

# Activity Plan



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NAME OF THE ACTIVITY:

MYTHS VS FACTS

## OVERVIEW

THIS SESSION INVITES PARTICIPANTS TO CRITICALLY EXAMINE COMMON MENTAL HEALTH MYTHS THROUGH A QUIZ, COLLABORATIVE GROUP RESEARCH AND OPEN DISCUSSION, FOSTERING AWARENESS AND CHALLENGING MISINFORMATION.

## OBJECTIVES:

TO HELP PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFY AND DEBUNK MENTAL HEALTH MYTHS, UNDERSTAND THEIR HARMFUL IMPACT, AND GAIN TOOLS TO CHALLENGE STIGMA IN EVERYDAY CONVERSATIONS.

## COMPLEXITY AND TIME:

LEVEL 1 90 MINUTES TOTAL.

## GROUP SIZE:

AROUND 30

## THEMES ADDRESSED:

MENTAL HEALTH  
STIGMA

## TARGET GROUP:

YOUNG ADULT FROM 18-30 YEAR

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## MATERIALS:

QUIZ  
LIST OF MYTHS  
PAPERS  
PEN  
MARKERS

## RESOURCES:

IDEAS FOR MYTHS AND FACTS QUIZ:  
[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGM-85RvgI/8AVVmlVFThixMKEfxF-QDA/edit?utm\\_content=DAGM-85RvgI&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGM-85RvgI/8AVVmlVFThixMKEfxF-QDA/edit?utm_content=DAGM-85RvgI&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)

## INSTRUCTIONS:

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SESSION, YOU WILL ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS IN A SHORT QUIZ ABOUT MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH, WHERE PARTICIPANTS NEED TO RECOGNIZE WHICH IS WHICH. AFTER EACH MYTH YOU WILL PROVIDE THEM WITH A FACT. (WRITTEN IN THE RESOURCES PART)

THEN, PARTICIPANTS WILL ENGAGE IN THE MYTHBUSTERS GROUP CHALLENGE. THE GROUP WILL BE DIVIDED INTO INTERNATIONAL GROUPS, AND EACH GROUP WILL RECEIVE A COMMON MENTAL HEALTH MYTH TO INVESTIGATE. THEIR TASK WILL BE TO ANALYZE THE STATEMENT, DISCUSS THEIR INITIAL THOUGHTS, RESEARCH CREDIBLE SOURCES, AND PREPARE A SHORT EXPLANATION TO DEBUNK THE MYTH.

MYTHS THEY WILL GET:

- MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES ARE A WESTERN CONCEPT AND DON' T AFFECT OTHER CULTURES
- IF YOU CAN GO TO WORK OR SCHOOL, YOU CAN' T BE SERIOUSLY MENTALLY ILL
- PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS ARE OFTEN VIOLENT OR DANGEROUS
- YOU' RE EITHER MENTALLY HEALTHY OR MENTALLY ILL, THERE' S NO IN-BETWEEN
- ANTIDEPRESSANTS CHANGE YOUR PERSONALITY OR MAKE YOU EMOTIONALLY NUMB
- ADDICTION IS A CHOICE, NOT A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE
- YOU NEED A DIAGNOSIS TO VALIDATE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES
- PEOPLE EXAGGERATE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS FOR ATTENTION ON SOCIAL MEDIA
- CHILDREN ARE TOO YOUNG TO EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES
- TALKING ABOUT SUICIDE MAKES PEOPLE MORE LIKELY TO ATTEMPT IT

EACH GROUP WILL ANSWER FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- “WHY DO PEOPLE BELIEVE THIS MYTH?”
- “WHAT EVIDENCE CAN DISPROVE IT?”
- “HOW DOES BELIEVING THIS MYTH IMPACT PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES?”

AFTER COMPLETING THEIR RESEARCH, THE GROUPS WILL PRESENT THEIR FINDINGS TO THE WHOLE GROUP. EACH TEAM WILL HAVE 2-3 MINUTES TO SHARE THEIR MYTHS, THE FACTS THEY DISCOVERED AND WHY THE MYTH IS HARMFUL.

AFTER EACH PRESENTATION, YOU WILL GUIDE A SHORT DISCUSSION, ASKING QUESTIONS SUCH AS:

- “HAVE YOU HEARD THIS MYTH BEFORE?”
- “WHERE DO YOU THINK THESE MISCONCEPTIONS COME FROM?”
- “HOW CAN WE CHALLENGE THESE MYTHS IN EVERYDAY CONVERSATIONS?”

THIS OPEN DISCUSSION FORMAT ALLOWS FOR SHARED LEARNING AND HELPS PARTICIPANTS THINK CRITICALLY ABOUT THE IMPACT OF MISINFORMATION ON MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA. AT THE END, EACH PERSON WILL WRITE DOWN ONE MYTH THEY PREVIOUSLY BELIEVED BUT NOW UNDERSTAND DIFFERENTLY AND ONE ACTION THEY WILL TAKE TO CORRECT MENTAL HEALTH MYTHS IN THEIR DAILY LIVES

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## DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION:

“WHICH MYTH SURPRISED YOU THE MOST? WHY DO YOU THINK YOU (OR OTHERS) BELIEVED IT BEFORE?”

“HOW DO MENTAL HEALTH MYTHS SHAPE THE WAY WE TREAT PEOPLE STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES?”

“HAVE YOU EVER UNCONSCIOUSLY REINFORCED A MENTAL HEALTH MYTH? HOW DID TODAY’S SESSION CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE?”

“WHY DO YOU THINK SOME MYTHS PERSIST EVEN WHEN SCIENCE PROVES THEM WRONG?”

“IS THERE EVER A TIME WHEN A MENTAL HEALTH MYTH COULD BE BENEFICIAL OR PROTECTIVE?”

“WHAT’S THE BIGGEST BARRIER TO CHALLENGING MENTAL HEALTH MYTHS IN DAILY LIFE? HOW CAN WE OVERCOME IT?”

“IF YOU COULD CORRECT ONLY ONE MYTH IN SOCIETY TODAY, WHICH ONE WOULD IT BE AND WHY?”

## TIPS FOR FACILITATOR

CREATE A QUIZ WITH MYTHS PROVIDED IN THE RESOURCES PART OR WITH THE ONES YOU FIND SUITABLE, SOME MYTHS ARE EASY TO DETECT AND SOME ARE MORE CHALLENGING, SO, NATURALLY, SOME PARTICIPANTS WILL HAVE A STRONG OPINION ABOUT SOME MYTHS. THE POINT IS NOT TO SHUT THEM DOWN BUT TO CHALLENGE THEIR BELIEFS. YOU CAN ASK WHAT MAKES THEM THINK THAT, WHERE THESE IDEAS COME FROM OR HOW THEY THINK THIS BELIEF CAN IMPACT SOMEBODY STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO PREPARE FOR MISINFORMATION. PARTICIPANTS MIGHT SHARE SOMETHING THEY THINK IS A FACT, BUT IT’S NOT. IN THAT CASE, DON’T TELL THEM IT’S WRONG BUT RATHER TO RESEARCH TOGETHER.

## FOLLOW UP

ENCOURAGE PARTICIPANTS TO KEEP TRACK OF MYTHS THEY HEAR IN THEIR COMMUNITIES AND HOW THEY TRIED TO BREAK THEM IN CONVERSATION WITH THEIR FAMILY, FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES, ETC. A MONTH AFTER THE ACTIVITY, THEY SHOULD HAVE A SOLID LIST AND THEY WILL REALIZE HOW MANY MYTHS ARE AROUND US, BUT ALSO HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO BREAK THEM AND PROVIDE OTHERS WITH SCIENCE-PROVED INFORMATION.