



Mental Health

A CLARION CALL

BY MR. ISAAC MFUM,
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It is important to acknowledge that every normal human being strives for value of life, in other words quality life. I wish to inform you that this laudable ambition cannot be achieved without good mental health.

We fail to recognize that our mental faculty or cognitive functions is the supreme controller of all our activities. Yet it is undeniable that our mental health care is seriously marginalized or relegated to the background.

The reason you and I don't know why could be due to:
(1) inadequate funding and (2) the fact that treatment of mental illness is expensive. The drugs are expensive and treatment is lengthy. Nevertheless there are ways by which we can reduce cost if we are serious as a people.

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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE- CHANCELLOR

I am happy to make a modest contribution to this maiden issue of the CU Library Newsletter.

First, I'd like to congratulate Mrs. Francisca Yaba Asante and her team for the vision and foresight to initiate this communication piece.

It is very much in keeping with the vim with which they have approached many of the issues affecting the Library Services at CU. They have



cont. in pg 2

MESSAGE FROM THE IN-CHARGE, LIBRARY DIRECTORATE



MRS FRANCISCA YABA ASANTE, In-Charge, CU Library Directorate

We give God all the glory for making it possible for us to witness the birth of the maiden edition of the Central University Library Newsletter (The CULIN). The dream has finally been a reality.

The main objective of this Newsletter is to educate the University Community about contemporary issues and bring out other matters that border on the total well-being of our varied users. One such

key issue that is being addressed globally is the SDG 3.4 which is about mental health and total well-being, which is the focus of this maiden edition of The CULIN.

According to Rose, Crystal et al. 2015, academic libraries have always supported learning and research, but now they have a new and very essential role to play as part of a broader campus culture that promotes and fosters wellness. In addition to the traditional roles of providing reference and instructional support, they are uniquely positioned to offer services that may alleviate the anxiety and stress many students are experiencing. The library is where students spend a great deal of time. Libraries are open in the evening and on weekends when many other departments on campus are not. Students frequent the library in greater numbers at the end of the semester and during exams, a time when they are likely experiencing the highest levels of stress and anxiety, making it an ideal location for wellness support.

Central University Libraries are a one stop center for all students and staff on campus to learn and destress. Over the past twenty-four (24) years, the Library staff have interacted with various groups of students and realised that the Library must take a very keen interest in the mental health and total well-being of our users, hence the focus of this maiden edition of the Newsletter.

The Library Directorate believes that once our users are in the right state of mind, they can effectively use and enjoy our services and resources. To this end, the Directorate has made available a Motivational Corner with recreational and motivational books and daily newspapers in all the libraries to enable our users to destress from the normal routine of academic learning and research. Some of these books can be borrowed and returned later. The Directorate has also relaxed some of the traditional rules such as: "No drinking of water in the library" and is considering other initiatives, all in a bid to enhance users' soundness of mind and well-being.

We hope that this maiden Newsletter and the subsequent ones would be of great support to our users and impact their lives greatly.

Long Live Central University. Long live Central University Libraries and Long live The CULIN.

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR *cont.*

organised or participated in various Library Week celebrations, proactively seeking sponsorship support for these events.

Second, CU's Library Services have done well to function under very difficult resource circumstances. The CU Library has served students and faculty especially during the times leading up to exams when they work very late hours keeping our libraries open. I commend them.

The repository, information, multimedia services that libraries provide in connecting people to people, offering knowledge/information services, facilitating e-knowledge are fundamental to the work of higher education institutions.

As this newsletter launches, I urge the editors to avert their efforts to addressing innovative student friendly topics and initiatives. I also would like the Newsletter to serve as a moral compass to raise awareness about and against questionable practices in the information world. I am referring to such practices as plagiarism, dishonest privileged use of stored dissertations, dis/misinformation fostered by availability of web resources. I am also referring to posting and storage of inappropriate material and the use of social media tools to subvert the individuality and/or innocent youthfulness of children and young adults.

The chosen theme on Mental Health is timely. From the ravages of COVID-19 to challenges in economic sustenance, multiple pressures on individuals, emotional issues of young people, families, unemployment to wars and rumours of wars, there are many things that erode mental health and the sense of stability of one's life. Information and ideas about mental health are therefore welcome.

CU's Library Newsletter must be a tool for both light and deep thinking and must help the CU community connect with the best that can be offered in the information world.

The management of the University stands firm to offer its support to see the Newsletter and the Library Services grow and deepen its professional support to all within and in the environs of all our three campuses.

*Professor Bill Pupilampu
Vice Chancellor
March 2022*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRO-VICE CHANCELLOR



I wish to congratulate the Central University library for bringing out their first ever Newsletter. This Newsletter is a testimony of the importance Central University attaches to the provision of quality teaching and learning. The university commends the efforts of all those who worked tirelessly to bring the Newsletter into fruition. I look forward to reading about the various activities, achievements, and articles on contemporary issues in the Newsletter. Congratulations to the editorial team and I wish you luck in your future endeavours.

Professor John Ofosu-Anim
Pro -Vice Chancellor (Academic)

FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES, CENTRAL UNIVERSITY, MIOTSO

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY NEWSLETTER (CULIN) MAIDEN EDITION

25th September 2015, the United Nations adopted and launched 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) The 175 nation states and stakeholders across the world were invited to achieve these goals before 2030. These ambitious SDGs include no poverty (SDG 1), zero hunger (SDG 2), good health and well-being (SDG 3), quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), climate action (SDG 13), life below water (SDG 14), life on land (SDG 15), peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16) and partnerships for the goals (SDG 17) <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

The goals are stated in simple short statements that belie the challenges that attend their achievement. For each goal several 'measurable targets' are set that allow for the performance of different states and stakeholders to be monitored and evaluated.

The Central University Library Services has decided to put out a Newsletter (CULIN). This

Maiden Edition is dedicated to the highlighting SDG 3 of the

United Nations

Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

The School (of Medicine and Health Sciences) congratulates the Central University Library Services on the publication of the maiden CULIN (Central University Library Newsletter) and drawing the attention of the University community and the public to the Good and Well-being.



Prof. Richard Apatu
Dean, School of Medicine and Health Sciences
Central University, Miotso

GOODWILL MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARIAN OF GHANA INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (GIMPA)

Academic libraries are changing faster than at any time in their history. The Academic Library of the 21st century has to be distinguished by the scope of the quality of its service programmes, calibre of Staff, response to the ever-changing academic environment, the worth of its materials to potential users and the diversity of user-centred activities they engage in for the benefit of their clientele.

It has been observed that Central University Library has, over the years, been working hard to build on the library's traditional strengths, inject quality leadership and innovation in their workflow, identify and advance the use of emerging technologies, making Central University become a leader in the provision of library services in a reputable dynamic learning environment.

On the occasion of the celebration of their Library Week 2022, I wish to commend Mrs Francisca Yaba Asante; the indefatigable University Librarian, her very hard working and committed Staff and the very supportive Management of the University for making this year's celebrations very successful. This Library has no doubt made tremendous impact in the university community and beyond, and this time round it has drawn very much needed attention to the issue of mental health, and they managed to bring in The President of the Ghana Psychological Association as the Guest Speaker. In addition, a very informative newsletter has been put together for launching. I pat them on the shoulder and I wish to encourage them to soar even higher up the sky. Central University is really the place "where dreams are born",

and it will go beyond that to be a place where dreams are also lived. Central University Library is a force to reckon with! More grease to your elbows!



Adolph K. Agbeh
Institute Librarian, GIMPA

MENTAL HEALTH: THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY

Mental health must be acknowledged as a public health issue. Mental Health (MH) includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. Our mental health is linked to how we think, feel and behave. Mental Health is universal and an important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Any of us could experience MH problems at any point in our lives. What could be the overall consequence of succumbing to mental health challenges?

"A poor mental health affects the individual, family and friends of the individual and impacts on the entire society". Poor mental health can affect the ability to live a fulfilling life and carry on with normal activities of life being it at school, work, and familial responsibilities.

We all have a responsibility to prevent and promote healthy mental health. It is a collective responsibility we have. It is for this reason I would like to commend the management of CU and the Organizers of this programme for inviting all Librarians to support the push for mental



Dr. Collins Badu Agyeman
President of Ghana Psychological Association

health and well-being awareness. Your theme – Mental Health: The Role of the Library is very apt. Your initiative to link SDG Goal 3 and 4 – Good Health & Well-being and Quality Education – to the theme is highly commendable.

The following situations/observations among the youth and students certainly must invite us to action so as to prioritize students/youth-related mental health concerns:

- Increase number of disclosures of mental health problems
- Increase demand for university services
- Suicide and self-harm research in Ghana & the world (e.g. about 417 people attempted suicide between January and June 2021 [GHS, 2021]; 1 in 10 adults in rural communities think about taking their own lives; Similarly, nearly 3 in 10 junior high school students in Ghana report attempting suicide in the past 12 months, while 2 out of 10 senior high school students report attempting suicide during the past 12 months (Osafo et al., 2020).
- Attrition rate, drop outs, deferments etc
- Cases of abuse and bullying
- Behavioural addition among students (e.g. betting, watching of pornography, counter-productive use of internet and addiction
- Substance abuse (especially the abuse of aphrodisiacs, tramadol in Ghana etc)
- Prevalent eating disorders among students
- Increased Levels of Anxiety (especially around interim and final exams periods.
- Etc.....

Indeed Mental Health problems can affect many areas of a students' lives. Students' quality of life, academic achievement, physical health and overall satisfaction with the university-level experience and could negatively affect relationship with school mates, friends, family and relevant others. It is therefore appropriate to dilate on the theme for CU's Library Week Celebration.

The visionary leader who set up CU is himself an advocate for Mental Health. He has over the years supported the shaping of people and their moral-fibre and the urge to resort to afro-cultural (including religious) coping mechanisms to enhance peoples' sense of purpose in life. Second, the Vice Chancellor of CU is himself a Psychologist and a senior colleague. He has supported the legal structure that shapes psychology as a field of study and practice. CU runs psychology with social work, an indication that mental part is certainly part of your DNA. I am therefore not surprised of the love you have for selecting this theme.

The Library has been described as the **"heart or engine of every University"**. The school library play a critical role in supporting the educational and professional training of students. Students spend inordinate amount of time in critical and stressful times such as interim assessments and exams periods. Not much is known of the myriads of ways the Library and all Librarians can address young people's mental health and well-being needs.

Library staff provide non-medicalised support. Such as maintaining a collection of self-help literature, course guides provided by the CU's well-being/wellness service.

Librarians should create a collaborative and supportive environment through mapping user experience and understanding their needs. Small details, such as supportive messages on CU's Library websites, white/notice boards and random acts of kindness (tea-bags and notes hidden in book shelves) go a long way with our students.

In addition, librarians should operate as safe spaces for students. Students need safe spaces that foster a sense of well-being. Within the school, researchers have become interested in how the school library offers a unique safe space. The physical environment is an enabling well-being factor, and creation of a physical environment in the library that is conducive to the fostering of student safety and comfort can support student well-being. Activities rooted in common understandings and capabilities of a library, e.g., as a collection and a space help improve mental health. In some institutions, a wide range of activities (e.g., inspirational quotes) can be used.

Moreover, librarians should promote and resource mental health and well-being initiatives. The school librarians can work collaboratively with school counsellors to resource them with educational materials focused on mental health and well-being issues. School libraries can be important resources for identifying and building young peoples' digital health literacy skills, which can support them to access resources in mental health and well-being. The collaboration between the librarians and the wellness team could foster mutual training on how to identify needs of students and refer students to for help.

Furthermore, librarians should support and promote biblio-therapeutic practices and reading for pleasure. Bibliotherapy which is "literally 'healing through books'", can help students deal with issues challenging their mental health and well-being from a safe distance. Both reading for pleasure and biblio-therapeutic practices can have a positive impact on student mental health, though the role of libraries in facilitating or conferring these benefits has not been foregrounded in much of the research in this area. Research suggests that positive attitudes toward reading may be associated with improved mental well-being. School librarians can also support students to engage with literature in meaningful and healing ways.

Providing self-help information and resources, which will help, raise awareness of mental health issues, counter stigma and offer support to pupils. You have a beautiful opportunity to recommend stretch breaks, chat and walk areas in and around the library locations. I recommend that all of you librarians, reflect on the beautiful work of the Universities UK (UUK, 2017) policy report known as Stepchange Framework. Audit this document, make deductive notes and adapt proposals worth recommending to CU Management for implementation. I urge CU Management to engage the services of a licensed psychologist to support the set-up and development of CU's career, wellness and counselling unit. This unit will not only serve the students but the entire CU community.

I would like to conclude by commending you all and charging you to prioritize your well-being and encouraging others to do so. If the Library is said to be the "minds hospital", then let us promote mental health and well-being awareness with the opportunities library (physical or digital) space offers.

May God bless you all.

Thank you.

Mental Health: a clarion call

What is Mental Health?

Mental health can be defined as the capacity or ability to adapt and adjust to the stresses of our everyday living. It is estimated that one (1) person out of every three (3) people has an emotional or mental health challenge.

Characteristics

Let me cite you a few characteristics of good mental health.

1. Ability to enjoy normative life activities for example, enjoy heterosexual relationship not homosexuality or lesbianism.
2. Adapt successfully to life changes.
3. Set realistic goals.
4. Solve problems.
5. Have satisfying working relationships.
6. Maintain interpersonal relationship

There are many different types of mental illnesses. Mental illness may be minor or major (severe). No matter the type, there is a lot we can do to help these our unfortunate brothers and sisters who through no fault of theirs are suffering from mental illness.

I crave your indulgence to take a look at our streets today; these our brothers and sisters roam the streets as vagrants. They constitute a serious security risk to the population especially to our children who commute to and from school every day. Apart from that, they (vagrants) litter our streets. Some could be pyromaniacs, i.e. they can set buildings and installations on fire, yet we talk about promoting our tourism industry. This is a serious anomaly which, with very little effort, can be corrected.

The single most important bane affecting our mental health care is STIGMA. These unfortunate victims are so stigmatized that even family members reject them. The mentally ill persons even when they recover from the condition, are not accepted by society but when we are sick with malaria and we recover we are readily accepted. Why?

It is significant to mention that mental illness can be treated, controlled or even cured. It is also not infectious. There is therefore no reason for the stigmatization.

Recommendation

In the short term, the relevant agencies like Social Welfare, Mental Health Authority, Ghana Health Service and the Ministry of Health must be empowered to collaborate to strategize and rid our streets of these unfortunate victims, treat, do contact tracing and reunite them with their families and eventually reintegrate them into society.

In the medium term, Rehabilitation and Day Centres should be established to assist them acquire some skills and maintain their stability. In the long term, continuous health education programmes be mounted and training of more mental health



professionals be encouraged. All these can be achieved through a viable community mental health programme. Our libraries should continue to help mount outreach programmes and also stock latest books on mental health to aid research work.

Conclusion

To conclude, I would like to say that mental illness is no respecter of persons. It can affect anybody irrespective of your socio-economic status. It is also pertinent to note that mental illness is the only condition that can paralyze you physically, emotionally and socio-economically, thus affecting the economic and manpower status of the nation.

I take advantage of this forum to make a passionate appeal to the government, well-meaning Ghanaians, philanthropists, churches, mosques and all recognized organizations to join hands to confront and defeat this menace.



PROMOTING GOOD MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING through Mental Health Care and Forgiveness Therapy

Systematic Review By: Dr. Doris E. Yalley, Lecturer, Central University

Introduction/Background

The SDGs are a set of 17 inter-connected goals that set the ground for the new SDGs and the global development agenda spanning 2015-2030. This paper focuses on SDG 3- which seeks to guarantee healthy lives and well-being for all people of all ages. Globally, existing mental health care systems are found to be unappreciable and unsustainable (Kpobi, Swartz and Ofori-Atta, 2018; Roberts, Mogan and Asare 2014). Mental health disorders account for about 13% of total global disease burden, with projections for growth up to 15% by the end of 2030 (Murray, Vos, Lozano, Naghavi, Flaxmana...Lopez, 2012).

It is estimated that some 450 million people do suffer mental disorders around the world, with 25% of the world's population experiencing psychological disorders at some point in their lives (WHO, 2017). Despite the rising incidence of mental disease cases, and well-being issues, the needed attention is lacking globally, this is coupled with very limited support from government and private entities, compared to other global diseases.

The Christian churches, since their inception, have been active players in the general health care delivery system in Ghana (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2020; Grieve & Olivier, 2018). But in terms of mental health, these faith-based organizations (Christian churches) have not played any significant role, in that area of health care, perhaps due to the bio-medical nature of mental healthcare delivery (Akadinma et al., 2020). The trend however, seems to be changing now, especially in the area of mental health therapies through marital counselling (Antonsen, 2003; Giblin, 2004).

Ghana's Mental Health System and Situation in Context

In Ghana religious therapy plays a major role in helping people negotiate everyday problems, particularly mental and well-being problems, which make many city dwellers turn to this source of support available in their churches or mosques. In addition to providing guidance on religious matters, religious counselling services (i.e., Christian counselling and therapy) provide support and advice to those who need help in dealing with personal problems (Osei-Tutu & Dzikoto, 2020). It is estimated that about 2.4 million people in Ghana have mental health problems and of this number, only 67, 780 (2.8%) received treatment in 2011. Compared to the alarming increase of mental disease and its cost to humanity, Ghana can boast of just 18 Psychiatrists, 1,068 registered psychiatric nurses, 19 psychologists, 72 community mental health officers and 21 recognized social workers. The same source indicated that healthcare delivery in Ghana is provided by both public and private sectors (WHO-AIM, 2011).

Forgiveness therapy can also play a major role in helping people negotiate everyday problems, particularly mental and well-being issues. Studies confirm a direct correlation between forgiveness and mental health variables (Horwitz et al., 1996; Kiecolt-Glaser & Wilson, 2017). Firstly, that unforgiveness is often a core component of stress, resulting from an interpersonal offence, and stress is associated with decreased mental health (Akhtar & Barlow, 2018; Newberg et al., 2000; Standish, 2016). Secondly, unforgiveness resulting from intrapersonal transgressions may increase levels of guilt, shame, and regret that in turn negatively impact one's mental health (Webb, Robinson and Brower 2011). Forgiveness is also considered a way of coping with interpersonal and intrapersonal stress (well-being) in a fashion that promotes positive adjustment (J. Berry & Worthington, 2001; Norman, 2017). Thus, to the extent that forgiveness can be shown to ameliorate negative mental health and well-being consequences, it will become increasingly recognized as a viable means of treatment and an important protective variable against mental health disorders and challenges in well-being (Norman, 2017; L. Toussaint & Webb, 2005a).

Ghana, like many other developing countries, does not have a well-developed and efficient working system to deliver mental health care to its citizens. The country is characterized by mental patients fighting for space in the open market, on the pavements, with a growing number of them lying on street corners, posing a risk to society. Evidently, the country's healthcare delivery system lacks the necessary framework, personnel and other resources to effectively manage the growing cases of mental health disorders in the country (Roberts et al., 2014 Kpobi et al., 2018; Ofori-Atta, Read and Lund, 2010). With Ghana's population standing a little over thirty-one million (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012), Ghana can boast of only three government psychiatric hospitals, the Accra, Pantang and Ankafu Psychiatric Hospitals; the first two are in the Greater Accra and the latter in the Central region. There are four (4) private psychiatric institutions which provide out-patient clinic and in-patient consultancy services. Two are located close to Accra and two near Kumasi in the Ashanti Region. Because accessibility to mental medical facilities in many communities in Ghana is very challenging many families of mental patients seek solutions at prayer centers. Some also visit traditional healers. The desire to seek unconventional health givers stems from fear of stigma, illiteracy, ignorance and false perception about the condition (Apologun, 2012; Gyekye, 1987). Ghana has a mental health policy; mental health legislation exists, yet, there is no emergency and disaster plan for mental health. Again, mental health is not covered by National health insurance scheme in Ghana. (WHO-AIMS, 2011).

In 2012, Ghana passed its new Mental Health Act (846) which re-focuses on the way mental health services are provided, making it more community based. The act deals with stigmatization and discrimination against mentally-ill persons and also provides for the registration of Prayer Camps and the training of personnel as frontline community workers to handle mental health cases in religious settings. In an interview granted by the director of Ghana Health on Metro Ghana we learn that the ministry has included mental health treatment in its chip compound health care and most district hospitals. Yet the challenge of inadequate resources still remains and thus craves attention. It behoves us as Ghanaians to bring these issues to the forefront of public debate where it can receive the needed attention. Promotion of mental health and well-being needs to be brought to the public domain and this is what this paper seeks to achieve.

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a multi-dimensional construct which affect, behaviour, and cognition, and as such, is distinct from pardon, condoning, forgetting, and reconciliation (Sandage, Worthington, Hight and Berry, 2000). Two aspects of defining forgiveness are noticeable: first, forgiveness as a trait (trait forgiveness) and

forgiveness as a state of being ('state' forgiveness) (L. Toussaint & Webb, 2005a). These two forms of forgiveness are necessary for well-being. Forgiving others (offenders) is noticeably the major measure of forgiveness in the papers reviewed.

Well-being

Well-being can be described as the living state of having a good sense. The national wellness institution categorizes well-being into a six dimension: occupational well-being; physical well-being, social well-being, intellectual well-being, spiritual well-being, emotional well-being. These categories of well-being are inter-correlated one to another. Being intersected means psychological well-being is believed to affect physiological and social well-being and vice versa (National Wellness Institute, 2007; Kayastha, 2018). This study focuses on spiritual and physical well-being. According to Gatt, Burton, Schofield, Bryant and Williams (2014) Psychological well-being is about lives going well. It is the combination of feeling good and functioning effectively.

Forgiveness Therapy and Well-being, Ghanaian context
 Table 1 Summary of Correlation and Effect of Forgiveness Therapy on Mental Health and well-being.

| Study | Key Findings/Correlations/Relation to Mental Health Variables |
|---|--|
| Maltby, Macaskill and Day (2001) | Study found that failure to forgive oneself and others lead to scoring higher in neuroticism, depression and anxiety, social introversion among men and social pathology among women (i.e., social dysfunction, psychoticism). Findings suggest that the concept of forgiveness can be related to individual and social well-being. |
| Berry & Worthington (2001) | Forgiveness found to be positively related to mental health. Relationship variables (high love and liking for the partner, high happiness with the relationship) and personality variables (high forgivingness, low trait anger) were found to affect mental health directly and indirectly. |
| Exline et al. (1999) | It was found that having difficulty in obtaining forgiveness from God and forgiving oneself is positively related to mental health variables: depression and anxiety. Also, difficulty forgiving others (offenders) was found to be positively related to anxiety. |
| Mauger, Perry, Freeman, Grove and et al. (1992) | The study found that failure to forgive oneself and others is positively related to depression and anxiety. |
| Seybold, Hill, Neumann and Chai. (2001) | In a clinical study, the authors found that higher levels of forgiveness correlated with better well-being such as health habits, lower anxiety, lower anger, lower depression, and more task coping. Also, people with higher levels of forgiveness had lower hematocrit levels and lower white blood cell counts. Lower forgiveness levels were correlated with higher cytotoxic cell ratios. Thus, unforgiveness of self and others is found to positively relate to depression, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. Findings support the hypothesis that forgiveness is positively associated with indices of good health. |
| Brown (2003) | Forgiveness found to be negatively related to depression. |
| Raj, Elizabeth and Padmakumari, (2016) | The study found indicators of forgiving behaviour to include positive emotional state, empathy and perspective taking, and religiosity. The themes identified are enhanced sense of well-being, improved self-acceptance, and competence to deal with challenges. Forgiveness was found to enhance physical and psychological well-being of participants. |

| Study | Key Findings/Correlations/Relation to Mental Health Variables |
|---|---|
| Toussaint, Williams, Musick, and Everson (2001) | Study found that the levels of forgiveness of others and feeling forgiven by God differ by age: middle and old age adults showed higher levels of these forms of forgiveness than young adults. Forgiveness of others was more strongly related to self-reported mental and physical health for middle and old age adults than for young adults. Forgiveness found to be negatively related to psychological distress and positively related to life satisfaction whereas actively seeking forgiveness was positively related to distress and negatively related to life satisfaction. |
| Berry, Worthington, Connor, Parrott and Wade (2005) | The study found that trait forgiveness was negatively correlated with trait anger, hostility, neuroticism, fear, and vengeful rumination and was positively correlated with agreeableness, extraversion, and trait empathy. Relatedly, self-hate statements, a proxy for depressive rumination, mediated the relationship between forgiveness and both depression and fearfulness but not the relationship between forgiveness and trait anger. |
| Al-Mabuk, Enright and Cardis (1995) | In the randomized, experimental controlled study, the authors found forgiveness intervention to yield significant improvements in trait anxiety but not state anxiety or depression. |
| Witvliet et al. (2004) | Results of the study indicate that difficulty forgiving one and negative religious coping were related to depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptom severity. Difficulty forgiving others was associated with depression and PTSD symptom severity, but not anxiety. |
| Lichtenfeld, Maier, Buechner and Fernandez. (2019) | The study established emotional forgiveness to have a strong influence on subsequent health attributions. Individuals, who have emotionally forgiven a transgression, were found to hold the transgressor less responsible for the offense compared to those in the decisional forgiveness. Moreover, the findings demonstrate that emotional, but not decisional forgiveness affects cognition and, thus, emotional and decisional forgiveness should be treated as distinct facets in the forgiveness process. |
| Akhtar, Dolan and Barlow (2017) | The study revealed that unforgiveness increased negative effect, reduced cognitive abilities and was a barrier to psychological and social growth. State forgiveness had strong ties to participants' perceived sense of mental well-being, including reductions in negative effect, feeling positive emotions, positive relations with others, spiritual growth, a sense of meaning and purpose in life as well as a greater sense of empowerment. The findings also suggested that forgiving a range of real-life interpersonal offences may be an important determinant of psychological well-being, particularly among religious/spiritual populations. |
| Hirsch, Rabon, Reynold, Barton and Chang (2019) | Results show that the effect of self-forgiveness on suicidal thought-behaviour was fully mediated by depression while self-forgiveness was associated with depression and suicidal behaviour. Forgiveness of others was directly associated with suicidal behaviour. |
| Karremans, Van Lange, Ouwerkerk and Kluwer. (2003) | Study found that forgiving one and others in relationships is associated with enhanced well-being, but that this association is more pronounced in relationships with strong rather than weak commitment. |

Conclusion

Statistics show the growing cases of mental health and physiological well-being among people globally and the neglect of the problem to the background of global disease burden. The growing body of literature has produced some consistent findings regarding the potential connection between forgiveness and positive/good mental health and well-being. However, there is growing evidence from empirical works (although limited),

works (although limited), demonstrating strong support for the idea that forgiveness could have beneficial effect on mental health, hence making religious therapy of forgiveness a tool for achieving SDG3-mental health and well-being. There is therefore the need to bring the issue of mental health from the shadows into the lime-light where it can be given the needed attention.

THE LIBRARIAN AND MENTAL HEALTH (THE WEIGHT WE CARRY)

Gloria Mawusi Atiso,
Graduate School Library, Central University

A Librarian is a person who is professionally trained to be in charge of a library or assist in a library. They provide access to information using resources available both manual and virtual.

The Librarian's role has changed much over time to meet new social and technological needs, currently the Librarian has to deal with the provision and maintenance of information in many formats including books, electronic resources as well as provide services such as information literacy instruction and training, much is now expected from a modern librarian due to the revolution in library education and service provision in this modern era.

With the above information one would ask about the mental capability of the librarian to cope with this "new era" of librarianship.

According to the World Health Organisation, Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

The Medical News Today newsletter refers to mental health as the cognitive, behavioural and emotional well-being, it is about how people think, feel and behave.

Mental health can affect daily living, relationships and physical health. Everyone has some risk of developing a mental health disorder, no matter their age, sex and ethnicity etc. It is important to note that good mental health depends on a delicate balance of factors.

However conditions such as stress, depression, anxiety, and physical health conditions, continuous social and economic pressure can cause mental health disorders. Some common mental health disorders include Anxiety Disorders, Mood Disorders and Schizophrenia Disorders.

Even though mental health disorders are scarcely discussed in the library community it may be a big

Issue among librarians. Being a librarian comes with emotional labour, the librarian is expected to know all, be super bubbly and upbeat, the librarian constantly faces the challenges of dealing with people from all walks of life and having to deal with their informational needs, and sometimes emotional and social needs, putting on a friendly face after a while coupled with the librarian's own personal issues whatever they may be can affect the mental health since the librarian must display emotional intelligence for our patrons sake and our own.

Because librarians work in such a demanding environment they experience burnout, and unfortunately we are not taught how to

manage our own mental health not to talk of even speaking about it. Librarians are supposed to deal with feelings that people "throw" at them because as a professional service provider we are expected to be compassionate and understanding about the patrons needs.

Apart from the challenges of being a librarian there are other conditions that affect the mental health of the librarian. There are work place conditions which may include lack of motivation, inability to upgrade one's self educationally, limited resources to work with, understaffing which can lead to overworking one's self, unhealthy and unfriendly working environment.

There can also be personal issues, social pressure whereby making the librarian unable to relate well with patrons, economic pressure that has to do with financial challenges on the path of the librarian, having physical health challenges sometimes also contribute to mental health challenges.

Looking after ones mental health can preserve a person's ability to enjoy life. Doing this involves reaching a balance between life activities, responsibilities, and efforts to achieve psychological resilience.

Libraries are considered to be safe places or refuge, welcoming to all who use the space, services and resources they provide and the fact that librarians feel unsafe to come forward due to the fear of stigmatization and other reasons such as the fear of losing their job speaks volumes to the work needed to make the library truly safe place for all.

In conclusion, I believe that when the librarian is motivated at the place of work, with a safe and friendly environment, adequate resources to work with as well as the ability to upgrade in the career, having a good healthcare system to cater for health needs which include self-care as well the organizations providing counselling and therapy units where the librarian would not be afraid to ask for help in case they go through such situations.

GOOD MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

By Charles Asiedu,

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Everyone knows the importance of good mental health, but how do you achieve it? Whether you are born with a predisposition to a mental health disorder or acquire it as a result of substance abuse. This article is going to enlighten us on how to promote a healthy mental and wellbeing.

It is of great concern that mental health promotion is frequently overlooked as an integral part of health promotion (Desjarlais et al., 1995; WHO, 2001; Lavikainen et al., 2000). Mental health promotion seeks to foster individual competencies, resources, and psychological strengths, and to strengthen community assets to prevent mental disorder and enhance well-being and quality of life for people and communities (Herrman et al., 2005). Health is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' (WHO, 2001), and health promotion is understood as 'actions that support people to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles and which create supportive living conditions or environments for health' (WHO, 2004). Good mental health is also more than just the absence of a mental disorder, such as, bipolar disorder, depression, or anxiety.

A person who is mentally healthy has a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her own community (WHO, 2001b). This is surprising because, in theory, mental health is accepted as an essential component of health (WHO, 2001), the close relationship between physical and mental health is recognized (WFMH, 2004) and it is generally known that physical and mental health share many of the same social, environmental and economic determinants (WHO, 2004). We know that facilities for those with mental health problems are more poorly resourced than those for physical illness in many parts of the world (WHO, 2001) and it is important that mental health promotion does not get similarly affected.

How to Promote Good Mental Health

In order to promote good mental health, there must be action. Mental health promotion covers a variety of strategies, all of which have the aim of making a positive impact on mental health. Actions taken to promote mental health include strategies and programs to create environment and living conditions to support mental health and allow people to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles. There is no one-size-fits-all program for promoting good mental health. Strategies and activities that contribute to good mental health and wellbeing are as follows:

- Spending quality time with close friends and family.
- Working in a job or finding an activity that is meaningful, which

can provide a sense of purpose.

- Reducing your sugar intake is better for your health.
- Avoid alcohol and other drugs as they can worsen the symptoms of mental health problems.
- Finding a hobby (such as gardening, playing sport, cooking, or arts and craft)
- Get enough sleep if you are tired, you are more likely to feel stressed and worried.
- Having someone to talk to who can provide support and reassurance.
- Eating healthily and exercising regularly.

Individuals who have good mental health are able to bounce back from the adversity of a lost job, relationship, illness, sadness, or other setbacks. They see the circumstance or situation for what it is, and set about righting their emotional balance. In fact, resiliency is all about emotional balance. And you can teach yourself to become more resilient and, thus, have better mental health.

Being able to recognize your emotions ensures that you don't become trapped in negative mood states or in depression or anxiety. It also helps to have a good support network family, friends, co-workers, counselors, and others who can help you in times of need. Resiliency, according to the American Psychological Association (APA), is not a trait that people either have or don't have. It involves actions, thoughts, and behaviors that can be learned and developed in anyone.

CONCLUSION

It is advocated that mental health assume its rightful place in health promotion. The significant number of evidence-based mental health programmes concerned with well-being from early childhood to old age, aimed at individuals, groups or at community structural issues demonstrate that well designed interventions contribute significantly to the well-being of populations. Efforts need to be made to strengthen this evidence, particularly in developing countries.

A further challenge is for mental health professionals to become more skilled in the process of advocacy in order that such evidence is used to maximum effect in ensuring that mental health promotion is recognized as an integral and central component of health promotion.

THE ROLE OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN COMBATING MENTAL ILLNESS

By Seth Akwasi Danquah,

Central University, Business and Social Science Library

According to American Psychiatric Association, mental illness comprises health conditions involving changes in emotions, thinking, or behavior or combination of all these. Mental illness is normally associated with distress or problems of functioning in social, work or family activities. Serious mental illness is a mental, behavioral or emotional disorder (excluding developmental and substance use disorders) resulting in serious functional impairment, which substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities. Examples of serious mental illness include major depressive disorder, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder (Parekh, 2018).

Libraries have a particularly important role to play, both in promoting general wellbeing, and as part of a support package to people struggling with poor mental health. They do this through providing safe spaces, access to knowledge resources, and skills development.

Welcoming space offered by libraries is one of the features that makes them so unique as actors in the community. It also makes them a refuge for people facing mental health difficulties. Some libraries have specific policies for such as how to help if someone is in crisis. Some libraries take extra steps to ensure that everyone with mental health difficulties can enjoy the space offered. For example, creation of autism-friendly libraries in the UK, or through the Russian State Library for Young Adults in Russia.

Libraries also provide meaningful resources to help those suffering mental health. Working to make books, magazines, and even a collection of agony aunt columns more easily accessible and visible and in Norway, it appears to have enabled young people to locate information they need. Also in Norway, libraries are using and adapting games to help older people suffering dementia.

Apart from the spaces and resources libraries provide, libraries also have a role in giving people the skills they need to take control of their situation through applying information literacy: knowing when you need information, knowing where and how to find it, knowing how to evaluate and apply it.

According to International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change (2021), mental health literacy needs to be understood in the context of a concept that has resulted from the sphere of health literacy. According to the U.S Department of Health and Human Services (2000), health literacy is the degree to which persons have the ability and capacity to obtain, process, and understand fundamental health information and services that are needed to make appropriate health choices or decisions.

It is important to appreciate that health literacy is a major significant component of health 's social determinants. The importance of health literacy therefore stems from the fact that it empowers persons to find, understand and employ health information and services for healthy. It has been found that all persons rely on health literacy at a point in their life including well educated persons who also face issues in health literacy

(Zarcadoolas et al., 2005; Oakie, 2017).

Librarians should therefore be instrumental in fostering and promoting health literacy and they have been doing that since its information and services for healthy. It has been found that all persons rely on health literacy at a point in their life including well educated persons who also face issues in health literacy (Zarcadoolas et al., 2005; Oakie, 2017).

Librarians should therefore be instrumental in fostering and promoting health literacy and they have been doing that since its beginning through research and teaching, as well as programmatic and campaign efforts (Larsen, 2015).

Interestingly, the role of librarians in mental health literacy is not limited to awareness creation and prevention but treatment as well. Bibliotherapy is a therapy that employs books and cognitive-behavioral therapy principles (Hanson, 2018). As opined by Larsen (2015), Bibliotherapy represents a context where the reciprocal interaction between reader and literature sets focus on the reader's personality so that literature becomes a tool for the therapist. Put in simpler terms: bibliotherapy is treatment through books, and arises in the interaction between the participant, the therapist and the literature. (p. 2).

Librarians, through bibliotherapy, could assist in the treatment of mental health disorders by prescribing self-help books to staff and students in higher education. It has been found that the employment of bibliotherapy increases mindfulness as well as quality of life since it is potent in the treatment of moderate and mild depression symptoms, stress and anxiety (Hanson, 2018). Importantly, the use of bibliotherapy for mental treatment applies not only to those diagnosed with mental disorders, but anybody that requires an emotional pick-me-up, change in attitude, or anyone in need of help to understand and deal with difficult issues (Gualano et al., 2017).

The significance of libraries in higher education goes beyond the provision of a storage area for information. Significantly, libraries and librarians are available to provide numerous supports to the students and staff in higher education. Librarians are well placed, due to their expertise, to have a significant impact on the promotion of mental health literacy and health information fluency (Mani, 2004). An important role of librarians in the promotion of mental health literacy involves the provision of quality and timely mental health information to students, faculty and staff to aid in their understanding, and achievement, of better mental health outcomes.

UNIVERSITIES AND STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

By Mrs **Benedicta Annor**,
Central University Science Library

Mental illness is known as a wide range of conditions that affect mood, thinking and behaviour. This can range from anxiety, mood disorders (such as depression or bipolar disorder), psychotic disorders (such as schizophrenia), eating disorders, trauma-related disorders (such as post-traumatic stress disorder) and substance abuse disorders. In an Academic Institution for example, a University, it is important to address issues concerning mental health especially amongst students. Persons with mental disorders represent a considerable proportion of the world's population (WHO, 2010). It is estimated that about one million people die due to suicide, one of the major outcomes of being stigmatized every year (WHO, 2009) and one in four people will experience mental illness in his or her life time. (WHO, 2010). A lot of them struggle with mental issues without realizing they have an illness. Some also are afraid to share their concerns with their family therefore Academic Institutions can help address these issues.

There are various ways Academic Institutions can address mental health issues amongst its students. Students well being should not only be about inside the class room. Their well being outside the class room matters as well. With a few suggestions below, this article should help educators, staff members and administrators who want to prioritize student well-being at their Institution and parents who are about to send their wards off to the University.

AWARENESS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Academic Institutions should make mental health issues a priority during their face to face orientation sessions for freshers. Students should be made aware that they can approach any one with their issues. This is why the Chaplaincy Unit and Guidance and Counselling departments are a vital part of any Academic Institution. Short videos can be made on the topic and circulated. Information about Mental Illness can be published in the newsletter of the school. This would help students identify and come to terms with any mental issue they may face. Efforts should be made to encourage students approach counsellors without any fear of stigmatization. Avenues can also be created to get feedback from students about their struggles. This would help them know they are not isolated in the University community.

WIDE COURSES AND INITIATIVES

In Central University, campus wide courses like 'purposeful living' have been incorporated into the school's curriculum.

This course is meant to help students recognise their individual qualities and skills as well as helping them become transformational leaders in future. Other courses that deal with mental health issues can also be introduced. For example 'coping with stress' etc can help. Other initiatives can also include giving out questionnaires each semester to monitor student's responses regarding their mental health.

STUDENT COUNSELLING

Counsellors working in higher education should offer their professional skills and utilise their understanding of the connections between psychological and academic difficulties. They should be well trained and easily approachable. No counselling unit would undertake the diagnosis or treatment of severe mental illness but should be able to recognise the various forms of mental illness and to know when referral to medical and psychiatric services is necessary. (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2011) The establishment of a Guidance and counseling unit is very important for all academic institutions.

PROVISIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Universities and other higher education institutions try to improve funding by the recruitment of international students. International students come from a wide range of cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. When considering their mental well-being, it is important to be aware of the additional challenges that they face in adjusting to living and studying in the new country of study. They have to undertake a major process of adjustment to a new academic and cultural environment. (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2011) They may be unable to afford regular visits to their home countries and this may sometimes take a toll on them. A unit should be created exclusively for them to address their concerns.

To conclude, the mental health struggle students face may feel difficult at times, but there are so many opportunities to pitch in and offer our support. We can play a role as mental health advocates by talking more openly about mental health symptoms and sharing available resources. We should avoid criticizing or belittling the severity of a student's symptom and encourage them with some coping strategies.

EDUCATION ON GOOD MENTAL HEALTH-CREATING AWARENESS

By Doreen Hinson,
Central University Law Library

Mental health refers to the emotional well-being of a human being. A person considered to be of sound mind is considered to be mentally healthy. A person with a sound mind has a good social relationship and shows a good physical health. A person with poor mental health has no social relationship and does not show a good physical health. Mental illness was considered a spiritual problem, but the case has changed in recent times. Mental illness has now increased among the youth.

Approximately one out of 4 sampled youth will suffer from mental illness, making it a leading cause of disability in the country and the globe. Mental illness can be mild or severe ranging from depression, stress and anxiety. Poor mental health leads to psychological problems.

Several factors such as bad parenting, socio-economic factors, violence and poor education, lead to the rise in poor mental health. Mental health challenges are often pervasive and impacting many developmental outcomes. Poor mental health has a detrimental effect on the patient and the economy as a whole.

Education is one of the clearest indicators of life outcomes, such as employment, income and social status. Education is a strong predictor for improved health and well-being. Hence the correlation between mental health and education. There's no health without good mental health.

With the SDG goal 3 target to achieve good mental health, the public health department have made available a lot of mental health resources, like counselling and other treatment options.

Many people suffer poor mental health in silence, they do not know who to run to or who talk to.

To ensure optimum improvement in good mental health among the youth, all hands must be on deck; mental health professionals, parents, teachers and the clergy must come together to educate the youth and create awareness on the negative effects of poor mental health and its impact on our society.

The youth must be educated on good mental health as well as the systems of poor mental health and how to overcome it.

Education on good mental health will help create awareness among the youth to curb the rise in poor mental health.

Massive education on mental health will help reduce the stigmatization. This will help people who need help to come out willingly to seek help.

It is in this direction the government passed the mental health bill, the call for better integration of mental health. (Mental Health Act 846 - 2012). However, the prevalence of poor mental health among the youth is increasing with each generation. The government and all stakeholders have the responsibility to protect our youth the best way we can by creating awareness on good mental health (SDG3.4). Awareness is the key to reduction of poor mental health.

SPACES, DÉCOR AND COLLECTIONS: A THOUGHT-PIECE ON ACADEMIC LIBRARIES AND SDG 3.4

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Introduction

Heritage institutions (libraries, archives and museums) play a key role in the management of stress which is an aspect of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.4, which seeks to promote mental health and well-being. One would think that academic libraries by their nature would not even be remotely connected to SDG 3.4.

which seeks to promote mental health and well-being. One would think that academic libraries by their nature would not even be remotely connected to SDG 3.4. However, if we paid enough attention, we would realise the fundamental role libraries play through architecture, collections, services and facilities; undergirding the academe so that it achieves its mission in teaching, learning and research.

Libraries, including academic ones, essentially offer serene and conducive environments for activities which in essence impact on the psychological make-up of those who use them. This write-up is a thought-piece of how academic libraries could help in the management of stress through it collections, spaces and décor.

Students and Stress

The life and stress level that contemporary tertiary Ghanaian students face is a far cry from what pertained in the early years of tertiary education in Ghana. Stories about life in university in those days have one wondering if we are in the same country, and if those students had any stress at all. Stress factors among tertiary students in recent years range from those bordering on admission, accommodation, coping with living in a new environment, and different study techniques, to mention but a few. And of course the programme of study has its own stress level – with some thinking that medical and engineering students experience more stress than arts and social science students.

Stress comes in different forms, and could be so indiscernible, its toll on students' academic performance and well-being could easily be overlooked; and if not managed properly can negatively affect academic output. As such, how people respond to stress is as important as the available facilities to aid these individuals de-stress.

Spaces and Decor

Some hallmarks of good libraries include having ambient spaces, adequate (natural, if that is possible) ventilation and natural lighting (in the event of power outages in our part of the world). It is in this regard that academic libraries ought to have spaces that allow users to take a breather from the weighty nature of academic work. These could include lounges for snack breaks, sections for newspapers, multimedia spaces, word/board games, and spaces for literary events. Psychologists would say that the colours of paint used for the spaces, lighting, interior and exterior designs, all impact on the psychological make-up of users. It was not much fun working in a library housed in a remodeled 1860 building which maintained both the beautiful terra cotta bricks and black-painted jalousie windows! To cope with the rather gloomy décor which might have had a psychological effect on work and general well-being, the windows were flung open every morning to let in more light and happy noise from pupils in a nearby primary school.

Libraries are not storehouses for resources; they are vibrant spaces and as such, in carving and designing its spaces, there is the need to consider furniture and decor. The interior design of

these spaces should be distinct from other learning spaces in the library with appropriate and comfortable furniture; décor which depict calmness and serenity that allow users to de-stress. The design of these spaces should be done with stress management at the fore of other considerations. The ambience in academic libraries should be welcoming and therapeutic; studying is stressful enough.

Collections

Although an academic library may be constrained for space and would typically not stock novels, it could help students manage stress through the provision of light and exciting literature unrelated to their academic programmes, the provision of board games, and fun activities. It is interesting what one can learn from magazines like *New African*, *New African Woman*, *Reader's Digest*, *National Geographic*, and *Forbes Africa*. Non-academic materials could be used in-house or loaned out, and thankfully some collections are freely accessible online. After all, true education is not about learning to pass examinations, it is also about how much one knows about one's world and being well read.

Conclusion

The planning and designing of libraries is a purposeful venture and should not be treated as an afterthought in the scheme of planning tertiary institutions. Just as library stock is dictated by the curriculum, so should its spaces be purposefully and carefully designed to meet the psychological and emotional needs of its users (staff and students alike). Academic libraries ought to provide adequate and effective stress management facilities for its user community as much as it provides learning resources and learning spaces. So, though librarians may not be consulted in the designing of a library, they can lighten the academic atmosphere with its collections, services, facilities, and the provision of some literary events (of course consider events and performances in the mother tongue too). So, how would you celebrate the next Library and Information Week (LIW) when it does come around with SDG 3.4 in mind?

symptoms increase with age (Kennedy 2016).

Depression is a major depressive disorder which is very common and affects quite a number of people. It usually affects the mood of the individual. It can lead to various symptoms such as feelings of sadness, inability to sleep or even changes in weight. It varies from mild to severe and must last for at least two weeks. Though depression and grief share some features, depression is different from grief felt after losing a loved one or sadness felt after a traumatic life event. Depression usually involves self-loathing or a loss of self-esteem, while grief typically does not. In many cases, depression according to George (2016) affects the health and social relations of the aged. According to Max et. al. (2015) the presence of perceived loneliness contributed to depression which led to the mortality of the aged. The negative effect of loneliness in old age has been reported by reporters Heikkinen et. al.

Methodology

DEPRESSION: IT'S EFFECT ON THE ELDERLY

By Mrs Aku Hayfron

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Abstract

In the last ten or more years, I have attended grand funerals of elderly people who bragged about their children all being out of the country. They all sounded very happy to tell you that their children were all abroad and remit them from time to time. You hear about their sudden death after which all the children come down to Ghana and hold very grand funerals for them after which they all leave the country in turns to return a year later to unveil the tomb. Little did I know that the real cause of their death was depression!

Many studies have demonstrated that prevalence of depressive

The qualitative method was used in this study where the person was interacted with in order to get the information needed for the research. Qualitative research is used to understand how people experience the world. While there are many approaches to qualitative research, they tend to be flexible and focus on retaining rich meaning when interpreting data. Observation is equivalent to recording what you have seen, heard, or encountered in detailed field notes. Whereas interviews are personally asking people questions in one-on-one conversations.

The inductive research strategy was used in this research, as this was because the lady who is quite elderly came for counselling. Her referral note from the medical doctor indicated 'ageing' as her problem. However after interacting with her, I realized it was more than that. She was so downhearted and begun by asking why God had made her live this long. I later realized that she was suffering from severe depression, the long and short of her problem was that she had single-handedly taken care of four of her children through school and later helped each one of them travel abroad. This was because they lost their father quite early in life. Now that she has grown old and is expecting that they should reciprocate the love she showed them, none of them is ready to leave their lives outside and spend time with her. According to her, just

recently, one of her daughters came to Ghana and refused to come and live with her. She felt very hurt and kept asking what harm she could have done to deserve such treatment. She says she feels suicidal at times. As a Clinical Psychologist, since I am not allowed to prescribe medication, I had to refer her back to the doctor to give her some sedatives while I continue with further counselling to reduce her level of pain.

In the meantime, the question we have to ask ourselves is that: if God did not find it necessary for us to be in Ghana, would He have made us been born here? Psychosocially, why should parents encourage their children to go and settle outside and brag to their friends that their children are abroad? We may have to do a broader study to see the effect of children resettling abroad on their parents and whether it should be encouraged or discouraged. We may have to ask about the economic benefits the country gains from the remunerations these children make to their parents back home. My prayer is to see her this week in higher spirits than she was when I last saw her.

PROMOTING GOOD MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

By Seva Tamakloe,
Central University. Kumasi Library

Mental health and wellbeing mean different things to different people and every person has to find their own way to a life that is meaningful and satisfying for them. Everyone experiences mental health and wellbeing throughout their lives, and it can vary in whether it is positive, negative, or somewhere in between. In discussions of mental health and wellbeing it is important to understand what is meant by those terms, and that poor mental health or poor wellbeing can affect people in different ways. A person is said to be suffering from mental illness when they have the symptoms of a clinically diagnosable mental health condition. If someone experiences negative mental health, but it does not necessarily meet the clinical threshold it is known as mental distress. Wellbeing relates to the extent to which someone is feeling good and functioning positively, but poor mental wellbeing does not always indicate a mental health condition (Institute for Public Policy Research 2017).

Mental health and well-being has become an increasingly important social concern today, and the manner in which people perceive and respond to the situation is often linked to those on the street, but that is not always the case. Mental health includes

our emotional, psychological, and social well-being which affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Over the course of your life, if you experience mental health problems, your thinking, mood, and behavior could be affected. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including: Biological factors, such as genes or brain chemistry, Life experiences, such as trauma or abuse and Family history of mental health problems.

However, there are early signs to lookout for in order to overcome mental health problems at early stage. Pulling away from people and usual activities, feeling helpless or hopeless, experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships, having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head, hearing voices or believing things that are not true, thinking of harming yourself or others, just to mention few.

Bringing this down to students, mental health or wellbeing issues in students does not only affect students' lives outside of university but can have a significant impact on their studies. Universities UK (2018) found that students with mental health problems are more likely to experience disruption to their education through taking time off, attempting to continue their studies without the support they need or dropping out altogether. Therefore management of every academic institution has a role to play in ensuring that students have a good mental health translating into their well-being. Some schools have guidance and counseling department which takes care of the mental health and well-being of students.

Libraries are an important place on campus. They are visited

frequently by students, are a convenient place to meet and have good reputations as information providers and community centres (Ramsey, Aagard 2018). It is therefore important to consider what role they would play in a whole campus approach to mental health and wellbeing. Some academic libraries are already offering programmes to encourage de-stressing or to improve wellbeing. These have ranged from pet therapy (Lannon, Harrison 2015), to craft, music, yoga and meditation (Brewerton, Wooley 2016).

The library is not only for books, but also guides and connects people not only to the resources available but also connect people, services, and also create that atmosphere and space that accommodate and provide assistance to its patrons. It's therefore the responsibility of the library staff to assist people with their information need, most importantly, information they didn't know they even needed.

There is a growing literature around the role of libraries in supporting student mental health and well-being. Indeed, this role was a top trend globally in 2020 (prior to the pandemic) according to Benedetti et al. (2020: 274) in the context of "rising rates of college students struggling with depression, anxiety, sleep deprivation, food insecurity, family responsibilities, and other factors impacting student wellbeing". It reflects the turn away from the library being seen primarily as place for books to it becoming a place for learning in the widest sense (Clement et al., 2018). Implicit is a growing concern with the library user as a whole person not just as an information seeker, especially if this were narrowly conceived as a purely cognitive process (Lenstra & Latham, 2019). As well as directly beneficial to students themselves, such care

contributes to student retention and performance (Ramsey & Aagard, 2018).

In order to promote good mental health and well-being, measures and strategies must be put in place. Anticipating problems before they arise will help reduce worry and stress. It is also important to identifying at least two people who can help you when you come across a problem in your life. Finding a self-help group, as talking to people who have similar feelings can be a huge support. Experiencing new things such as trying different foods, travelling, or meeting new people can help promote good mental health and well-being.

Other studies have pointed to the mental health and wellbeing benefits of reading itself, most commonly known as bibliotherapy. This can involve a wide variety of activities involving books specifically dealing with mental health and wellbeing issues or simply reading for enjoyment. This process has been shown to be an effective approach and works best when facilitated by councilors working with in conjunction with library staff (FORREST 1998).

In conclusion, a number of problems, including mental, social and behavioral health may interact and intensify effect on individual's well-being. Its therefore important that intervention programs or measures such as , interventions in the workplace to prevent and reduce workplace stress, programs that support ecological change in schools, showing unconditional love, nurturing a child's self confidence, and above all ,building a sense of contentment is vital.

MENTAL HEALTH AMONG STUDENTS: A REALITY OR MYTH?

By Emmanuel Wiredu

Central University Library, E-Support

The utility of a sound mind for daily activities cannot be underestimated. A sound mind which encompasses mental health is a bedrock for productivity at work. For students, mental health is that little pillar that acts as an intersection and correlation between academic studies and academic laurels. Academic laurels are important to students. Likewise, students must overcome the myriads of academic, social, psychological and financial challenges to be academically successful. To that end, academic institutions can play significant roles to ensure that students have the capacity to deal with mental health problems.

Mental health is a serious concern and cannot be taken for granted. According to the World Health Organization, 21.6 million in Ghana are suffering from mental disorder (Latey, 2020). All facets of our intellectual, physiological, and behavioral well-being are included in mental health. It shapes our mind, emotions, and deeds. Mental health also influences our socioeconomic interactions (Moreno et al., 2021).

With this mind, it is imperative that school administrators recognize the prevalence of mental health and its impacts on students. For university students, each semester or year encompasses a flurry

of studying activities: tests, research, together with a plethora of complex anxieties (Porru et al., 2021). Despite how readily they are ignored, stress and anxiety are very real and can harm their mental health afflicted (Kumar & Nayar, 2021). Academic stress is not the only thing that might affect students' personal lives. University students' mental health awareness is crucial to their general wellbeing in this context.

Aside the studies, tests, researches and anxieties, social media also affects mental health (Nagaur, 2020). Social media has positive impacts on entertainment, education, and research, yet it also has its negative impacts. Social media, especially among younger generations, can have long-term consequences and leave profound scars on users' minds. There is a lot of materialism on social media. There are many portrayals of materialism such as cars, fashion, beauty and money by famous people and celebrities. The unclear conceptions of success as portrayed by these people affect the beliefs of the youth. They leaves many youths confused and anxious about what success is. As a result, the youths struggle with self-confidence.

With mental health being such a menace, academic institutions must raise the bar on mental health awareness and ensure that their students learn about self-love, respecting

others, not passing judgment, and sharing their anxieties honestly. This will help students' mental and social development and assist them to overcome disillusionments. Academic libraries can aid students' mental health and well-being in the face of this seeming catastrophe. The establishment of leisure reading collections and the designation of spaces for contemplation or napping, games, as well as dog stroking sessions, appear to be among the interventions that can be beneficial. During the Covid 19 era, some libraries employed the art to ease stress while also raising mental health awareness (Cox & Brewster, 2020).

Teachers and students should be educated on how to recognize signs of developing mental health problems, and opportunities for learning about and addressing mental health emergencies, such as the risk of suicide or self-harm, should be provided. Furthermore, education should address the connection between mental health, substance abuse, and other hazardous coping behaviors, as well as the negative impact of stigma and cultural attitudes about mental illness.

PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AT CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

By Gladys Quablah-Afriqué
Graduate School Library - Christ Temple

The first time I saw Elliana (not her real name) entering the library I was struck by her Indian like beauty especially her big wide-spaced eyes and hairy body. She nodded as in greeting the library staff seated at the security desk. She spoke very little and rarely smile and doesn't seem to have friends among her classmates because she was almost always alone and has a favorite seat at the back at the far corner of the carrel. Even when the library staff tries to engage her in light conversation, she doesn't seem interested. She visits the library often and spent long hours in the library and usually among the last to leave the library when it closes for the day. We didn't see her for some time and upon inquiring, we were told she attempted suicide so she was undergoing psychiatric treatment. I sometimes wonder about her whereabouts. She was one of our students and couldn't complete her programme.

This incident happened one Friday afternoon during one of the revision weeks before end of semester exams. Even though it happened a few years ago I could still recall the events as they unfolded in the library of all places. That day the library was packed with students studying for the end of semester examinations. I heard commotion coming from the space reserved for the law students. Fortunately, a medical doctor reading theology, studying around the place quickly came to my desk and explained the situation. Apparently, a male student with a history of psychological problems didn't want anybody to sit close to or around him and was therefore threatening students who disregarded his commands. The matter was taken to the head of department of his programme of study who fortunately was still on campus who immediately took charge of the situation by calling the family of the student who took him home. We were told he stopped taking his medicines that is the reason for his relapse. He came back later to continue his studies and has since graduated.

A more recent case is that of a former graduate student who lost his job due to the recent restructuring of the financial sector. This is someone we knew very well since he also did his undergraduate studies at the university and was a frequent visitor to the library. He was writing professional exams so he was still visiting the library to study even though he had completed his studies. The sudden

change in him was very obvious and one could tell things were not right with him. He usually visits the library to while away the time because one doesn't see him doing any serious studies apart from reading the current and the archived dailies which he reads cover to cover even those he has read previously. It is obvious he may be going through some form of emotional problems because now he seems to have a permanent frown on his face, doesn't smile and will not come to our desk for the usual chit chatting.

The above cases are real situations that happened in one of the libraries. These are few examples out of the many incidents that we experience daily in our work as library staff.

Mental health illnesses or disorders are as old as Adam, meaning they are as old as time and can be found in developed and less-developed nations of the world. They affect people from all spheres of life and across many age brackets including the very young and the very old. It doesn't look at faces or one's worth. The (SMHT Group, 2016) report defines it as 'a range of psychological difficulties that most people do not expect to endure in the course of their everyday lives.

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2014) defines mental health as the capability of establishing harmonious relationships with others, modification of individual and social environments and resolving personal conflicts and tendencies in a logical, just and suitable way.

Mental health disorder or illness refers to a wide range of mental health conditions that affects mood, thinking and behaviours. Examples include depression, anxiety disorders, eating behaviours, addictive behaviours and schizophrenia. From the above description it seems most people are going through or have gone through such periods in their life. It is said mental health becomes an illness when it affect one's ability to lead a normal life. Some of the symptoms include feeling down or sad, confused thinking, excessive fears, extreme mood swings, withdrawal from friends and family, excessive anger, suicidal thoughts among others.

Student mental health issues are at an all-time increase according to (UUK, 2018). This view is further corroborated by (Brewster and Cox, 2022; Berwick et al, 2010, Dooley and

Fitzgerald, 2012) who also reported increases in mental health disorders among university students in Iran and Ireland respectively. (Murphy et al, 2016) described the issue as an "overwhelming tsunami" because of the sheer number of students with a formally declared mental health status in Israel.

(Barry et al, 2018) in response to the question of the reasons or the factors behind the increases, lists financial insecurity with regards to fee payment, high academic workload among others. Academic work can be very stressful for those students who are not used to that. This view is also shared by (U.K. Universities, 2015) which mentioned some of the stressors of university students as new experiences, new ways of learning and interacting with people, financial and family pressures.

How can students exhibiting such symptoms be identified and supported to cope with their mental health challenges? (Seldom & Martin, 2012) in their article appealed to educators and students themselves to fully understand the factors that contribute to mental health problems and offered suggestions for educators to work preventably and urgently if they want the numbers to come down.

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2004a) outlines some strategies to mitigate it and the first on their list is to promote student-led mental health literacy promotional campaigns which is one major key to reduce the stigmatisations and prejudices attached to mental health. They believe that seeking early help for anxiety, depression and other emotional health challenges by talking to professionals is needful. They advocated some groups that the strategy should cover and these include the following: one for those not at risk, those at increased risks and those suffering or recovering from mental health challenges.

Mental health promotion interventions for young people can have significant positive effects on students' emotional, and behavioural wellbeing, including reduced depression, anxiety and improved coping skills (Barry et al., 2013; Doyle et al., 2017; Winzer et al., 2018). This view is also supported by (Murphy et al, 2017) who recommends that the promotion of mental health be included as part of compulsory induction programmes to higher education,

while also advocating for the delivery of support services for all students be provided. However, even though some few researchers disagree with the above assertion (Humphrey et al. (2010, Lendrum et al. 2013) who mentioned inconsistency and lack of resources as some of the factors that affected their desired outcomes, the results have been impressive (Durlak et al, 2011 & Sklad et al, 2012).

It is therefore important for educators to take the issue of mental health promotion among their students very serious because it affects the well-being of the future of society.

In conclusion I would like to outline some helpful points I picked from 'The Positive and Mindful university report which are based on the positive approach to mental health. The report mentioned 10 ideas to consider when institutions want to create a positive university for students.

They are as follows: institutions must train tutors in coaching techniques to help students make good and sound decisions, secondly students must be helped to set realistic academic and other curriculum activities targets and at the end of every year they receive a certificate listing their achievements; students are encouraged to take classes in well-being and other relevant areas. They are also encouraged to engage in peer to peer mentoring. It is said that belongingness is vital to mental health so students are encouraged to join a house on campus or assigned to one which is overseen by an experienced staff who will with the help of the students organise social and other competitive events across sporting and cultural activities. The academic departments are also to do same. Another strategy is to encourage students to become leaders and spaces should be provided across campuses for relaxation activities. Students are also encouraged to be more responsible for their dieting needs, sleep more and exercise at least 20 minutes each day. They are also taught exercises that help in reducing anxiety and fear. Lastly they are helped to identify their strengths and also to grow their weak points thereby becoming self-accepting.

CULIN EDITORIAL BOARD

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THE HISTORY

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Hall Schell, a former university librarian of the University of Cincinnati had this to say about libraries

'Great libraries and great universities are intricately bound together. A university's greatness means an improved library services and facilities and this in turn will bring about improvement in the quality of the university'

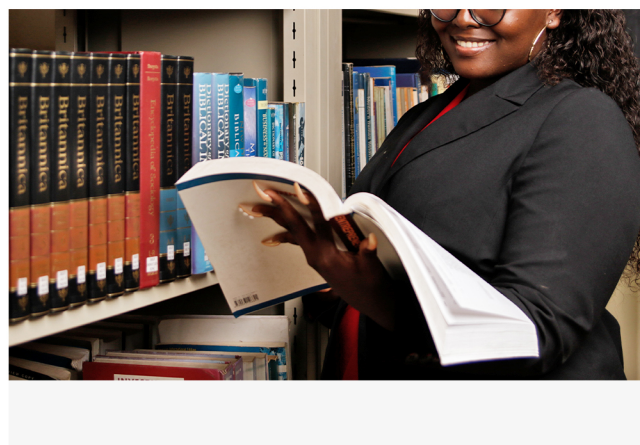
Nothing plays a more central role in the mission of a university than a library which can be likened to its lifeblood. This history of Central university libraries is also a reflection of the institution as a whole and is a highlight of some basic facts and events of its history.

The Central University College established in 1998, traces its history to the pastoral training institute of the International Central Gospel Church which was set up in 1988. The Bible College later changed its name to Central Christian College in 1993. The name was again changed to Central University College in 1998 to reflect its new status as a liberal arts tertiary institution which was later accredited by The National Accreditation Board. It is co-educational with equal access for male and female enrolment. Central University has eight (8) faculties/schools, namely the Central Business School (CBS), the School of Architecture and Design (SADe), School of Graduate Studies (SGS), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS), Faculty of Law (FOL), School of Pharmacy (SOP), School of Engineering and Technology (SET) and the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS)

In January 2016, the University College became a fully-fledged university and is now called Central University with campuses in Miotso, Prampram, Christ Temple and in Kumasi. The student population is 8400.

The importance of the library as a key stakeholder to the realisation of the university's mission was recognised by the school's management so steps were taken to upgrade the library's collection from mostly theology-based to meet accreditation requirements and also to reflect the types of programmes being run by the University.

The Central University Library was set up to provide the



informational and research needs of the University community. Knowledge is said to connote power, and the mission of a library is to package this knowledge in a way that can be easily accessible to support teaching, research, give information and to entertain. Since the Vision of the University is to train transformational leaders, the Library provides accurate, current, relevant and timely information to empower users.

A higher percentage of the Library's collection is funded from the University's budget. However, it receive donations from donors' both in Ghana and abroad. It also have E-Journal services through its membership with the Consortium for Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana (CARLIGH), E-book Services and an Electronic Catalogue both built in-house and powered by the Destiny Library Manager's Software.

Central University currently has six (6) libraries, stocking mostly books on programmes being run at the various campuses. The libraries which are program- specific are as follows: School of Architecture and Design Library (SAD) which is located on the first floor of the Central Plaza, Miotso, Faculty of Law Library, Ground floor of the Central Plaza, Miotso, Business and Social Science Library first floor of Kanda Block, Miotso, School of Graduate Studies Library located at The International Central Gospel Church, Christ Temple, Abossey Okai and the Kumasi Library which can be found within the premises of Calvary Charismatic Centre (CCC), Kumasi. It must be noted that the Kumasi Campus also has two libraries: the Law Library and the Business Library.

With regards to the headship of the libraries, Mr Samuel Agyenkwah the first substantive head served from 1998 to 2014 when he retired. Madam Edna Asante was appointed as the In-Charge from 2015 till 2018. Mrs Francisca Yaba Asante is the current head of Central University libraries (2018-

The Library presently has a staff strength of 20, made up of 7 professionals, 7 sub-professionals and 6 library clerks.



CU LIBRARY SERVICES:

1. Information Literacy Skills Programme.
2. Electronic Support Services.
3. Literature Searches.
4. Reference & Reader Services.
5. Library Instructions & Training
6. Inter-Library Loans & Documents Delivery Services.
7. Reprographic (Photocopy & Printing) Services
8. Off Campus Access To Online Database

KNOW YOUR LIBRARY STAFF



Mrs Francisca Yaba Asante

In-Charge, Cu Library Directorate

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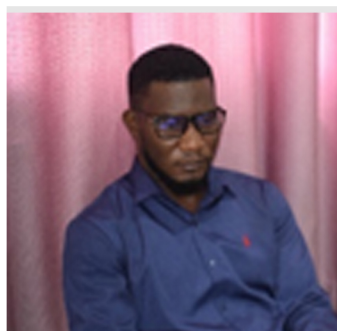


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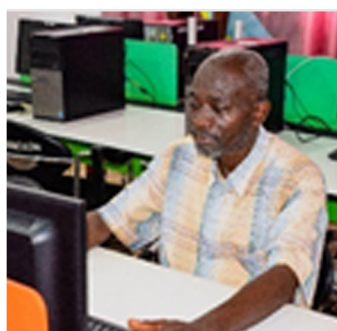


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Asare Bediako



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VIEWS FROM SELECTED STUDENTS ON MENTAL HEALTH

Kyei Abena Korang

(Level 100 Nursing Student)

QUESTION: What is your view on mental health?

Mental health is the way your thought, feelings and behaviors affect your life. Mental health includes psychological, emotional and social wellbeing. It helps determine how to handle stress, how to relate to people and how to make right choices.

QUESTION: How do you think the library can help in issues related to mental Health?

The library provides a serene environment and access to resources that can help reduce emotional instability.

Sampson Kwabena Alebetu

(400 Nursing student Christ Temple)

QUESTION: What do you think mental health is about?

Its about the state of the mind whether positive or negative.

QUESTION: Why do you think it's important?

It is important because we have to educate the students or lecturers on their state of mind in the positive way.it can include stress management because stress affect the state of mind. Therefore, if the student has knowledge on mental health it will help him or her.

QUESTION: What Role can the library play?

The library should create a conducive environment for patrons to read books for relaxation.

Celestine Awuvey

(Level 300 Nursing Student Christ Temple)

QUESTION: What do you think mental health is about?

It is the total psychological, emotional and social wellbeing of a person.

QUESTION: How can the library help?

The library provides certain information.it also provide a conducive environment because the place is quite and it helps the students to reflect and also provide information that is books on mental health.

QUESTION: How can students handle mental health issues?

Stress normally triggers mental imbalances therefore the student can handle stress by regular exercise and by getting time for himself. The student can also get to talk to someone about his or her problems.

Vera Awinbisa Atiah

(Level 100 Pharmacy Student)

QUESTION: What is your view on mental health?

According to mental health isn't just about been mad. Somebody can be physically strong but might be having a mental health issue. according to US department of Health and Human Services Mental health includes psychological, emotional and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and act and how we handle stress and make choices. You might see someone today alive and well but the next day you will hear that the person has committed suicide. It may be as a result of emotionally unstable or maybe he or she might be psychologically unsound. Therefore, mental health is an issue which needs to be talked about and awareness has to be made to educate people on how to handle mental health issues.

QUESTION: How do you think the library can help in issues related to mental Health?

The library can help by providing books which people can read or use to relax and help to release stress.

Raphael Nii Ammafi

(Level 400 Nursing Student Christ Temple Campus)

QUESTION: What is your view on mental health?

As we talk about mental health, we shouldn't just talk about mental wellbeing but we should talk about the emotional and how the person thinks and handle things.

QUESTION: What role does the library plays?

The library is a place where we read and do research. It can be a space where individual can get books to read on mental health and get a chance to improve their mental health by providing people around who can address issues for the students.



PUZZLE

Z L S B P W R E A F X B N S P Y
 J C G S P I Q I R O A C E P R E
 P T B Y L G R Q M I A C C W I K
 B Q U Y G I I K I T O A P B M O
 Y X E P T E R M S N A N M H A R
 A C Y I Y I T E D M H P P R R G
 N U A U D Y R A I T R E T Y Y A
 A D S R G A R O Y Q V M T V A N
 E Y I E E Y T R H S W I C Z B I
 L T P A L T O A A T L F F J R Z
 O Y A R Q H I W B I U O E R Z E
 O F S U C X O L B A R A G M E I
 B F D R L P F A B M S Q V G M M
 F J A E V A L U A T E E D N I F
 J E I Q Y L V T D T R K S H G W
 S N E S T D S E C J T G O Z Z U

- ABILITY
- AUTHORITY
- BOOLEAN
- DATABASE
- EVALUATE
- FIND
- FORMATS
- KEY
- LITERACY
- ORGANIZE
- PRIMARY
- SEARCH
- SECONDARY
- TERMS
- TERTIARY
- USE

LAUGHTER GOOD FOR MENTAL HEALTH

1. What are the major complaints of patients at a book hospital : my spine, my appendix, I am over due!
2. Why are libraries the tallest buildings in the world? Cos they have so many stories.
3. Why did the cardiologist recommend that his patients go to the library ? He heard they are good for circulation.
4. What is the difference between a cat and a comma: a cat has claws at the end of it's paws while a comma is a pause at the end of the clause.
5. Advice do you get from a librarian? Believe in your shelf.
6. A book fell on the librarian's head - who is to blame? The shelf.
7. How do librarians flirt? They ask for your call number.
8. What is the longest word in the dictionary? Smile. Cos there is a mile between each s.
9. What has a spine but no bones? A book
10. What did the librarian say to the astronaut? Find space for a book.
11. I am the heart of my mother, when I function well all the children of my mother become knowledgeable. What am I? The library
12. Why is maths book always unhappy? b'cos it has lots of problems to solve.
13. I give information on many subjects or on many aspects of one subject, I am typically arranged alphabetically.
14. What am I? Encyclopedia
15. I am accessible from a local network or the internet and can provide you with scholarly articles from various academic discipline. What am I? Online database



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