

ADULT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID



DESCRIPTION

Adult Mental Health First Aid teaches people how to recognize signs of mental health or substance use challenges in adults ages 18 and older, how to offer and provide initial help, and how to guide a person toward appropriate care if necessary. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, psychosis, and addictions.

Mental Health First Aid is a skills-based training course that teaches participants about mental health and substance-use challenges.

- Create a new path of resilience and wellbeing.
- Reduce stigma and discrimination.
- Improve overall psychological safety.
- Address mental health and substance use challenges.

What Participants Learn

- **Risk factors and warning signs** of mental health and substance use challenges.
- **Information** on depression, anxiety, trauma, psychosis and substance use.
- **A 5-step Action Plan** to help someone in a developing a mental health or substance use challenge.
- Available evidence-based professional, peer and self-help **resources**.

BENEFITS OF Adult Mental Health First Aid certification:

- **Expand your knowledge** of signs symptoms and risk factors of mental health and substance use challenges.
- **Identify** appropriate types of professionals and self-help resources for individuals with a mental health or substance use challenges.
- Have **Increased confidence** in and likelihood to help an individual in distress.
- Show increased mental wellbeing **yourself**.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Adult Mental Health First Aid (Adult MHFA) is an early intervention public education program. It teaches adults who how to recognize the signs and symptoms that suggest a potential mental health or substance use problem, how to listen nonjudgmentally and give reassurance to a person who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use problem, and how to refer a person to appropriate professional support and services.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) was created in Australia in 2000 by Betty Kitchener, an educator and mental health consumer, and Professor Tony Jorm, a mental health researcher. In 2008, the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, the Marland Department of Health and Mental Health, and the Missouri Department of Mental Health brought MHFA to the United States.





COURSE OBJECTIVES

The Adult MHFA course focuses on recognizing the patterns of thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and appearance that show there might be a mental health challenge. Learners are taught the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) that they apply to non-crisis and crisis scenarios.

BY THE END OF THE COURSE, LEARNERS WILL:

- Describe the purpose of MHFA and the role of the Adult Mental Health First Aider.
 - Identify the impact of mental health and substance use challenges on the wellbeing of American adults.
 - Explain that recovery from a mental health or substance use challenge is possible.
- Describe the principles of safety and privacy for both the Mental Health First Aider and the person receiving first aid.
 - Explain the 5 steps of the Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (ALGEE).
 - Recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges that may impact adults.
 - Evaluate the impact of early intervention on mental health and substance use challenges.
 - Apply the appropriate steps of the Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (ALGEE) to a non-crisis scenario where a person shows early signs of a mental health or substance use challenge.
 - Apply the appropriate steps of the Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (ALGEE) to a non-crisis scenario where a person shows worsening signs of a mental health or substance use challenge.
 - Apply the appropriate steps of the Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (ALGEE) to a crisis scenario where a person shows signs of a mental health or substance use challenge.
 - Choose appropriate methods for self-care following the application of Mental Health First Aid in a crisis or non-crisis situation.

COURSE OUTLINE

The Adult Mental Health First Aid course is delivered IN-PERSON, BLENDED IN-PERSON, or VIRTUAL. IN-PERSON and BLENDED IN-PERSON: 2-hour self-paced and 5.5-hours instruction. VIRTUAL: 2-hour self-paced and 6.5-hours zoom instructor led training.

- 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO ADULT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID**
 - Describe the purpose of Mental Health First Aid and the role of the Mental Health First Aider.
- 2. MHFA SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION RECAP**
 - Identify the impact of mental health challenges on the well-being of individuals in the United States.
 - Explain that recovery from a mental health challenge is possible.
 - Recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges that may impact people.
- 3. MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID ACTION PLAN (ALGEE)**
 - Learners learn the 5 steps of the MHFA Action Plan.
- 4. MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR EARLY SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**
 - Learn the impact of early intervention on mental health challenges.
 - Apply the appropriate steps of the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) when a person shows early signs of a mental health challenge.

5. **MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR WORSENING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**
 - Apply the appropriate steps of the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) when a person shows worsening signs of a mental health challenge.
6. **MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR CRISIS SITUATIONS**
 - Definition of a Crisis
 - Learn what to do for Crisis situations: Safety, Your Role, and De-escalation Strategies.
 - Learn types of crisis Situations.
7. **SELF-CARE FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER**
 - Learners learn how to choose appropriate methods for self-care following the application of Mental Health First Aid in a crisis or non-crisis situation.

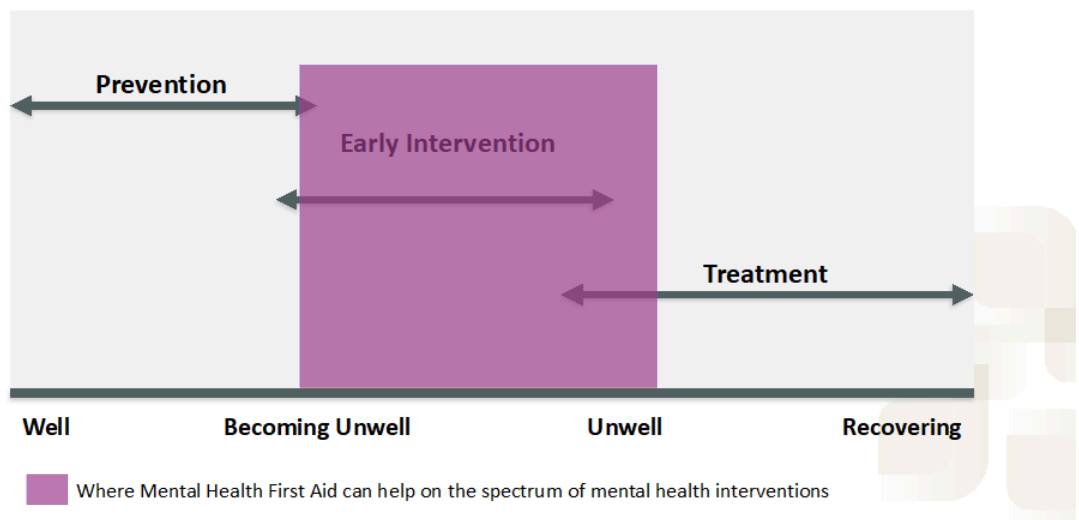
The MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) the five steps, which can be used in any order.

1. **A – Approach, assess for risk of suicide or harm.** Try to find a suitable time or place to start the conversation with the person, keeping their privacy and confidentiality in mind. If the person does not want to confide in you, encourage them to talk to someone they trust.
2. **L – Listen nonjudgmentally.** Many people experiencing a challenge or distress want to be heard first, so let the person share without interrupting them. Try to have empathy for their situation. You can get the conversation started by saying something like, “I noticed that ...” Try to be accepting, even if you don’t agree with what they are saying.
3. **G – Give reassurance and information.** After someone has shared their experiences and emotions with you, be ready to provide hope and useful facts.
4. **E – Encourage appropriate professional help.** The earlier someone gets help, the better their chances of recovery. So, it’s important to offer to help this person learn more about the options available to them.
5. **E – Encourage self-help and other support strategies.** This includes helping them identify their support network, programs within the community, and creating a personalized emotional and physical self-care plan.



How do we know MHFA is effective?

- Many people know to call 911 or administer CPR for a physical health emergency but hesitate to start conversations about mental health and substance use. MHFA provides the tools a person needs to take action.
- Studies show that MHFA training reduces stigma, improves knowledge and increases first aid actions toward people experiencing mental health and substance use challenges.
- MHFA is proven to be effective in teaching adults how to recognize and respond to signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges. Peer-reviewed studies from around the world show that individuals training in MHFA:
 - Expand their knowledge of signs, symptoms and risk factors of mental health and substance use challenges.
 - Can identify appropriate types of professionals and self-help resources for individuals with a mental health or substance use challenge.
 - Have increased confidence in and likelihood to help an individual in distress.
 - Show increased mental wellbeing themselves.



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**Mental Health
FIRST AID**
from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
MENTAL WELLBEING