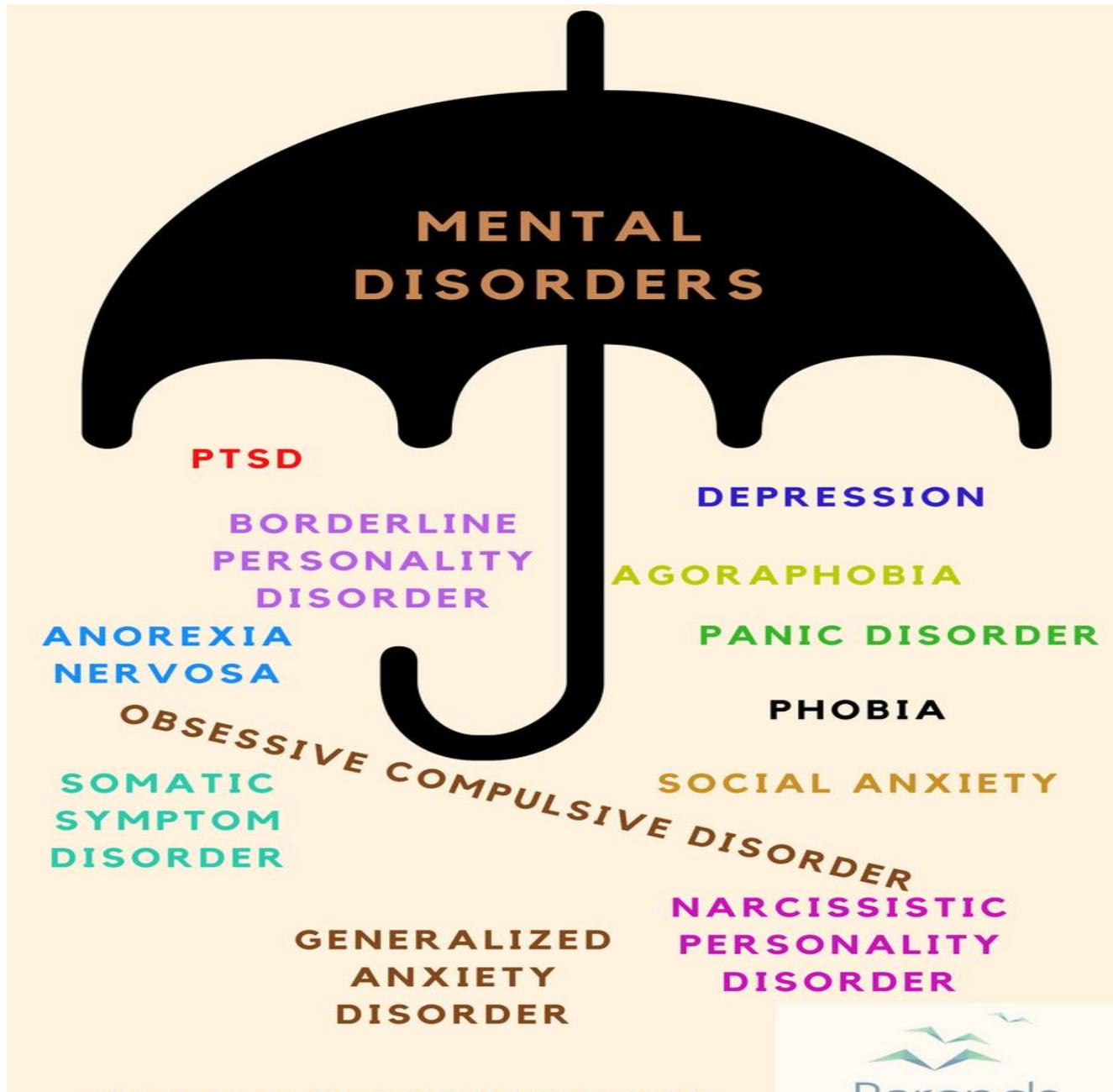


Challenging Stigma in Mental health

Presented by Dennis Chiwuta.



Types of Mental Illnesses



What is stigma

- ▶ **A stigma can be like a mark, a stain or a blemish.**
- ▶ **. A mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person.**
- ▶ **Stigma is a degrading and debasing attitude of the society that discredits a person or a group because of an attribute.**
- ▶ **The stigma associated with mental illness can be divided into two types: social stigma and self-perceived stigma,**

What is social stigma

Involves the prejudiced attitudes others have towards mental illness or people who have mental illness.

Prejudice is a bias or a preconceived opinion, idea, or belief about something. When you act based on prejudice, you make up your mind about something and make generalizations about it before fully knowing about it = stigma.

Why we have social Stigma towards Mental Health.

- ▶ Ignorance.
- ▶ Fear
- ▶ Cultural/Societal values.
- ▶ Media perceptions and portrayal of mental health. Newspapers. Movies.
- ▶ Criminal behaviour being described in mental health terms
- ▶ Portraying inaccurate stereotypes about people with a mental illness
- ▶ Sensationalising situations through unwarranted references to mental illness
- ▶ Using demeaning or hostile language

Self stigma

- ▶ **involves an internalized stigma the person with the mental illness suffers from**
- ▶ **Fear of being discriminated**
- ▶ **Fear of being marginalised e.g limited job opportunities**
- ▶ Describing self as their illness e.g I am bi-polar or schizo. Living the label
- ▶ Lack of compassion compared to physical health issues
- ▶ Patients develop feelings of low self-esteem and become less willing to seek or adhere to treatment.
- ▶ Patients anticipate that they will be discriminated against, and to protect themselves they limit their social interactions and fail to pursue work and housing opportunities.



STIGMA

NEGATIVE PERCEPTION OF MENTAL ILLNESS

FEAR OF DISCRIMINATION

AVOIDANCE OF HELP AND RESOURCES

UNTREATED MENTAL ILLNESS, PERPETUATING MISCONCEPTIONS

THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF STIGMA



The D0s to fight stigma

- ▶ Be aware of your own attitudes and behaviour.
- ▶ Educate yourself.
- ▶ Educate others
- ▶ Focus on the positive
- ▶ Talk openly about mental health. Its NOT a taboo.
- ▶ Normalise talking about mental health.
- ▶ Empower people with mental health to speak for themselves.
- ▶ Get the conversation going from an early age. Part of every day discussion.
- ▶ Advocate, protest, make right.
- ▶ Engaging social influencers
- ▶ Keep contact with people with mental health problems.
- ▶ Let them tell their story.

Be Mindful of

Paternalistic

Prescriptive

Labelling- people are not
their illnesses.