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THE WHALE WATCH

"Looking Out for Yourself and Others"

Busting Mental Health Stigma

The Center for Student Wellness and Counseling Services was recently selected as one of six in the world to be recognized by Kevin Love-Cleveland Cavaliers Basketball Forward – as being a "Genuine Hero" for advocating for mental health and making a positive impact on those suffering from mental health issues.

Some of you may be aware that Kevin has been public about his story of being diagnosed with anxiety after only coming to realize in recent years that anxiety had been present in his life most of his early childhood to adulthood. Kevin has been vocal about the impact of mental health stigma in his life. In the words of Kevin Love "Being depressed is exhausting".

He has been one of many professional sports athletes that has been working on busting stigma about mental health and wellbeing. In fact, Kevin was inspired by Toronto Raptor's DeMar DeRozan's story about coping with depression.



The CSWCS team invites you to come to Suite A-200, next to the library, to check out the autographed art titled "The Show-K Love"

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Stigma in Medical Education

Similar to Kevin Love's journey in competitive sports and the pressure for success, students pursuing higher education in medical professional school are often more impacted by symptoms of depression and anxiety than they realize. In fact, the very factors that landed students in the competitive field of medicine/pharmacy/graduate school, are likely related to some characteristics that lead to anxiety masked under the cloak of ambition and drive.



Stigma

What is Mental Health Stigma?

Until recent years, stigma about mental wellbeing has provided a significant roadblock in students seeking help and assistance.

Mental health stigma is when an individual feels like others are judging them or "blaming" them for their condition or they

may even blame themselves for "not trying hard enough". This can often lead to feelings of shame. This form of thinking can prevent people from seeking help when in actuality, it is the act of *not* getting help that *perpetuates* the stigma.

In fact, if individuals sought help during the early stages of experiencing mental or emotional problems, they are less likely to get to a point where they get stopped in their tracks in the progress toward their professional goals.

How to Fight Mental Health Stigma

Reframe the Stigma– Everybody experiences symptoms of depression and anxiety throughout their lifetime. Mental health issues will not take control of your life if you are proactive about addressing them and learning to live with them and work with them.

Talk Openly with Others about Mental Health- this can help to normalize your own experience and give others a chance to identify with a similar experience.

Educate Yourself and Others- learn about what you are experiencing and share it with others so that they can better understand.

Choose Empowerment Over Shame- own your own truth – everybody has to take crooked roads to achieve their personal and professional goals at certain times through their life. If you are experiencing mental or emotional concerns in your own life – work *with* them rather than *against* them. Make them a part of your story rather hiding them.

Check out other ways you can fight stigma via <https://www.nami.org/blogs/nami-blog/october-2017/9-ways-to-fight-mental-health-stigma>



Check Yourself

We encourage you to check out your mental and emotional state by taking a quick mental health screen through TAO Connect. Click here to view a PDF on [how to access and sign up for TAO.](#)

Getting Help

**The Center for Student Wellness
and Counseling Services**

330.325.6757

neomed.edu/cswc

counseling@neomed.edu

Local and National Hotlines

[Suicide Hotline Information](#)

[Suicide Prevention Resource Phone Numbers](#)

[24/7 National Crisis Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK \(8255\)](https://www.nationalcrisislifeline.org/)

[Community Crisis Resources](#)