



**CLINICAL PERSPECTIVES ON
THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE
OF ANXIETY, DEPRESSION
AND TRAUMA**

Caregiver Day

FIRDAY, 10/16/2026



Kevin, Erika, and Kassius,
*Parent Enrichment Clients
Altadena Residents*

Learning Objectives

- 1. Identify the importance of treating mental illness**
- 2. Describe depression, anxiety and trauma**
- 3. Identify one key factor contributing to the recovery**



Agenda/Contents

TWC – WHO WE ARE

WHAT IS MENTAL ILLNESS

DEFINING DEPRESSION, ANXIETY AND TRAUMA

THE EXPERIENCE

BARRIERS

THE RECOVERY

STRESS BUCKET

DEALING WITH CHANGE



*We empower
families towards
healing, health,
and homes.*



**MENTAL
HEALTH**



**FAMILY
HOUSING**



**PARENT
ENRICHMENT**



**NUTRITION
EDUCATION**



Jenesis,
Child of Family Housing client

MENTAL HEALTH

We address behavioral challenges and trauma in children by helping them develop coping skills and heal from distress.

Melissa, Parent of Ruben,
Mental Health clients
Whittier Residents



1,400+
families served

31,000+
therapy hours
completed

55%
of all anxiety/
depression
clients reported
improvement

63%
of clients met treatment goals for
symptoms such as temper tantrums,
cutting/self-harm, fighting with siblings,
running away, suicidal ideation, self-
isolation, school suspensions, and more

WHAT IS A MENTAL ILLNESS

A medical condition that changes how a person thinks, feels and behaves

- It makes it difficult to handle daily life
- It requires ongoing clinical care
- Just like chronic physical conditions, recovery is possible
- It is common to keep it from those around you out of fear of judgement/criticism

Anxiety, Depression & Trauma

Clinical illness not a personal weakness

Depression: Focusing too much on things that have already taken place

Anxiety: Focusing too much on things that have not taken place

Trauma: A very confusing event that caused injury or threat of injury to the self or to others.



The Experience

How would you describe the clinical presentation of clients with...

How would you describe the behaviors that clients with...

How would you describe the impact on parents when their loved one experiences...



Barriers

What are some of the challenges clients experience during treatment

What are some of the challenges parents have in helping their loved one during treatment



The Recovery

How to instill hope for a brighter day for clients and their loved ones?

What helps re-instill hope when relapse happens?



Impact of Stress



Dealing with Change

Our mental health is like the weather...EVER CHANGING

It all depends on how we are thinking and feeling about what is happening in our lives

There are lots of things that can influence our emotional or mental health for the better...

And sometimes for the worst.



THANK YOU

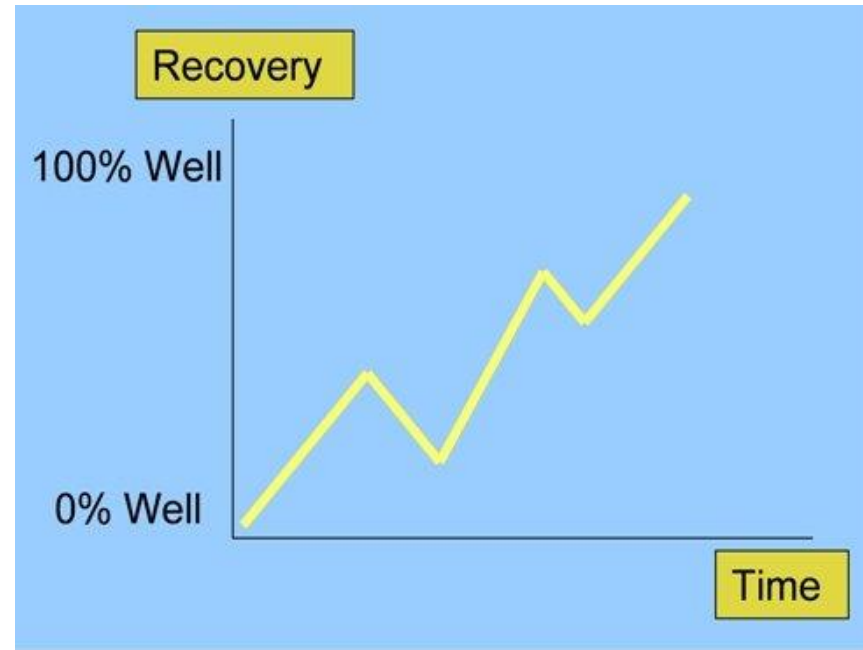


Family Guidelines

Principles of family interaction
based on brain biology

Family Guidelines

GO SLOW



Family Guidelines

Keep it cool



Avoid over-loading.

Reduce background noise; have only one conversation going at a time

When interactions get emotionally heated, processing information is difficult.

Family Guidelines

Give each other space



Try not to nag

Pay attention, don't hover

Allowing alone time is still caring and care-taking

Family Guidelines

Observe limits



Everyone needs to know what rules are. A few good rules keep things clear.

Family Guidelines

Ignore What You Can't Change

Let some things slide, just not violence
If you don't agree with certain ideas change the subject.

Don't dwell.



Family Guidelines

Keep it simple

Say what you have to say

- Clearly
- Calmly
- Positively



Family Guidelines

Carry on business as usual

Re-establish family routines, stay in touch with family and friends



Family Guidelines

Consider Using Medication

Medication can improve symptoms and protect your future.

- Help can take many shapes and forms
- A little goes a long way
- Don't stop medication when you begin to feel better
- Work with your doctor to find the right medication for you
- Openly share/communicate symptoms and experiences



Family Guidelines

Consider not using street drugs or alcohol

Marijuana, hallucinogens, cocaine, and amphetamines (meth/speed), make symptoms worsen and interfere with medication effectiveness.

Avoid over-the-counter stimulants like pseudoephedrine, diet pills.

Reduce nicotine and caffeine, as hard as it might be.



Family Guidelines

Attend to early warning signs

Know your triggers: know your warning signs and which situations to avoid (at least in the short-term)



Family Guidelines

Lower expectations, temporarily

Use a personal yardstick. Compare this month to last month, rather than to siblings, peers or friends.

Take 2 classes instead of 4



Family Guidelines

Solve problems step-by-step

Make changes gradually.

Work on one thing at a time.



Family Guidelines

- 1. Go slow**
- 2. Keep it cool**
- 3. Give each other space**
- 4. Observe limits**
- 5. Ignore what you can't change**
- 6. Keep it simple**
- 7. Carry on business as usual**
- 8. Consider medication use**
- 9. Consider not using drugs and alcohol**
- 10. Attend to early warning signs**
- 11. Lower expectations temporarily**
- 12. Solve problems step by step**