



Brought to you by the Holy Family Health Ministry

May is mental health awareness month



Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of. It is a medical problem, just like heart disease or diabetes. **Mental illnesses** are health conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking or behavior (or a combination of these). Mental illnesses are associated with distress and/or problems functioning in social, work or family activities.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. This is a time to share the importance of mental health and wellness, and to celebrate recovery from mental illness.

If you are concerned about your mental health or about someone you know, **call, chat, or text 988**. This 24 hour a day, 7 day a week lifeline provides free and confidential support in English, Spanish and to people who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Go to **FindSupport.gov** for issues with mental health, drugs, or alcohol. The website provides information (in Spanish and English) on finding health care or support, how to cope, learn about treatment and how to pay for treatment, how to help someone, and how to get help now.

Whether we share resources, encourage others to seek help, or simply are there for someone when they need us, we instill hope and can help others to reach out when they need to most.

This month, talk with your loved ones. Talking about mental health promotes acceptance and encourages people to seek help.





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What if someone talks to you about their mental health?

- **Listen.** Let them finish their sentences and complete thoughts without interrupting. After they have finished you can respond.
- **Let them know if you understand.** Make sure you don't switch the topic of conversation to your struggles though; focus on their needs.
- **Take them seriously.** Try not to respond with statements that minimize how they are feeling or what they are going through, such as, "You're just having a bad week," or "I'm sure it's nothing."
- **Make yourself available to talk again if needed.**
- **Don't turn what you've been told into gossip.**
- **Consider suggesting contact with a mental health professional.**

Virgin Islands Department of Mental Health contacts:

St. Croix: (340) 773-2323; St. Thomas: (340) 774-4888;

St. John Community Crisis Center: (340) 693-7233

Sources: <https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health-awareness-month>;

<https://mhanational.org/time-talk-tips-talking-about-your-mental-health>;

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7

