



Video: What's your experience of stigma around mental health?

Asha

00:05

I think stigma is everywhere

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and it's in everything from people using "crazy" as a shorthand for "disorganised"

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or "mad" as a shorthand for "challenging".

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That kind of stigma is so ingrained in society

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that it's really difficult to escape.

David:

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People with mental disability,

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they never want to tell other people, they keep secret.

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I don't want to prove to everybody I have a mental disability

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I just want to be a normal person, you're treating me like a normal person.

Annaliese:

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I've had numerous experiences of stigma, discrimination and isolation.

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Isolation is a big symptom for me of my mental illness

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but often it's in result of an experience of stigma and discrimination

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so I will tend to isolate, or not feel particularly safe navigating the world

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because of those experiences of stigma and discrimination.

DJ:

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More focus should be put on the way people deal with people

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who have a lived experience of trauma or suffering or distress

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and I feel that if more responsibility was taken

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by the way people handle other people

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then there'd be less reason for these labels.

David:

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For Chinese people, culturally we

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don't want to admit that we have this (mental health problem).

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And, our family does not want others to know it either.

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First, we are unwilling to talk about it;

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and second, others do not understand our cultural background very well.

Asha:

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There's also the kind of discrimination and prejudice

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that comes in through things like the healthcare system

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when people are not believed because they have

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a mental health diagnosis.

David:

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How do you show you have a mental health problem?

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(inaudible) depends on doctors.

Asha:

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Where complaints are not taken seriously

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and when reasonable reactions to terrible situations

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are written off as simply being a product of madness

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rather than reasonable emotions, which they often

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almost always are, just because people don't see

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the whole situation doesn't mean that the reaction isn't real.

IC:

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It's funny, people used to say "Oh, it's all in your head"

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Exactly, it all is in my head.

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It's going to be in my head and it's gonna have

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flow-on effects to how I perceive and communicate

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with the rest of the world.

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And people think that it's just something

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you can snap out of. It came, or it took me a long time

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to accept that this is my lived reality, I'm not just

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gonna be able to take a pill and miraculously get better.

David:

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And when we are treated unfairly

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we must speak up and find some way to overcome this

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we should not suffer from both the illness, and the discrimination from others

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at the same time.

Asha:

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And that discrimination comes into play definitely

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in healthcare settings, but it can be in the workplace,

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it can be in relationships. It can be, you know, dealing with the justice system.

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It's really prevalent and often goes unquestioned.