

Mental Health Today

Mental health problems make a regular appearance in the news. Despite the modern day being a multicultural society where we try to understand one another all the more whether specifying religion, culture, music, foods or even hobbies. Speech and opinion have never quite been as free as what they are in 2016 where arguably everybody has a voice, an opinion or the power to act upon whatever they so desire whether portrayed in a physical form or over social media outlets. It does seem however that despite the immense progression and evolution of the human race there are areas, which we are still rather uneducated, resulting in stereotypes, prejudice and perhaps a lack of sympathy for the people effected by the particular matter. The subject I am talking about is of course mental health. It does seem strange however considering that actually mental health problems will at some point effect 1 in 4 people.



Were I to fall physically ill enough to loose consciousness, rest assured that human instinct will drive members of the public to act upon my misfortune and either help pick me up or refer me to somebody that can. Its sad to think however that should I be equally floored by depression crying in the corner of a busy station, have a breakdown through anxiety and freak out in public, or act irrationally because of bipolar I would perhaps be observed, glanced at or even worried about but more than likely passed and left to deal with the problem alone.



A lot of people suffering with mental health problems often hold back from treatment, or raising concerns about their own state to friends and family due to embarrassment and fear of prejudice, but this seems so wrong considering that mental illnesses are actually a result of chemical imbalance within the brain, no different then from a heart that beats irregularly right?

Mental, weird, freak, maniac.. Just some of the terms that people suffering with mental illnesses may receive. Of course people of a slightly more educated background or who have dealt with or experienced mental health problems first hands would be slightly wiser than to use such terms but it is in fact a reality that people fear being open about their problems with mental health perhaps because they have experienced naïve opinions subjected towards them. Georgina Hoffman from Winchester University suffers with Bipolar disorder and confessed in an interview with me “I have always tried to handle things the best I can, I don’t ever want to allow my diagnosis with Bipolar disorder to interfere with day to day life, but some episodes are rather obvious to people on the outside so I confided in people around me at work so they would understand my illness, sadly however I received a dramatic change in attitude towards me from colleagues and even management. I found myself at the root of many jokes, some of which were rather spiteful. Then at one point a couple of months later the doctor actually signed me off work. I never returned as I felt I was made to feel quite small by colleagues and lacked any support from management.”

Georgina is not alone, many people feel somewhat subjected to negative prejudice regarding their mental health problems and often feel that even when they do seek help they receive little support.



This said however, more and more awareness is being made, with programmes on the television, articles in magazines, social media, and the work of charities being publicised and brought into the spotlight. There is also an increase in charity work supporting mental health, and treatments including fitness, exercise and good diet being recommended in culture to help combat poor mental health. Support is certainly growing despite the NHS receiving so many patients.

