

group that can meet your needs. You can also find out if there is a national organization dealing with your problem and request its newsletter.

### **OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES**

You may find that some of your problems can be solved by assistance from agencies outside the mental health system. Sometimes, practical help, such as home nursing care, Meals On Wheels or subsidized door-to-door transportation for people unable to walk, will greatly reduce the stress in your life, either as a care-giver or as a disabled person.

### **HELP FROM FRIENDS AND OTHERS**

Sometimes, the help of a trusted family member, a close friend or a member of the clergy for your religion can be a source of support. People close to you can also point you in the direction of the help you need.

### **HOW YOU CAN LEARN MORE**

Many communities have information centres that produce lists of available services, which you can view at social service agencies or public libraries. Other sources of information include:

- books about your problems, available at your public library or local bookstore.
- films, videos and audio tapes.
- courses and workshops offered through community centres, secondary schools, colleges and universities.

### **DO YOU NEED MORE HELP?**

If you need more information about the resources in your area, contact a community organization, such as the Canadian Mental Health Association, which can help you find additional support.

The Canadian Mental Health Association is a nation-wide, voluntary organization that promotes the mental health of all and supports the resilience and recovery of people experiencing mental illness. CMHA accomplishes this mission through advocacy, education, research and service.

Visit the CMHA website at [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca) today.

## **GETTING HELP WHEN & HOW**



### **MENTALLY HEALTHY PEOPLE IN A HEALTHY SOCIETY**

Canadian Mental Health Association,  
York Region Branch  
Serving York Region and South Simcoe

905-853-8477 or 1-866-208-5509  
[yorkregion@cmha-yr.on.ca](mailto:yorkregion@cmha-yr.on.ca)  
[www.cmha-yr.on.ca](http://www.cmha-yr.on.ca)



**CANADIAN MENTAL  
HEALTH ASSOCIATION**  
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE  
POUR LA SANTÉ MENTALE



Most of us go through life solving our day-to-day problems without needing help to cope with our feelings. But sometimes, things get out of hand. A severe illness, an accident or an emotional crisis can overwhelm us, at least temporarily, and suddenly we need help.

## How Do You Know If You Need Help?

Sometimes the need for help is obvious, and getting it is as simple as phoning for an ambulance or a fire truck. At other times, it can be hard to admit help is needed. This is especially true when your emotions are involved. The problem may be anything from what to do about an aging and increasingly helpless parent to a serious emotional problem such as depression.

Here are some of the reasons you may decide you need help:

- You find yourself feeling overwhelmed by feelings of anger or despair, and you cannot enjoy life anymore.
- You used to be healthy, but now you are always feeling a bit sick and you are missing more and more time from work.
- Your finances are out of control, and you are worried about being able to pay the next month's rent or mortgage payment.
- You cannot "get over" the death of someone you loved very much.
- There is too much conflict at home. You are afraid your marriage may break up.
- You are drinking too much or having some other kind of drug problem.
- You are feeling suicidal.

## How To Find The Help You Need

Most communities, especially cities and large towns, have many different sources of help, such as:

- If you feel desperate and need help immediately, you can phone or go to the emergency department of your local hospital.
- The front page of your telephone book may have the phone number of a community service referral agency.
- Your telephone book may also have the number of a crisis hotline that you can call.
- Your family doctor can help you find the professional help you need. First, he/she should start by giving you a thorough physical check-up: your problems may not be "all in your head."
- A community organization which provides information services may be able to direct you to a mental health clinic in your area.

## What Kind Of Help Is Available?

There are many different kinds of assistance available, and you should be able to find the help you need within your community through the following sources:

### PSYCHIATRIST

Your family doctor may refer you to a psychiatrist who is a medical doctor specially trained in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses. He/she may treat your problems with medication or by psychotherapy (sometimes called "talk therapy"), or a combination of both.

### PSYCHOLOGIST

You may decide to seek help from a psychologist, and you do not need a referral from your family doctor to do so. A psychologist will have a doctoral degree from a university but not a medical degree. He/she will use counselling and other methods that do not involve the use of medications. If you plan to see a psychologist, you should remember that his/her services are not necessarily fully covered by public health insurance. You may want to find out if some coverage is available through private insurance (for example, your company benefits plan) or through social assistance. You can often find a psychologist by calling your provincial psychological association.

### OTHER THERAPIST

Your family doctor or a psychiatrist may refer you to a therapist such as a social worker with specialized training. Again, you should be aware that the services offered may not be covered by an insurance plan.

### SELF-HELP GROUP

You may find it helpful to join a self-help group. These groups provide the mutual support of people who have all had similar experiences. For example, there are groups for people suffering from depression, grief, the trauma of sexual assault, eating disorders, and phobias (a phobia is an irrational, crippling fear of an object, animal or situation). Your local Canadian Mental Health Association branch or another community agency can tell you if there is a local self-help