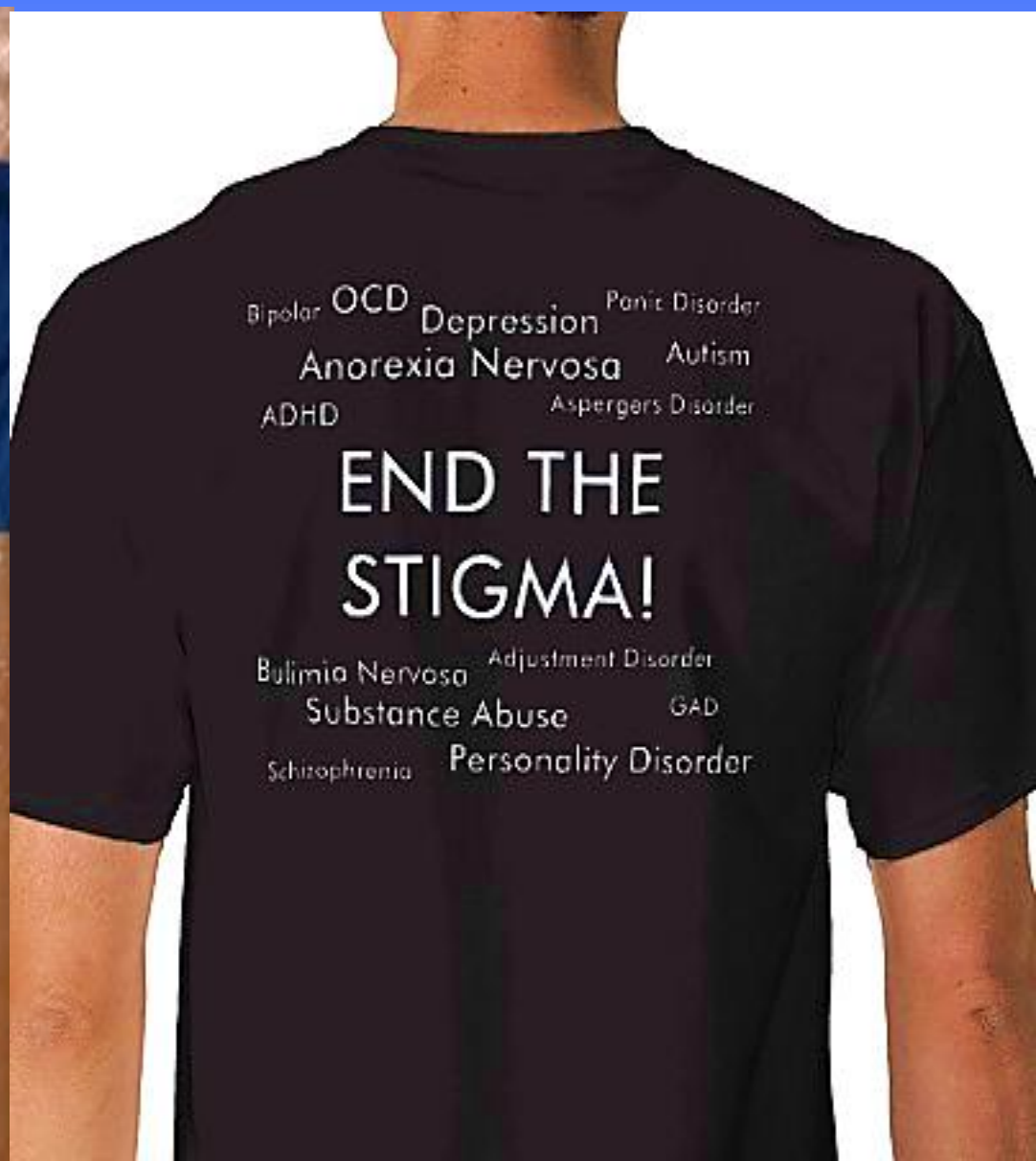


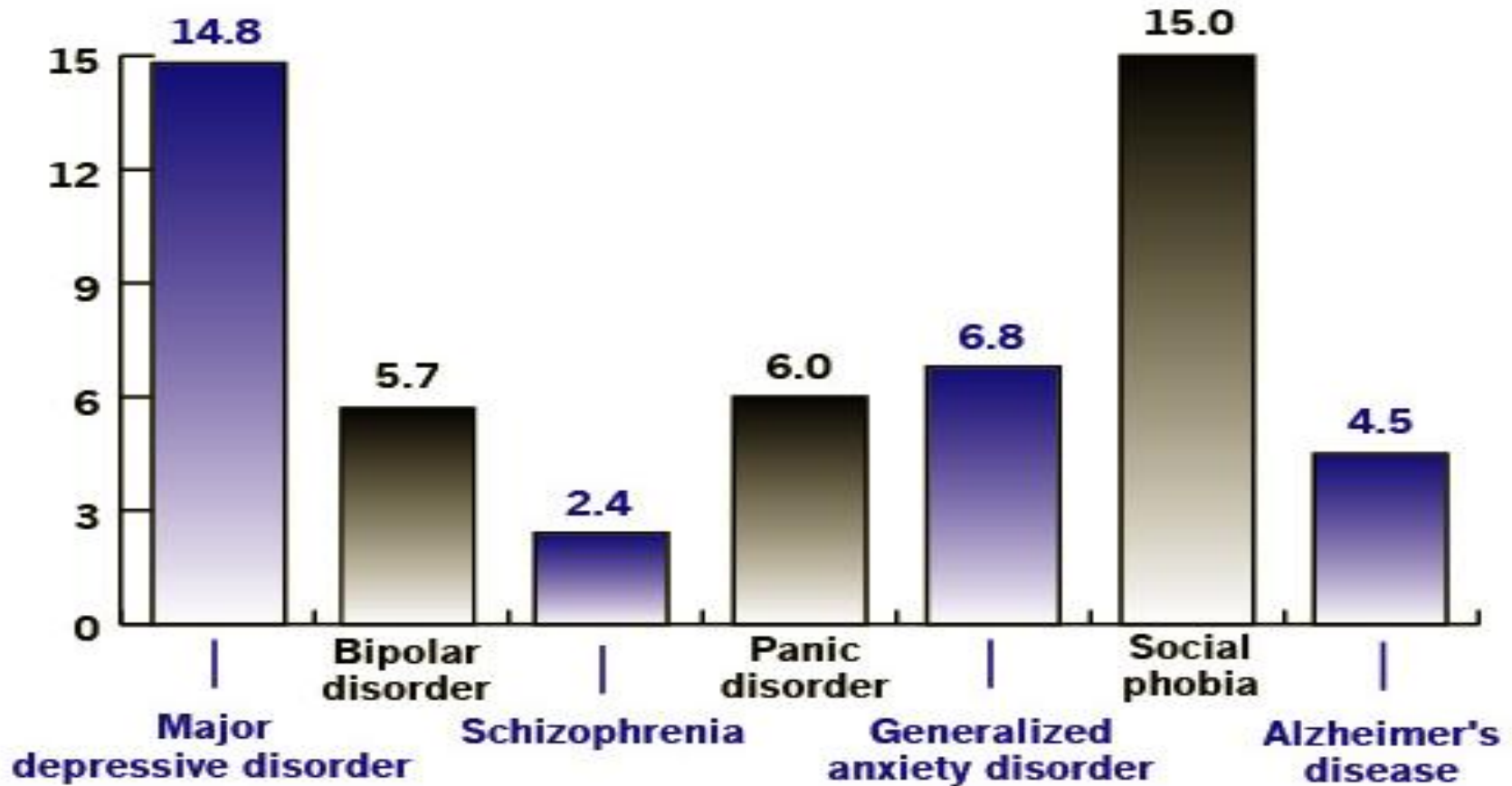
Recognizing Mental Illness in Family Members

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National Institute of Mental Health estimates 26% of adults experience a mental illness in a given year-57.7 million



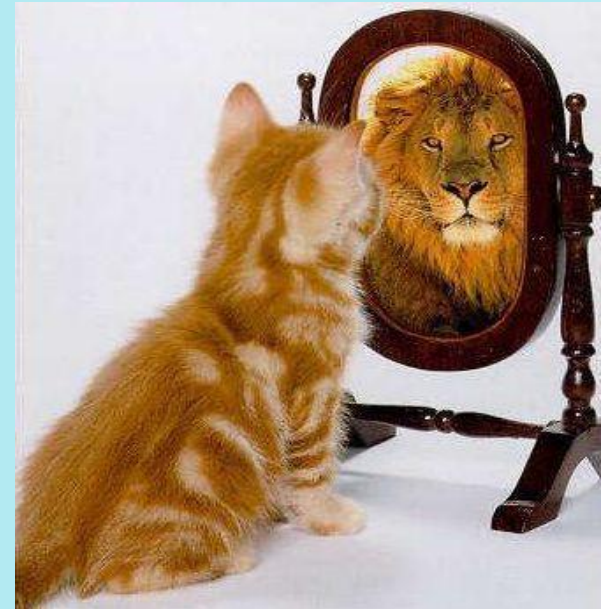
Adults Suffering Selected Mental Illness during any given year



Source: National Institute of Mental Health (2008). "The Numbers Count: Mental Disorders in America." (www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-numbers-count-mental-disorders-in-america.shtml).

Warning Signs: Perception/Thinking

- Persistent irrational fears (paranoia) or impulses
- Constant and irrational worrying
- Delusions or hearing voices when no one else is around
- Extreme guilt
- Racing thoughts that can't be stopped
- Difficulty concentrating
- Inability to track thoughts/form concepts
- Pre-occupied with suicide
- Unusual beliefs about personal powers; magical thinking



Warning Signs: Feelings

- Mood swings that are unrelated to environment or inappropriate
- Increased irritability-anger for no reason
- Lack of emotion/inappropriate emotion
- Prolonged sadness or “blahs”
- Extreme anxiety that seems out of control
- Vague feeling of being disconnected from self or surroundings



Warning Signs Related to Behavior

- Non-responsiveness to environment; No initiative; No interest in activities that have previously brought pleasure
- Isolation and loss of interest in others
- Decreased ability to cope with stressors
- Use of drugs, alcohol, or smoking to cope
- Drop in functioning: school, work, relationships
- More conflictual, easily offended, reactive to others
- Self abusing behavior (head banging, self inflicted wounds)
- Pressured speech & problems with speech that are hard to explain
- Dramatic changes in sleep, eating, or personal hygiene
- Heightened sensitivity to sights, sounds, smells, or touch
- Uncharacteristic, peculiar behavior-increase in risky behavior



Life Events that Increase Risk

- Trauma (physical/sexual abuse, domestic violence)
- Stressors “pile up”
- Multiple losses (Count ambiguous losses too)
- Divorce or separation
- Physical illness including viral infections
- Accidents with related head trauma
- Parentification as children
- Mental Illness in the intergenerational family



How Are Families Affected by Mental Illness?

- Similar to how families respond to chronic physical illnesses
- Both family and the individual are affected
- If family is functioning poorly before mental illness is diagnosed, negative effects of the illness on the family will be greater



First Stage: Crises, Chaos, Fear, Shock

SOURCE: Fox, D. *Emotional Impact of Mental illness on Families* . www.mentalhealthlibrary.info

- May occur when family member
 - Becomes delusional, paranoid
 - Hears voices when no one is present
 - Is unable to work or perform in school
 - Attempts suicide
 - Enters a manic phase
 - Has a panic attack
 - Exhibits pattern of interpersonal behavior that is atypical for them
- Likely to blame the ill person
- Likely to blame themselves
- Likely to be ashamed
- Confusion among other siblings
- May try to organize family routine and structure around illness

Needs of Family Members During First Stage

- Someone to listen without judging
- Empathy for the pain and devastation
- Support
- Encouragement to maintain other family relationships
- Reassurance that they did not cause illness
- Help in Finding Resources
 - NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)

Second Stage: Accept that Illness is Real, Learning to cope

- Anger and Resentment (sometimes directed toward God, faith congregation, professionals, or ill person)
- “Ripple effect”--Increased conflict among family members
- Sense of guilt
- Grief

Needs of Family Members During Second Stage

- Education about mental illness
- Someone to listen without judging-vent feelings
- Help in letting go of unrealistic expectations
- Need a plan for care and treatment of family member with mental illness
- Need reminder about self care
- NAMI's Family-to-Family Program
- Respite Care

Third Stage: Understanding and Acceptance, Sometimes Advocacy

- Recognize that bad things happen to good people
- Recognize that life is still worth living and we will go on
- Good self care among all family members
- Respite Care

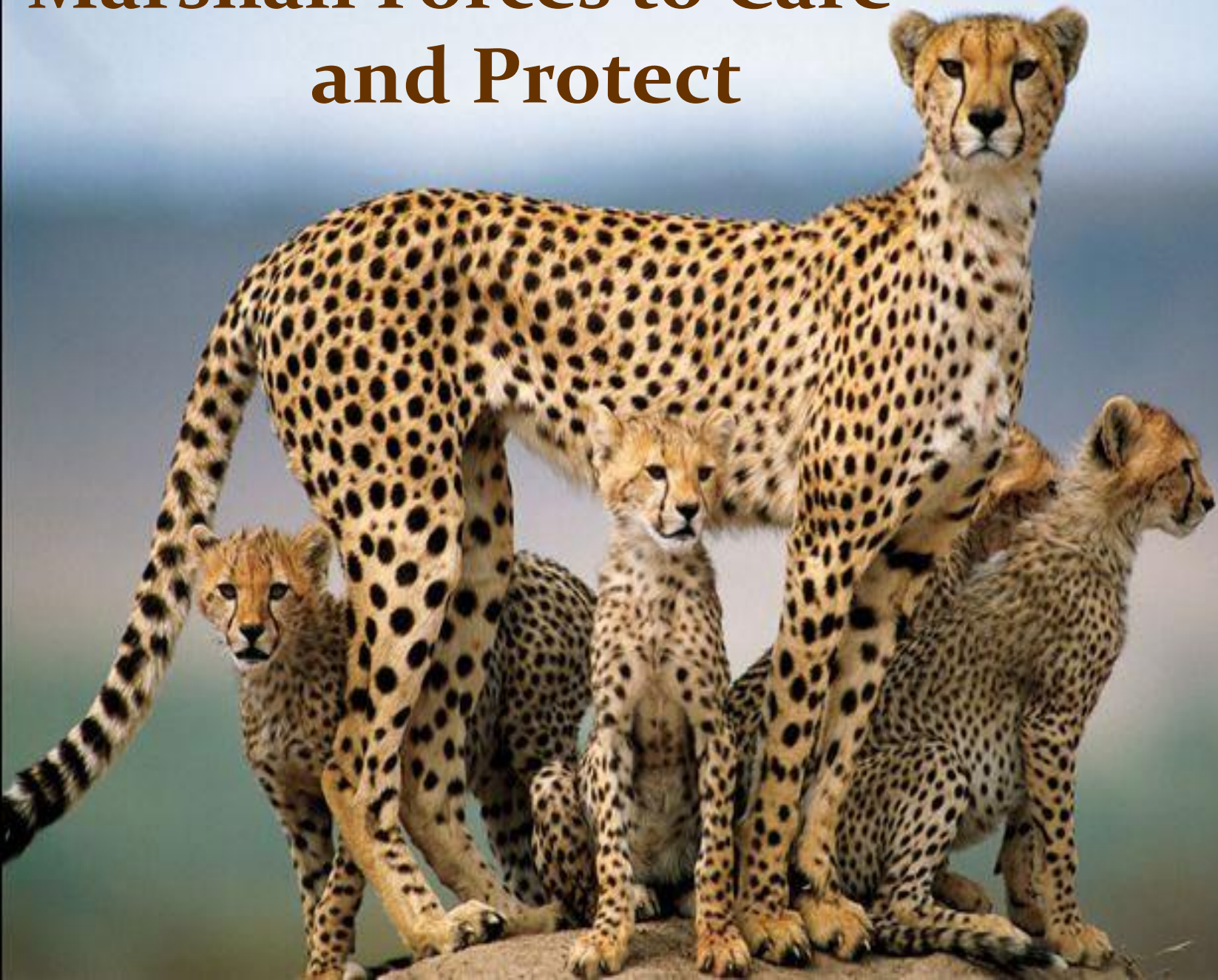
Needs of Family Members During Third Stage

- Restoring balance in daily activities and life
- Help in letting go of unrealistic expectations
- NAMI
 - National www.nami.org
 - Utah County (801) 373-2688 or 442-0591
 - State of Utah 1600 West 2200 South, Suite 202
West Valley City, UT 84121
(801)323-9900
email: education@namiut.org
Website: www.namiut.org

It helps to have others who care



Marshall Forces to Care and Protect



Keep Hope Alive!

