



**July**  
**National**  
**Minority**  
**Mental Health Awareness**  
**Month**  
**2019**

Mental health conditions do not discriminate based on race, color, gender or identity. Anyone can experience the challenges of mental illness regardless of their background.

America's entire mental health system needs improvement, including when it comes to marginalized communities. When trying to access treatment, these communities have to contend with:

- Language barriers
- Cultural stigma from several angles (being a minority and for having mental illness)
- Lower access to care
- Lower chance of health care coverage
- Bias and discrimination in treatment settings

These are all in addition to the usual road blocks. Many cultures also view mental health treatment as a luxury, considering symptoms a "phase" that will eventually pass. These harmful perceptions of mental illness can further isolate individuals who desperately need help.

The fact is – the way in which individuals talk or don't talk about mental health and mental illness is influenced directly by the society and cultural that a person is a part of. The way we talk about these issues is a learned behavior. The beliefs of the church demands we broaden our way of thinking and underscore the need to address mental health issues with a unique lens while integrating the varied needs of diverse communities.



*A Prayer for Inclusion*

*Creator God, we are your people.  
We look to the future with optimism  
and with faith in you,  
as we pursue our call to provide justice and  
fullness of life for ALL people with Mental Illness.  
We pray that every man, woman and child  
may develop their potential and meet you  
in themselves and in one another.  
May we enjoy a totally welcoming community,  
with you as our center, joined hand in hand  
with our sisters and brothers.  
We ask this in Jesus' name.  
Amen.*

Based on the Pastoral Statement of  
US Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities  
– National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD)

Learn more . . .

- NAMI Greater Houston
- Mental Health America Greater Houston
- Mental health information from Medline Plus – mental health information from the Medline Plus in multiple languages
- Understanding the Barriers to Minority Mental Health written by Nursing @ USC, the online Family Nurse Practitioners (FNP) program
- Talking about Mental Health in Diverse Communities Twitter Chat from MHA (2018)

*"People of color . . . feel the stigma more keenly. In a race – conscious society, some don't want to be perceived as having yet another deficit."*

*BeBe Moore Campbell*

May 2008, the US House of Representatives announced July as BeBe Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month to promote public awareness of mental illness among minorities, to end stigma improve access to treatment and services.