independent Recovery Dharma community that works together to host safe, inclusive, and reliable Buddhist-inspired recovery meetings
- [Rooted in Radiance](#) offers solutions that emphasize well-being, fitness, and mental resilience. We curate creative and culturally tailored programming that empowers people to achieve their goals, enhance their mental health and form lifelong healthy habits.

Communities of African Descent/Black Communities:

- [Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective \(BEAM\)](#) is a national training, movement building, and grant making institution that is dedicated to the healing, wellness, and liberation of Black and marginalized communities.
- [Black Girls Can Heal](#) is an online community and coaching program dedicated to helping women break the cycles of unavailable partnerships, unhealthy relationships and feeling not enough here to provide via evidence based and real, actionable tools.
- [Black Men Heal](#) provides access to mental health treatment, psycho-education, and community resources to men of color.
- [Therapy for Black Girls](#) is an online space dedicated to encouraging the mental wellness of Black women and girls.
- [Therapy for Black Men](#) wants to break the stigma that asking for help is a sign of weakness. With a rapidly growing directory of 608 therapists and 50 coaches throughout the 50 states thus far, Therapy for Black Men provides judgment-free, multiculturally-competent care to Black men.

Communities of Arab Descent:

- [Khalil Center](#) is a psychological and spiritual community wellness center advancing the professional practice of psychology rooted in Islamic principles.
- [Institute for Muslim Mental Health](#) promotes Muslim Americans’ mental health through research, resource development, training and advocacy.
- [Naseeha](#) is a Mental Health Helpline that answers calls from around the world from Muslim and non-muslims.
- [Muslim Wellness Foundation](#) utilizes a holistic and spiritually-grounded psychological approach, we cultivate honest conversations and experiences wherein radical healing, belonging, and growth can flourish.

Communities of Asian or Pacific Islander Descent:

- [Asian Counseling and Referral Services \(ACRS\)](#) promotes social justice and the well-being and empowerment of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other underserved communities – including immigrants, refugees, and American-born – by developing, providing and advocating for innovative, effective and efficient community-based multilingual and multicultural services.
- [Asian Mental Health Collective](#) aspires to make mental health easily available, approachable, and accessible to Asian communities worldwide.

- [Mustard Seed Generation](#) exists to eradicate barriers to mental health that increase life dissatisfaction, family dysfunction, and suicide in the Korean American community. We provide culture-specific training to increase the mental health literacy of Korean American churches, families, and youth.
- [Yellow Chair Collective](#) provides culturally relevant therapy for Asian Americans. YCC doesn't simply view therapy as addressing the problem you're facing or the symptom you're experiencing. YCC takes into account who you are as a person first and what is truly important to you.

Communities of Indigenous Descent:

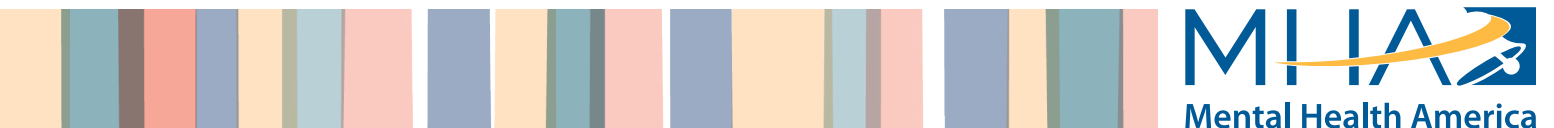
- [One Sky Center](#) is a National Resource Center for American Indian and Alaska Native Health, Education and Research. It is dedicated to quality health care across Indian Country.
- [Native Hope](#) exists to address the injustice done to Native Americans. We share Native stories, provide educational resources, and assist Native communities.
- [WeRNative](#) is a comprehensive health resource for Native youth, by Native youth, providing content and stories about the topics that matter most to them. We strive to promote holistic health and positive growth in our local communities and nation at large.

Communities of Latine or Hispanic Descent:

- [Estoy Aqui](#) offers innovative training programs to providers in the helping professions who want to learn about the socio-cultural aspects of mental health in Latine and Black communities.
- [Latinx Parenting](#) is a bilingual organization rooted in children's rights, social and racial justice and antiracism, the individual and collective practice of nonviolence and reparenting, intergenerational and ancestral healing, cultural sustenance, and the active decolonization of oppressive practices in our families.
- [Latinx Therapy](#) is a national directory for Latinx Therapists in private practice. Latinx Therapy works to destigmatize mental health in the Latinx community by providing a bilingual podcast, national directory, and culturally-grounded workshops and services.
- [Therapy for Latinx](#) was created to make finding a mental health provider as easy as possible. Search our listings to find therapists that honor who you are, provide services with dignity, and can code switch like the best of them.

Communities of Multiracial Descent:

- [Mixed in America](#) is a community organization looking to have more nuanced conversation about race in America, specifically through the multiracial lens. Our goal is to empower the mixed community by facilitating supportive spaces for mixed individuals to explore and unpack their identities. Mixed in America offers services for adults, children, affinity groups, schools, and businesses. Our approach is trauma informed, holistic, inclusive and autonomous.



BREAKING DOWN MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA IN BIPOC COMMUNITIES

Mental health stigma is a negative or discriminatory attitude someone holds about mental health. Learn more about how to break down stigma in BIPOC communities and create spaces where everyone feels comfortable sharing their experiences with mental health.



Factors that may contribute to negative beliefs about mental health:

Communities of Arab and Middle Eastern Descent: In this community, mental health challenges can be considered a personal failure. People from communities of Arab and Middle Eastern descent may fear being labeled as someone with a mental health condition because it could potentially alienate them from their friends and families. They may also be influenced by religious beliefs that a mental health condition is a form of spiritual punishment.

Communities of Asian/Pacific Islander Descent: The pressure of the “model minority myth” can contribute to stigma for communities of Asian/Pacific Islander descent. People from this community may believe that they need to live up to expectations of achievement and success, and that experiencing mental health challenges would deem them incapable of doing so. Sharing their mental health challenges with someone outside of the family might also be considered a betrayal and bring shame to the family.

Communities of Black/African American Descent: In this community, seeking mental health care can be seen as a sign of spiritual or moral weakness. Some people may think that if their ancestors survived slavery and segregation, their mental health struggles seem insignificant in comparison.

Communities of Indigenous Descent: Communities of Indigenous descent may fear being perceived as weak if they are experiencing mental health challenges. Because of their close family ties and collectivist worldview, they may worry that seeking help would bring shame to their family and impact their family’s status within the community.

Communities of Latine/Hispanic Descent: In this community, people may tend to be more private, keeping them from discussing mental health concerns with others. Many people in the Latine/Hispanic community are familiar with the phrase “la ropa sucia se lava en casa,” similar to the phrase, “don’t air your dirty laundry in public.” Because of their religious affiliations, some people may also believe that demons or sinful behavior are the cause of mental health conditions.

Communities of Multiracial Descent: Multiracial individuals may have to navigate different types of stigma from the multiple ethnic communities they are a part of. They may also experience alienation from communities they are a part of if they are not perceived as “enough” of a given race/ethnicity. This isolation can make it more difficult to speak up about mental health challenges.

How to normalize conversations about mental health in your community:

Tailor your approach:

Different generations may have different comfort levels when it comes to talking about mental health.

Older generations may prefer face-to-face conversations where they can share stories and connect with others. Adults may appreciate resources and workshops that provide strategies for managing mental health. Young people may gravitate towards [digital platforms because they feel more relatable](#).

Get creative with your wording:

Are there words that people in your community use to talk about mental health without saying the words “mental health?” Some examples of this might be words like: wellness, health, spirit, soul, or mind. For example, asking “how are you feeling spiritually?” or “how are you feeling - *really?*”

Instead of the word “anxiety,” you could use terms like: nervous, nerves, jittery, on edge, jumpy, or irritable. For example, telling someone, “Wow, I feel really on edge today” can normalize talking about feelings.

Alternatives for the word “depressed” could be: tired, down, low, or not feeling it. For example, someone telling you, “I’m just not feeling it today” may be their way of asking for emotional support.

If you speak another language, there may also be words in that language you can consider.

Make connections to physical health:

Sometimes mental health challenges can show up as physical symptoms. For example, [people experiencing anxiety and/or depression may also experience headaches, stomach aches, or pain in their joints, limbs, or back](#).

People may be more comfortable talking about physical health than mental health. This could be a good entry point to help you start a conversation about mental health.

For example:

- If someone shares that they have a bad headache, you could try saying something like, “I’m so sorry you’re dealing with that. Do you know what might have caused it?”
- You could also ask, “Have you been feeling stressed lately? Sometimes I get a headache when I am feeling that way.”

Share Your Story:

When people who live with a mental health condition share their stories, it can help others feel less alone and reduce any shame they may have when talking about their own mental health.

Sometimes, it can be helpful to [create a plan](#) before talking to your loved ones about your mental health. This can help you think through how you want to share and how they might respond.

You can share your story in an informal setting while chatting with friends and family. You can also share your story in a more public way. Whatever method you choose, this can be a powerful way to stop the stigma from spreading in your community.

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BIPOC MENTAL HEALTH MYTH-BUSTING

In BIPOC communities, talking about mental health can be considered taboo. This fact sheet will uncover different “myths” that may exist in BIPOC communities about seeking mental health support. It will also provide affirmations you can repeat to yourself to help you think positively about asking for help, even when you might hear messages saying the opposite.

Myth #1: “Talking about my feelings and needing help is a sign of weakness.”

It’s normal to need support from time to time and talking with others is a great way to get that. Some people in BIPOC communities might believe that being “strong” means they don’t face stress or emotional struggles and can just keep moving forward after a traumatic event. Others may feel that the challenges they face aren’t anyone else’s business.

However, being vulnerable about how you are feeling and accepting help when you need it requires a great deal of strength. By [speaking up about your feelings and needs](#), you set an example for others to tend to their own mental and emotional health.

Affirmations:

- Expressing my feelings and asking for help is a sign of strength, not a sign of weakness.
- Giving and receiving support is part of a natural cycle of life. I have given support in the past; I am allowed to receive support in the present; I can give support again in the future.

Myth #2: “What happens in the family should stay in the family.”

Family is important to many. Depending on your preferences or how you grew up, you might believe that sharing challenges going on within the family is inappropriate. You may have been taught that family concerns should stay “behind closed doors” or that you shouldn’t “air your dirty laundry in public.” Some may also have been taught that seeking mental health care would bring shame to their family.

However, sharing your feelings and experiences with friends or professionals you trust can be extremely valuable to you and your family. You might learn [healthy coping](#) or communication skills that would benefit you, but would also positively impact your family dynamic. Because we are all interconnected, anything you do to take care of yourself naturally helps take care of your family.

Affirmations:

- I am allowed to express myself to people I feel comfortable and safe with, even if they are not my biological family.
- I am allowed to create a “chosen family” that I can trust to listen when I need validation and support.

Myth #3: “Therapy is for ‘crazy’ people.”

Therapy is for everyone. No matter what stage of life you are in, and wherever you are in your mental health journey, [talking to a therapist who understands you](#) can be extremely beneficial. Therapy can help you view yourself with more compassion, improve your relationships, set goals for yourself and so much more.

BIPOC celebrities, such as [Charlamagne tha God](#) and [many others](#), have opened up about the positive impact therapy has had on their lives. BIPOC athletes [Simone Biles](#) and [Naomi Osaka](#) shared that therapy was important for them after taking a break from competitions to take care of their mental health. Celebrity or not, therapy is something we can all benefit from as humans since we are hard-wired for connection.

Affirmations:

- Going to therapy does not make me “crazy.” It makes me wise.
- Therapy gives me a space to heal and grow so I can thrive.

Myth #4: “Mental illness is a white people problem.”

Just like we all have physical health and sometimes get sick, we all have mental health and can experience mental health conditions. [According to recent statistics](#), 17% of Black/African Americans, 15% of Latine/Hispanic Americans, 13% of Asian Americans, and 23% of First Nations people live with a mental health condition.

While the field of psychology is growing more diverse; the [majority of psychologists in the U.S. are white](#). With this in mind, it can seem as though going to therapy is only something white people do. It is important for people from BIPOC communities to [receive culturally responsive care](#) when in therapy. [Therapists providing culturally responsive care](#) will work to understand your cultural background, validate your experiences of discrimination and stigma, and also apologize for any communication errors that cause harm.

Affirmations:

- Everyone has mental health. It is part of what makes us human.
- I deserve to work with a therapist who understands and affirms me.

Myth #5: “If you’re struggling, you aren’t praying enough.”

Struggling with your mental health does not mean that you are being spiritually tested or punished for your sins. We all need support with our mental health sometimes.

Spiritual support can come in many forms, such as the people and resources that are put in your path to help you heal. Working with a mental health professional can supplement other [sources of spiritual or emotional support](#), and many therapists are also spiritually-minded. Finding someone who [shares your religion](#) or recognizes the importance of faith in your life can make your healing experience more personal and effective.

Affirmations:

- My faith supports and strengthens me, and I am allowed to seek help from a therapist if I am struggling with my mental health.
- My faith can support my work in therapy; my work in therapy can support my faith.

Myth #6: “My ancestors and family had it worse, so I don’t have a right to feel how I do.”

You may feel guilty if you are struggling with your mental health because your family made sacrifices in order for you to have what you have. You may feel like you don’t have the right to “complain” because you feel like your circumstances are nothing compared to the levels of racism, displacement, and violence others went through.

However, two things can be true at once. You can feel gratitude for your ancestors/family and all they have done for you. You are also allowed to have and express your own feelings about what you are going through in the present. By seeking and accepting help, you can actually play a part in [healing generational trauma](#). In this way, you are both working to heal yourself and the trauma your ancestors went through.

Affirmations:

- My feelings are valid and I deserve care and support. When I care for myself, I care for my family/ancestors.
- My ancestors would want me to be as happy and healthy as possible.

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SHARING GENERATIONAL WISDOM

In BIPOC communities, younger and older generations may hold different sets of cultural values and beliefs. Each age group also has their own unique wisdom to share when it comes to taking care of their own mental health and advocating for mental wellness in their communities.



Mental Health Challenges Across Generations

Younger people may face:

Assimilation Difficulties: Young immigrants or children of immigrants may have difficulty [assimilating to American culture](#). They may also be more likely to experience [discrimination and isolation at school](#). These experiences can lead to increased feelings of isolation and make it [more likely](#) to develop a mental health condition.

Responsibilities and Expectations: Younger generations may be responsible for translating for older family members, taking care of younger children, and/or working to help their family financially. Their parents may have high academic expectations of them because of all they sacrificed to create a life that offers more opportunity than in their native country. The combination of these stressors [can impact mental health](#).

Discrimination: The racism BIPOC youth experience can have a [negative and long-lasting impact](#) on their mental health and development. This is especially true in schools, where BIPOC youth are [more likely to be suspended](#) than their white peers. This systemic racism younger generations experience at school [leads to higher incarceration rates](#) which negatively affects [youth development](#). BIPOC youth may also experience [cyber-racism](#), or race-related online bullying, which their elders likely will not experience.

Older people may face:

Generational Trauma: Many older generations in BIPOC communities may have lived through forms of [racial trauma](#) such as segregation in the U.S., wars that caused them to flee their home countries, forced assimilation, etc. These painful experiences can [cause symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder \(PTSD\)](#). Even if they did not live through this trauma themselves, the trauma their parents and ancestors experienced [may also make older generations more vulnerable to depression](#).

Medical Mistreatment: The medical field has a long history of [mistreating people of color](#). As recent as the 20th century, Black men were subjected to non-consensual medical experimentation in the [Tuskegee Study](#). Around the same time, Black, Native American, and Puerto Rican women were [targeted for involuntary sterilization](#). Even today, Black people receiving medical care who express [physical pain are often underestimated and undertreated](#). The history of medical mistreatment in the U.S. can lead older generations in BIPOC communities to be less trusting of the medical system, making them less likely to seek out support for their mental health from a medical professional.

Discrimination: BIPOC adults are more likely to face discrimination at work. In a [recent study](#), one in four Black and Hispanic employees reported experiencing discrimination in their workplace. In addition to their mental health, this can have a negative impact on older generations' financial well-being, leading to increased anxiety.

Sharing Generational Wisdom

Strengths and knowledge that younger generations may have to share:

Language Fluency: Most psychologists in the U.S. [speak exclusively in English](#) and have only limited training when it comes to working with clients who speak other languages. There is a significant need for more therapists who speak languages other than English. But the language fluency of younger generations does make it easier for them to access mental health care and education. Their English language proficiency may make it easier for them to fill out forms, find a mental health provider, access health insurance, and support older generations if they decide to seek mental health treatment.

Digital Skills: While people across generations can be familiar with how to access technology, it may come more naturally to younger people since they grew up online. Younger generations likely have a good handle on how to use different social media platforms. They also probably know how to access information via podcasts, webinars, blogs, etc. These digital skills are [valuable when it comes to mental health education](#). It may also make it easier for younger generations to use [online therapy services](#) that may be more accessible for them. Their ability to find and share this information allows them to both care for their own mental health as well as the mental health of the people in their community.

Less Stigma: Younger generations are often more used to talking about mental health openly. They may have been exposed to mental health education at school, online, or asked about symptoms of mental health conditions during appointments with their primary care doctor. Growing up in environments where mental health is discussed reduces shame and is an asset when it comes to caring for mental health at the personal and community levels. Sharing their experiences with their own mental health reduces the amount of stigma older family members may feel about theirs.

Strengths and knowledge that older generations may have to share:

Traditional Healing: Older generations often have a wealth of knowledge of [traditional healing practices](#) that have been passed down from their ancestors. These practices are rooted in a more holistic understanding of mental health that sees the mind, body, and spirit as interconnected. Some examples of these are: healing circles, smudging, sweat lodge rituals, or reiki. Elders have important cultural knowledge with [significant mental health benefits](#) to share with younger generations.

Collectivist Perspectives: Older generations in BIPOC communities may be more likely to hold a [collectivist worldview](#) rather than an individualistic one. The idea that everyone is interdependent and interconnected allows for the creation of strong networks of support, which are especially important when it comes to mental health.

Life Experience and Family History: The life experience of older generations holds valuable lessons and storytelling can be a powerful tool to share with younger generations about how they navigated hard times. Older generations may also have known older relatives that younger generations have never met. They can pass down the wisdom they shared. Their knowledge of these older relatives also allows them to share information about their family's mental health history. Because they know the experiences of their elders, older generations may be more easily able to spot predictors of mental health challenges in younger generations of their family.

Honoring the younger generation's fresh perspectives and the older generation's traditional wisdom allows BIPOC communities to develop strong and supportive communities. To strengthen these relationships, you can find ways to [talk to your loved ones](#) about your mental health and [check-in on family and friends](#). You can also find [resources and strategies](#) to help if someone you care about needs support.

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WORKSHEET: HOW TO COPE WHEN YOUR COMMUNITY IS UNDER ATTACK



When communities face violence or discrimination, the resulting trauma from these attacks can be difficult to heal. Finding ways to process your feelings, feel more grounded, and take action can support you and your community in healing together. Use this worksheet to help you make a plan for how you will take care of yourself and your community if your community is under attack.

Section 1: Pause and Reflect

After experiencing a traumatic event, it is important to allow yourself to feel your feelings. Take the time to process your emotions and reflect on what you and your community are going through.

What happened? Describe the situation you and your community are coping with by writing or drawing.

What emotions are you feeling as a result of the situation? You can also reference the worksheet, [What's Underneath?](#), to help you identify your emotions.

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger | <input type="checkbox"/> Hopelessness | <input type="checkbox"/> Frustration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disappointment | <input type="checkbox"/> Fear | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness | <input type="checkbox"/> Numbness | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rage | <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overwhelm | <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust | <input type="checkbox"/> Confusion | |

What changes have you noticed in yourself or your community since the event (emotionally, physically, socially, environmentally, etc.)?

Section 2: Feeling Safe

Experiencing a traumatic event can make you feel unsafe and unstable. Thinking of things that have provided you with a sense of security in the past can help you [feel more grounded](#).

What resources, organizations, or faith communities exist near you that have supported you in the past? If you can't think of any, some resources that you can access to support you during this time are: the [Disaster Distress Helpline](#) (1-800-985-5990), the [THRIVE Lifeline](#) (text "THRIVE" to 1-313-662-8209), or resources from [Project LETS](#).

What [activities](#) have you done in the past that have helped you feel more safe and stable? (Examples: listening to calming music, reading your favorite book, eating your favorite meal, etc.)

What are some positive words or phrases you can say to yourself to help you feel more grounded? (Examples: I am courageous; I am loved, etc.)

Section 3: Taking Action

For some people, taking action can be a helpful way to cope with trauma. Once you have established your own sense of safety again, you may start to notice that you want to support the people around you or those who share your identity. This can increase feelings of connection and decrease feelings of helplessness. However, it is important to remember that you do not have to take action if you feel that you need time to heal in other ways.

Before you get started, let's make sure you have a game plan to stay mentally and emotionally grounded. What are some ways you can [protect your mental health](#) while you are advocating for your community?

Think back to times where you've connected with others in your community or volunteered. Are there any actions you want to take to support yourself and your community?

If you haven't engaged in this way, here are some examples: collecting and sharing basic necessities, joining advocacy groups, hosting a community meal, facilitating healing circles, etc.

After reflecting on how you would like to provide support to your community in the question above: What is a small, first step you can take toward providing that support?

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