

CHAPTER  
**5**

# Mental and Emotional Problems

LESSON 4

## Getting Help

### ● Before You Read

Some problems require help from mental health professionals. What are some sources of help in your community? Make a list on the lines below. After reading the lesson, add additional sources of help.

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### ● Read to Learn

#### When Help Is Needed

Many teens with mental health problems do not realize that their condition is serious. They may not understand that help is available. In fact, most adult mental disorders begin as untreated childhood and adolescent problems.

Mental health influences every part of a person's life. Teens should never feel embarrassed to talk with someone about mental and emotional problems. Teens should seek help if they experience any of the following:

- Feeling trapped or worried all the time.
- Problems with sleep, eating habits, schoolwork, job performance, or relationships.
- Abusing alcohol or other drugs.
- Becoming aggressive, violent, or reckless.

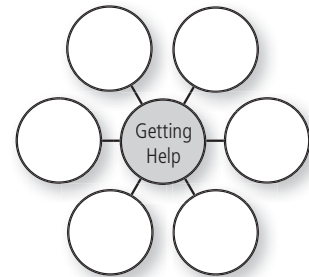
Friends and family are often the first to recognize that a problem is affecting the teen's life and relationships. They may encourage the person to seek help. ✓

### **BIG** Idea

**Mental health professionals and related agencies provide treatment and support for people with mental health problems.**

### Study Coach

**Cluster Chart** Draw a circle and label it "Getting Help." Use surrounding circles to identify professionals in the community who can help individuals with mental health problems. As you read, continue filling in the chart with more details.



### READING CHECK

**1. Explain** What are some signs that a person needs help with a mental or emotional problem?

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### Think it Over

**2. Explain** Why is it helpful to talk to someone during an emotional crisis?

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### READING CHECK

**3. List** What are some examples of people who can help teens with mental health problems?

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## Why Getting Help is Necessary

Seeking help for mental health problems can be difficult. However, mental health problems are not easy to manage without help. When asking for help, remember these facts:

- Asking for help is a sign of inner strength. It shows that you take responsibility for your own wellness.
- People who have mental health problems often cannot get better on their own.
- Talking to someone can be a great relief.
- Help covering the cost of treatment may be available.

## Where to Go for Help

It takes courage to confront a problem. Talking with a trusted adult is the easiest way to get started. Many teens receive help at school from a counselor or school nurse. They may also find help from crisis hotlines. The workers there are trained to deal with difficult mental and emotional situations. Sometimes help may be needed from more than one source. People with mental health problems should continue to seek help until they feel better.

### Who can help?

Mental health professionals work in schools, hospitals, and other agencies. They are trained to help people with mental and emotional problems. These specialists include the following:

- A **counselor** may handle personal matters or work in a school setting.
- A **school psychologist** specializes in the emotional and behavioral problems of schoolchildren.
- A **psychiatrist** is a physician who diagnoses and treats mental disorders. A psychiatrist can also prescribe medications to people who need them.
- A **neurologist** is a physician who treats physical disorders of the brain and nervous system.
- A **clinical psychologist** treats emotional and behavioral disorders through counseling. A clinical psychologist can also prescribe medications.
- A **psychiatric social worker** provides guidance and treatment for emotional problems. Psychiatric social workers usually work in hospitals, mental health clinics, or family service agencies. ✓

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## Treatment Methods

Mental health professionals may use several treatments depending on the needs of the patient. The following are the most commonly used therapy methods:

- **Psychotherapy** is an ongoing dialogue between a patient and a mental health professional. Talking therapy helps patients find the cause of a problem and find a solution.
- **Behavior therapy** is a treatment process that focuses on changing unwanted behaviors. This is done with rewards and reinforcements.
- **Cognitive therapy** helps the patient to identify and correct distorted thinking patterns. These thinking patterns can lead to destructive feelings and behaviors.
- **Family therapy** focuses on helping the family function in more positive ways. Family therapy is most successful when every family member attends.
- **Group therapy** involves treating a group of people who have similar problems. People in group therapy meet regularly with a trained counselor.
- **Drug therapy** is the use of medications to treat the symptoms of a mental disorder. It is often combined with other treatment methods.

Sometimes a mental health problem is serious enough to require hospitalization. In a hospital, patients can get care and treatment from a variety of mental health specialists. These specialists are often available 24 hours a day. ✓



### READING CHECK

- 4. Explain** Which form of therapy involves changing destructive thinking patterns?

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