

MENTAL HEALTH BEYOND THE SURFACE

MENTAL HEALTH DOES NOT EXIST IN A VACUUM!!!

WHAT IF WE LOOKED DEEPER?

Mental health is not just about what is happening inside of us. It is also about what has happened to us, what is happening around us, what we have access to, and how we have learned to survive. We often see behavior with no knowledge of an individual story. We hear of diagnoses and forget to see the person. We experience reactions, without understanding what came before it and we see the struggle independent of the systems, the relationships, the culture, the trauma or adverse experiences, or the environments that have shaped it.

Our mental health can be influenced by:

- 🧠 Our thoughts and emotions
- 🫀 Our bodies and physical health
- 🏠 Our homes and relationships
- 🎓 Our schools and workplaces
- 🌍 Our communities and environments
- 💰 Our access to resources and economic stability
- 🧬 Our biology and development
- 👥 Our culture, identity, and sense of belonging
- ⚖️ The systems and society we live within

What is Mental Health?

Mental health is a state of well-being that equips us with tools to navigate life, orchestrates our ability to cope, learn, function, and be contributors to society. It is a component of overall behavioral health that includes our emotional, social, and psychological wellness.



Everyone has mental health but not everyone has a mental illness or disorder. Diagnoses are simply explanations, not excuses. **UNDERSTANDING IS NOT THE SAME AS EXCUSING!** We can hold people accountable and seek understanding. We can acknowledge harm while recognizing the context, we can set boundaries while simultaneously being compassionate and we can support mental health without reducing people to a diagnosis, behavior, or a single moment in time.

