



Education for Lifelong Mental Health

What I should know about Mental Health Concerns & IDD

What is IDD?

IDD stands for **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**. This means someone's brain works in a way that makes learning and doing daily things harder. IDD starts when a person is young and affects them throughout life.



Can people with IDD have mental health problems too?

Yes. People with IDD can have mental health problems **just like anyone else**. In fact, people with IDD often have more worries, sadness, or other mental health problems. This is **not their fault**. It is also not just “part of having IDD.”



What mental health problems can happen?

People with IDD can have:

- **Anxiety:** Feeling very worried or scared a lot.
- **Depression:** Feeling sad or hopeless for a long time.
- **OCD:** Having thoughts and actions over and over that are hard to stop.
- **PTSD:** Bad memories or feeling scared after something very upsetting happened.
- **Other mental health problems**, just like people without IDD.

How might mental health look different in people with IDD?

It is important for doctors and helpers to know about IDD, to use the right tools recognize and treat the signs of mental health struggles.

For example:

- They might **show feelings with actions**, like getting upset, hitting, or staying very quiet.
- They might **not be able to say** how sad or worried they feel.
- Changes in sleep, eating, or behavior might be the only clues.



What can help?

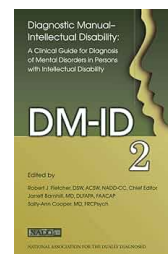
People with IDD can feel better and have a good life when using helpful strategies. Examples include:

- **Talking therapies** (like CBT) can be changed to fit the person's way of learning.
- **Medicine** may help balance brain chemicals.
- **Teaching new skills** for coping.
- **Family and staff support**, with clear routines and ways to help when the person is upset.



Why is the DM-ID-2 important?

The **DM-ID-2** is a big book that helps doctors figure out mental health problems in people with IDD. It shows how signs of depression, anxiety, and other problems might look different in people with IDD. It also gives ideas on how to **ask the right questions** and plan better care.



When should I get help?

- If you are feeling or acting very different, such as sleeping much more, eating much less, getting upset more, or not feeling like doing the things you like.
- If you feel sad or worried most days
- If you feel like hurting yourself or others

Tell a doctor, counselor, or someone you trust. **Help is out there.**

References

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