WHY MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS?

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There are numerous effects of the community quarantine caused by the pandemic to people. Aside from the fear for life, health, and safety, there are also those who get paranoid on the possibilities of contracting the virus. Hoarding behavior of was observed. People kept on buying more stocks of materials than what they used to do. Materials like bottles of alcohol, face masks, face shields and the likes. People get bored being confined inside their houses for long periods of time. People get anxiety attacks on how the society is dealing with the pandemic and how they are dealing with personal problems still connected to the crisis brought by the pandemic.

But one aspect that was not commonly noticed but is surely an effect brought by the crisis and the isolation due to community quarantine is in the mental health status of people, especially during times of crisis. Mental health refers to behavior of individuals that have experienced trauma. This has great impact on the emotional, psychological and sociological well-being of a person. What can be observable traits of a person suffering from mental health problems?

Minnesota School Social Welfare Association (MSSWA), (2020) reported that schools are a major setting for potential recognition of mental health problems.

According to MentalHealth.gov (2020) the following are warning signs for mental health disorders.

➢ Too much eating also termed as “pigging out” or “stress eating” or too much sleeping otherwise termed as “slumbering”
➢ Sudden change in social activities such as pulling away from people or groups of friends.
➢ Decreased energy for everyday activities
➢ Social apathy or feeling numb from what is happening around.
➢ Phantom pains or pains felt without physical, and medical causes.
➢ Excessive worrying or feeling helpless on a regular basis
➢ Developing vices such as smoking, drinking or worse drug addiction
➢ Aggressiveness and short temper manifested by yelling or fighting
➢ Unusual and frequent mood swings.
➢ Being forgetful, confused, or upset frequently
➢ Hearing voices
➢ Thinking of harming oneself

The last two signs are very alarming which needs urgent support.

Teachers might encounter or even experience these signs and not mind them. But doctors warn people not to ignore these signs for they can get worse. What can be done to overcome mental health problems?

One very good suggestion is to seek professional help from a medical and psychosocial practitioner is assessing the situation of an individual. Other helpful tips would be staying connected to people by having open and frequent communication, staying positive, getting active, getting enough sleep and developing coping mechanisms.

References: