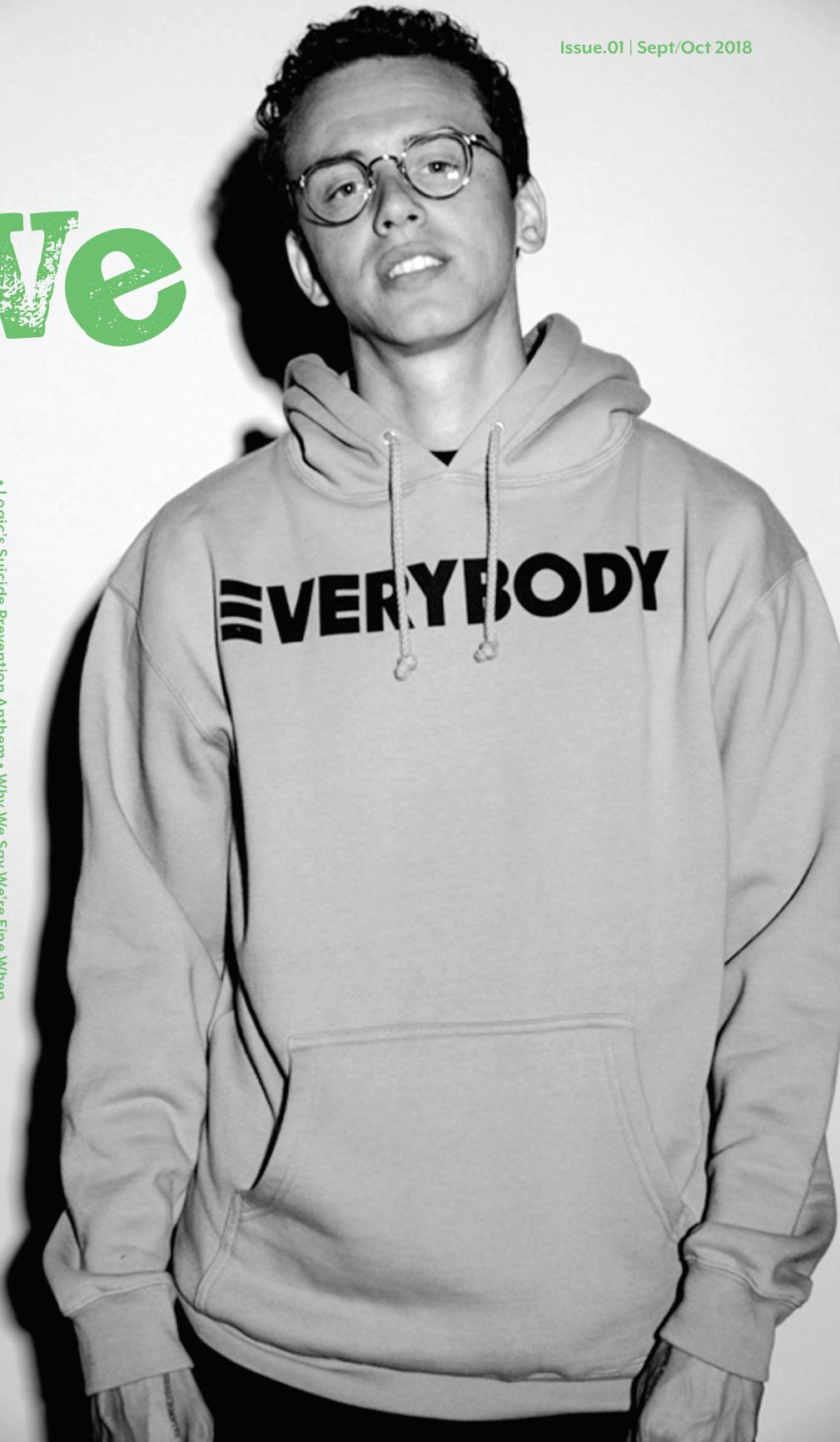


# We EVERYBODY

- Logic's Suicide Prevention Anthem • Why We Say We're Fine When We're Not by Grace Welsh
- How My Mental Illness Makes A Simple Thing Extremely Difficult by Alyssa Fusek
- How My School May Treats Mental and Physical Health Differently by Mel.



MYND



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# 20%

Nearly one in five teenagers in the United States lives, on a daily basis, with a diagnosable mental health issue.

Only one in five of those teens will get the help they need.



# 35%

of teenagers have an eating disorder

90% female

10% male



# 10%

have depression

# 1-800-273-8255

## by Logic



Track: 1-800-273-8255  
Artist: Logic feat. Alessia Cara, Khalid  
Production: 6ix, Logic  
Album: Everybody (2017, artwork above)

Logic on tour in Phoenix, AZ.

On “1-800-273-8255,” Logic shows that suicide is never the answer to anyone’s problems. He wants people to know that there is always help available, such as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, whose phone number is the title of this song. In fact, the song was released in partnership with the NSPL.

In an interview with Genius, Logic said that this song details the story of someone calling the NSPL wanting to commit suicide but after a conversation with the NSPL representative, the caller decides he wants to live.

On the day of its release, according to the statistics provided, the lifeline (NSPL) received the second-highest single day call volume ever at the time — nearly 4600 calls. The day after Logic (along with Alessia Cara and Khalid) performed the song at the VMAs, that record was broken again with over 5000 calls. Activity on the lifeline’s social media accounts is consistently now 50% higher than before the song was released. The song has also doubled google searches for the lifeline.

[Verse 1: Logic]  
 All this other shit I'm talkin' 'bout they think they know it  
 I've been praying for somebody to save me, no one's heroic  
 An my life don't even matter, I know it, I know it  
 I know I'm hurting deep down but can't show it  
 I never had a place to call my own  
 I never had a home, ain't nobody callin' my phone  
 Where you been? Where you at? What's on your mind?  
 They say every life precious but nobody care about mine.

[chorus]

[chorus]  
 I've been on the low  
 I been taking my time  
 I feel like I'm out of my mind  
 If feel like my life ain't mine  
 (Who can relate? Woo!)  
 I've been on the low  
 I been taking my time  
 I feel like I'm out of my mind  
 I feel like my life ain't mine  
 I want you to be alive  
 I want you to be alive  
 You don't gotta die today  
 You don't gotta die  
 I want you to be alive  
 I want you to be alive  
 You don't gotta die  
 Now lemme tell you why

[verse 2: Alessia Cara]  
 It's the very first breath  
 When your head's been drowning underwater  
 And it's the lightness in the air  
 When you're there  
 Chest to chest with a lover:  
 It's holding on, though the road's long  
 And seeing light in the darkest things  
 And when you stare at your reflection  
 Finally knowing who it is  
 I know that you'll thank God you did

## LYRICS



[Verse 3: Logic]

I know where you been, where you are, where you goin'  
 I know you're the reason I believe in life  
 What's the day without a little night?  
 I'm just tryna shed a little light  
 It can be hard  
 I can be so hard  
 But you gotta live right now  
 You got everything to give right now

[chorus]

[Verse 4/outro: Khalid]  
 Pain don't hurt the same, I know  
 The lane I travel feels alone  
 But I'm moving 'til my legs give out  
 And I see my tears melt in the snow  
 But I don't wanna cry  
 I don't wanna cry anymore  
 I wanna feel alive  
 I don't even wanna die anymore  
 Oh I don't wanna  
 I don't wanna  
 I don't even wanna die anymore



Logic, performing his suicide prevention anthem at the 2017 VMAs. (Getty Images)

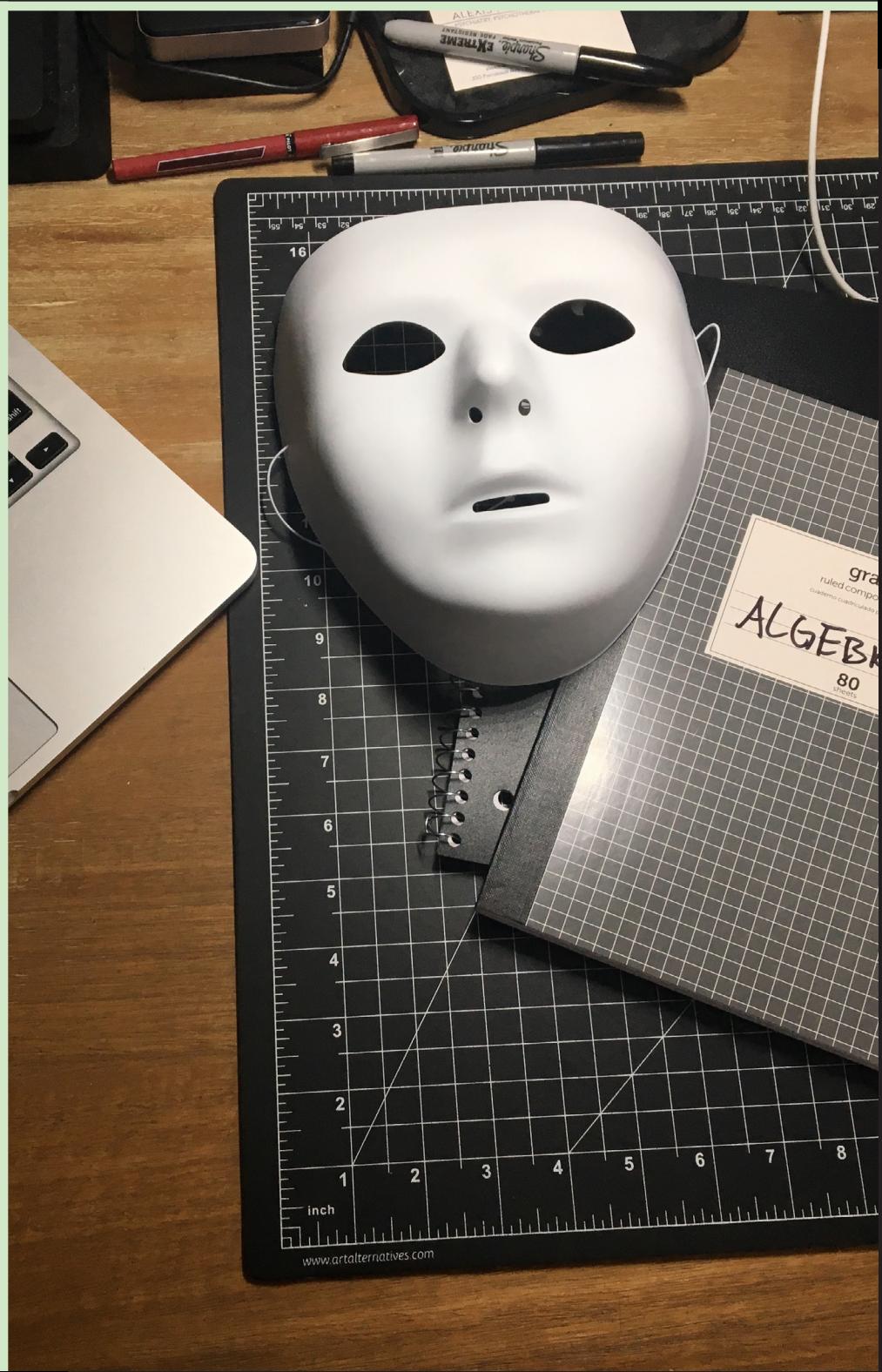


## IN THE ARTIST'S WORDS



So the first hook and verse is from the perspective of someone who is calling the hotline and they want to commit suicide. They want to end their life. When I jumped on a tour bus that started in Los Angeles, California and I ended in New York City and did a fan tour where I went to fan's houses and shared meals with them, hung out with them, played them my album before it came out. Them along with other people on tour, just fans that I met randomly, they've said things like, "Your music has saved my life. You've saved my life." And I was always like, "Aw so nice of you. Thanks." And I give them a hug and shit but in my mind, I'm like, "What the fuck?" And they're really serious. And they tat shit on their arms and get shit like lyrics that save their life and in my mind, I was like, "Man I wasn't even trying to save nobody's life." And then it hit me, the power that I have as an artist with a voice. I wasn't even trying to save your life. Now what can happen if I actually did?

And it's beyond just this song. It's the whole album. What can happen if I took myself out of my comfort zone and made a whole album about everybody and everybody's struggles including my own which is one I've never done. What if I silenced my own fear and I say, "I'm scared to talk about my race. I'm scared to talk about the state of this country but I'm going to do anyway. I'm going to persevere. Man, how many lives can I really save then?"



WHY WE SAY

"I'M

FINE"

WHEN WE'RE NOT

by Grace Welsh

When someone replies with the phrase, "I'm fine," when asked how they are, it's undoubtedly one of the biggest lies ever spoken – probably somewhere up there with, "I have read the terms and conditions," and, "There are sexy singles in your area".

So, let's be honest. How many times have you said, "I'm fine," when you really weren't? A few? Quite often? Too many times to count? Well, you're not alone.

So why do we feel this need to say all is well rather than just admitting we have a problem? What impact does this non-committal exchange have on our mental well-being and what can we do about it? For this, I propose three theories to why we overuse this lying phrase:

# THOSE ASKING FOR HELP ARE INCREDIBLY BRAVE.

## THEORY 1: WE'RE BEING POLITE

The simple response initiated by asking, "How are you?" is ritualistic; a social norm engrained that violating it is like prolonged eye-contact while eating a banana — you just don't do it. It's an automatic script of sorts; we've rehearsed our parts so well, we're basically Meryl Streep.

Checking in one on another with such superficial questioning and answering stops us from speaking openly and honestly about our mental health, as if we believe the other person isn't actually intent on finding out (or perhaps prepared for) the real answer.

Now, saying, "I'm fine," can just be... convenient. We liberally douse this phrase on each other in passing or in the supermarkets. I guess we must choose the moments when we allow our conversations to become more substantive. By returning meaning behind our words, we can seize vital opportunities to both seek and offer support.

## THEORY 2: WE WANT TO SEEM FINE

My wonderful Grandma says, "You can either sink or swim... and I choose to swim." Whilst there's something impressive about a person who solves their own problems, I think we're fooled by the misconception that if self-reliance is a virtue, requiring help is a weakness. So, we present a "brave face." We hide our vulnerabilities. We act like dogs who get stuck in things but pretend everything is OK. We precipitate a culture where we don't discuss our own mental health for fear of judgment.

"Am I the only one who feels this way?" Self-doubt like this clouds the reality that we often have common struggles. When I first acknowledged I was struggling with my mental health with my university personal supervisor, it kind of felt like that moment when someone asks the question in class you thought was too silly to ask aloud. Suddenly you realize you're not alone and the question wasn't silly at all.

Those asking for support are incredibly brave. But sometimes you can't quite initiate this first step alone. It wasn't until I fell off the uni treadmill following traumatic events that a friend contacted my personal supervisor on my behalf. Sometimes it's not "sink or swim," sometimes you need a lifeboat, and she was just that.

### THEORY 3: WE DON'T WANT TO BE A BURDEN

The phrase "I'm fine" can also act as the conversational equivalent of Crocs: swiftly able to shut down any chance of further discussion. Quite often, this defensive response results from a fear of worrying, burdening or annoying the listener.

Personally, I insist "I'm fine" in order to force myself to be the person I, and others, expect me to be (I'd like to think humorous and enthusiastic...). However, simulating these qualities and engaging in societies whilst depressed is grueling — sometimes I'd rather just hide away. Exhaustion and isolation is a high price to pay for thinking that I'm "pleasing" or "protecting" others. It took me a long time to realize I don't have to worry about pleasing or protecting others if I can have an honest conversation. People are more understanding than mental illness lets you believe.

There are SO many services and resources available that are incredibly willing to offer professional support and advice (e.g. counseling, student support, supervisors, campus GPs). But what friends DO have is time, care and compassion. You have the ability to reassure each other to be open and heard. You also have the capacity to learn what the other may want but won't ask for, and what they need but didn't know. Open ear? Cup o' tea? It's the little things too.



Overall, we must push for cultural change in terms of discussing our mental health. Speaking openly and honestly can begin by asking simply and genuinely how someone is. As humans, we experience a spectrum of emotions — chances are, you're probably not just "fine." It's about time it's okay to say we're not OK.

When was the last time you told someone you were fine when you weren't? Why did you tell them that? Is it something you do often?

*Writing, as well as drawing, has proved an incredibly useful tool in understanding our own mental health. This space is yours to write, draw, use as you wish to explore whatever thoughts or questions this prompt and the previous story bring to mind.*

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# HOW WAS YOUR DAY?

by Alyssa Fusek



My anxiety makes it  
hard to answer this  
common question.





When I was younger I didn't mind the question too much. As I grew older, and especially when I started high school, my social anxiety and depression became more debilitating, sucking the will out of me to talk about anything about myself. I didn't bother making an effort to communicate, something which frustrated and worried my parents and friends to no end. Even now, at the age of 24, that question triggers anxiety, fear and perhaps the strangest feeling of all, resignation.

There's a number of reasons why I have difficulty answering that one seemingly simple question. One is exhaustion. In high school, when my moods were more prone to fluctuate, my parents and friends thought I was angry at them or hiding something when I didn't respond to certain questions like, "How was your day?" My thought process usually was, Why would I want to relive a day usually full of anxiety and stress? The last thing I want to do is expend what little energy I have talking about my day, or even talking in general. Even on happy or productive days, I feel discouraged from sharing anything. The retelling drains me, so I try to say as little as possible.

IT'S A RELATIVELY INNOCUOUS QUESTION FOR MOST PEOPLE. FOR ME, HAVING DEALT WITH ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION FOR MOST OF MY LIFE, IT'S A QUESTION LOADED WITH NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS AND AN OVERWHELMING FEELING OF DREAD.

Another reason is futility. I have perfectionist tendencies, and when asked about my day, I think of all the details and events I experienced, but have no ability to describe in a manner that would do justice to them. If I can't accurately talk about my day, why even bother? Just giving a plain description versus a vivid one doesn't suit me either, so normally I just respond, "It was OK" and try to leave it at that.

NO MATTER HOW RIDICULOUS THOSE THOUGHTS ARE, MY DEPRESSION CONVINCES ME THOSE THOUGHTS ARE THE TRUTH, AND I ABIDE BY THEM EVEN WHEN I KNOW IT'S NOT RIGHT. IT'S A VICIOUS CYCLE OF OVERTHINKING, ONE I'M STILL TRYING TO RECKON WITH.

My chronic depression is the sole root of my feeling of resignation when faced with answering that question. I think, my day isn't worth talking about because I am worthless, and everything I do or experience is also worthless. I think, No one really cares how my day went. They're only asking out of common courtesy. No matter how ridiculous those thoughts are, my depression convinces me those thoughts are the truth, and I abide by them even when I know it's not right. It's irrational.

The fear that question evokes is tied to my social anxiety. If someone asks me that question first, and I respond, then I'm obligated to ask how that person's day was. What if that person drones on and on and I have to expend more energy in remaining engaged in the conversation? On the other hand, if I don't make any effort at all, that

person will think I'm being rude or disrespectful, when in reality, I'm just afraid. It's a vicious cycle of overthinking, one I'm still trying to reckon with.

As I've become more aware of my mental illnesses, I'd like to believe I've gotten better at answering that question, or at least more honest. Living with my partner of two years has certainly challenged me to participate in conversations outside my comfort zone. I think I'll always struggle with that question, but I'll keep making an effort to overcome the mental habits restraining me.

Do you also struggle with this question or any other socially common questions? How do you normally respond to this question? What helps you answer this or other questions?

It is extremely common for seemingly simple things (like the question 'how was your day?') to be distorted by anxiety into some kind of threat and amplified into something that seems bigger and more important than it really is. Do you experience this? When?

*Writing, as well as drawing, has proved an incredibly useful tool in understanding our own mental health. This space is yours to write, draw, use as you wish to explore whatever thoughts or questions this prompt and the previous story bring to mind.*

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*Why does my school treat  
mental and physical health  
so differently? — Mel W.*

# "But you're so happy all the time...

If I ever came down with the flu or even a common cold in high school, accommodations were made for me left and right. If I needed to skip one homework assignment, I was allowed to. If I needed to make up a test, that was fine. If I had to skip out on a group project while I recovered, it was understood. I was sick, after all, and sicknesses change one's schedule just a bit until they're better.

When my friend broke her leg, she was exempt from all of her required P.E. classes until she healed up. When another friend had to leave school due to constant migraines, he was granted accommodations until he could get his headaches under control.

But things change when the illnesses or injuries are mental. All of a sudden, accommodations begin to disappear. Help rides away in a dark, forlorn corner because mental illness is seen as intangible and difficult to measure.



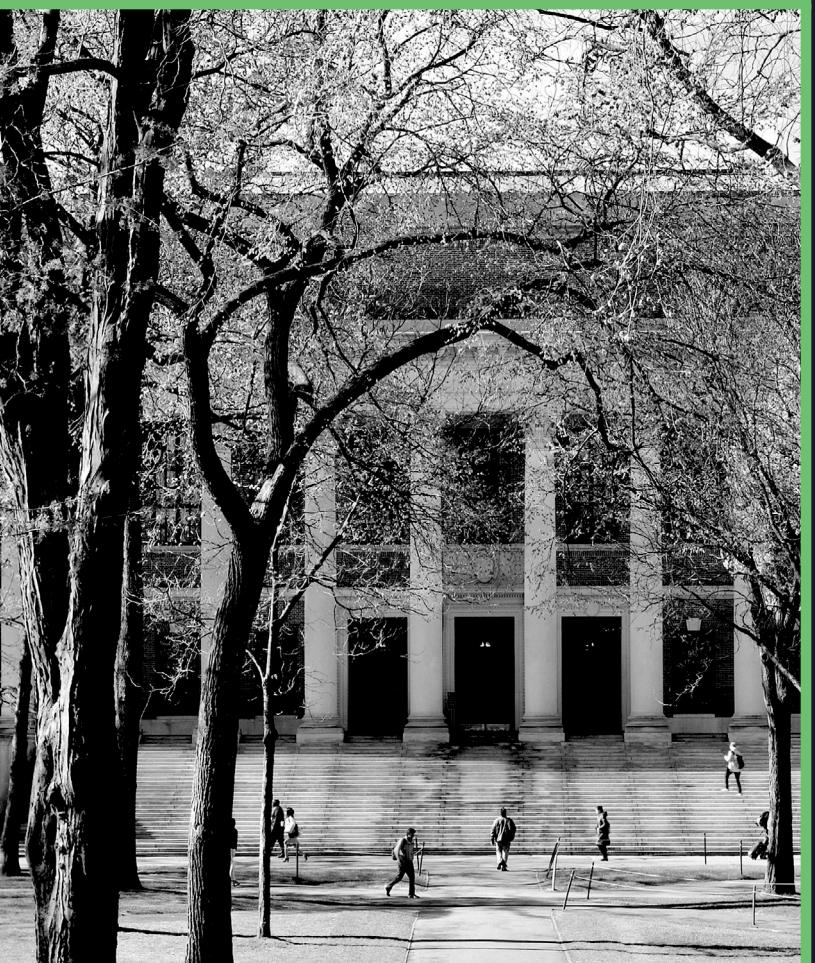
If there is one thing I am sure of, it is this: mental illnesses are experts in hiding in plain sight. My closest friends did not know about my struggles with anxiety, depression, and suicidal tendencies until about a year ago when I decided to tell them.

"But you're so happy all the time," one of my best friends said, "and you have straight A's; It doesn't seem like you're depressed at all."

This is the tricky thing about mental illness: it isn't a cut or bruise that can be seen with the naked eye. No amount of x-rays or physical checkups can identify it. Unfortunately, this makes it seem less real. When people cannot see the damage, it becomes harder to conceptualize.

*...and you have straight  
A's. It doesn't seem like  
you're depressed!"*

"We need awareness.  
We need to decrease  
the stigma until it's gone."



Even so, 300 million people are currently living with depression; and that's only one of the many mental illnesses people live with. Despite the massive call for increased investment in the research, understanding, and treatment of mental illnesses, only 35% of people with depression get treatment.

I am beyond fortunate to have had the opportunity to receive treatment. That treatment however, does not cure my illness. My illness still remains. It still strikes at unpredictable and inconvenient times, and I manage it as it comes. Managing it is what the treatment teaches but, beyond any medical treatment, we need awareness. We need to decrease the stigma until it's gone. I recently appealed for a math substitution at my university. I've grown up with a severe math aversion that causes terrible relapses of dangerous symptoms when faced with even the simplest of math problems. I even changed my major during my freshman year of college to be more proactive about taking care of my mental health and eliminate as many triggers as possible. When I finally got an appointment to discuss my appeal after nearly ten weeks of waiting, I was given three minutes to talk and then promptly told my request was "unreasonable," even with two doctor's letters outlining my concrete diagnosis.

I wasn't entirely surprised, unfortunately. Oftentimes, pre-judgements are made about people with mental illnesses before they can even make their case. These judgements typically make the claim people with mental illnesses are lazy, overreacting, or, as I was told, being unreasonable.

When my friend went to the health center at her university after experiencing severe panic attacks and suicidal thoughts, she was told that, "everyone has a rough time adjusting to college," and, "sometimes deep-breathing can help." When another friend attempted to speak with her high school teacher about the panic attacks she experienced during tests she was told that, "walking up and down a few flights of stairs before a test can help calm the nerves."

After graduating high school two years ago, I friended some of my old teachers on Facebook. About a year later, one of my former teachers posted a status about how he thought students with disability accommodations and good grades were "faking it." I was appalled, but not at all shocked. To this day, I wish I had written him a message explaining the often dual nature of mental illnesses. Having a disability accommodation does not mean that person will also have terrible grades, just as having a mental illness does not mean that person will be unable to function otherwise.

The way we view mental illness needs to change significantly. Though there are many people who are ready and willing to help, the lack of knowledge surrounding mental illness needs to be addressed.

# "We need to be ready to **LISTEN.**

*What matters is that we  
are open to the experiences  
of others."*

The question is: How? It's a valid question with various answers. At the end of the day, mental illnesses are not "one size fits all." There are many illnesses and, even within a single illness, the experience can vary greatly from person to person. The topic of mental illness is still a hard one to talk about. We've come far with acceptance and tolerance which is a wonderful thing, but stigma is still far to prevalent. Mental illness is not a weakness nor is it something to be romanticized. It is not something that should make you think any less of yourself, nor is it cool or edgy. Fancy prose does not make mental illness beautiful because at the end of the day, it is not. But it is also not something that should be dismissed or ignored because of the negative connotations that often get associated with it.

We do not need to "celebrate" mental illness to bring awareness. We simply need to acknowledge that it is real, share our own stories, when we're ready, and move forward in fostering an understanding environment.

We need to understand the way we talk also affects stigmas — for mental illness and other issues. Being moody does not equal havin bipolar disorder. Being sad is not the same as being depressed. Normal stresses or being nervous are not the same as having an anxiety disorder. Being excessively neat does not equal OCD. These may seem like little things that are thrown around as adjectives not intending to do any harm, yet they do harm nonetheless.

When stigmas decrease and awareness increases, we will be more apt to address the overwhelming case-by-case basis that mental illness presents itself on. We need to change how we view mental health and how we treat it on a daily basis. Rather than wonder how someone that appears successful could have committed suicide, we need to ask why he or she did it. Rather than question how a seemingly happy individual could be depressed we need to look for ways to help them. Whether we experience mental illness ourselves, know someone who has, or have never encountered mental illness once in our lives doesn't matter; we need to be ready to listen. What matters is that we are open to the experiences of others, we withhold judgements and foster compassion and the desire to change. Because change is what we need.

Unfortunately, it's very common for physical health to be prioritized over mental health. How has this been present in your life? Have your mental health struggles ever been trivialized by others? Have you ever found yourself being the one putting physical health before mental?

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# Resources

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