



**Innovations in Counseling: Working with Minority Populations (Part 9-Session 3)
Three Misconceptions About Mental Health That Prevent People
From Accessing Help**

Webinar Follow-up Question and Answer Session With
Brianna Gaynor, PsyD, Licensed Psychologist

Question from D. Demezier:

Is the presenter aware of the acculturation level of those who were interviewed in English vs Spanish? Perhaps those who were interviewed in Spanish had lower acculturation levels than those who spoke English. Acculturation impacts help-seeking behavior which may have been the case in this study.

Answer from Presenter

Yes you are correct. Those who were interviewed in Spanish were less acculturated than Latinos in English. The specific acculturation level was not identified in the article.

Question from T. Merchan:

Can you provide some resources to talking to adolescents about mental health stigma?

Answer from Presenter

NAMI is a great resource to provide information about mental health, as well as advocacy opportunities.

<https://www.childrens.com/health-wellness/5-ways-to-end-mental-health-stigma> This is also a helpful article to give some specific steps on talking to youth about mental health stigma.

Question from L. Child:

In the past year have you noticed more people of color are reaching out for help?

Answer from Presenter

Yes I have. As the world is changing and with increased social awareness and racial injustice I believe the topic of mental health has become more prominent than it ever has. It has also led to more people overall, including people of color, reaching out for support as this has been a difficult time for us all.

Question from C. Lu:

Do you feel that the compounded shame from all the negative experiences that African Americans have experienced in this country just makes the shame of needing mental health care more intense?

Answer from Presenter

Absolutely, I believe that shame as well as upbringing plays a major part in this stigma, particularly for African Americans. Many of the messages within the African American community suggest that we portray strength, which is not in line with asking for help or with experiencing or expressing emotional distress.

Question from A. Vosburg:

How can I as a counselor and an individual promote a progressive movement for mental health access?

Answer from Presenter

Conversation. The more we can talk about mental health and be open about our own mental wellness, the better we are able to help others. Often focusing on our sphere of influence, those people we are in contact with, and normalizing mental health is a way we can begin to be an agent of change on a daily basis.

Question from J. Porter:

This is off topic, but do you know/have any resources for getting certifications in psychological assessments?

Answer from Presenter

I do not, unless you are licensed as a clinical psychologist or receive a master's in psychology where you can get specific classes in diagnostic/cognitive assessment. However, if you are interested in learning and doing this work, looking for psychometrists positions is a good choice. There are psychologists who are willing to train individuals to do this work.

Question from S.C. Kretzmann:

Do you consider that most of the debunking points are counters to self-stigma? And do some of the approaches counter both the self- and public stigmas?

Answer from Presenter

They can be for both. However, because self-stigma has been found to be so much more significant focusing on these areas initially will be much more impactful for many people to seek support. Additionally, continuing to discuss and provide information and resources for the general public can also begin to lead to changes in how the world views mental illness.

Question from S.C. Anderson:

How do we get people to think differently about mental health?

Answer from Presenter

I find normalizing mental health is extremely significant. As a psychologist, disclosing that I have and still seek my own counseling is incredibly empowering to others. Additionally, there has been a big movement by celebrities to discuss their own struggles which I believe has also helped to diminish the stigma of mental health. Overall, I believe the more we discuss mental health as an aspect of our lives, as we do other things like exercise, nutrition, and medical assessment, the more it will become something that is "ok" to discuss and no longer shameful.