Mental Health and Social Inclusion: Making steps!

I can do it!
...and I have mental health problems

Why should we think about mental health problems?

Mental health problems can affect anyone. According to the World Health Organisation, one in four people experiences some form of mental health disorder during their lifetime. Financial hardship, unemployment, lack of a social network and uncertainty about the future very often have a negative impact on people's well-being and health. Pure mental health problems can be both a cause and a consequence of social exclusion. Many people who suffer from mental health problems face stigma and discrimination, and for an increasing number, poverty is a reality.
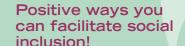
What is social inclusion?

Society often marginalises people with mental health problems so that they cannot fully take part in society.
★ Gaining access to employment
★ Securing appropriate housing
★ Obtaining access to training and education
★ Protecting human rights
★ Enjoying leisure activities and social life

Positive ways you can facilitate social inclusion!

Remember that people with mental health problems want to make a valuable contribution:
★ See their potential for employment...
  they can do it!
★ See their right to training and education...
  they can do it!
★ Recognise their need to enjoy a social life...
  they can do it!

Let's make steps towards social inclusion

I can do it!

...and I have mental health problems

Remember... Everyone has potential!

To bring about the integration of people with mental health problems into society and the labour market, we need to change the often negative perception of these people. Too often people have negative reactions and think that mental health problems are synonyms of strangeness, eccentricity and even madness. These negative perceptions need to be challenged and a more positive approach is necessary: remember that everybody can make a valuable contribution to society as a whole.

What can you do to make social inclusion a reality?

★ *Highlight the abilities of people with mental health problems*
Everyone has the right to make a contribution to society. People with mental health problems can work, they have talents and skills and have the right to utilise them.

★ *Combat stigma against people with mental health problems*
Mental health is as important as physical health to the overall well-being of individuals and societies. Yet only a small minority of those living with mental health problems receives treatment. Fear of disclosure, rejection by friends, and discrimination are a few reasons why people with mental illnesses don't seek help. We need to de-stigmatise mental illness and we can do this by thinking and acting in a positive way!

★ *Promote the active inclusion of people with mental health problems into society*
Overcoming prejudice and discrimination, getting effective services, and being part of a support network can help people with mental health problems to enjoy meaningful lives and meaningful relationships.

Mental Health Europe - Santé Mentale Europe is a European non-governmental organisation committed to the promotion of positive mental health, the prevention of mental distress, the improvement of care, advocacy for social inclusion and the protection of human rights for (ex)users of mental health services, their families and carers.