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## Mental Illness: The Situation In Singapore

In the current community, I believe, Singaporeans are more open and accepting towards people with mental illness, as compared to previous years. As more people and more people are made known to people suffering from mental illness, and the effects, and treatment of it. (through education/ talks - for e.g. public, schools, and workplace are taught on mental illness through educational talks, programs, roadshows and etc.) However, many people are still having stigma and misconceptions against a person suffering from mental illness, thereby, causing them to stay away from them. However, this number has also reduced largely due to the fact that more people are becoming aware of the mental illness, and what it is and the effects and treatment of mental health, therefore, might be an influencing factor for them to be more open toward people with mental illness.

A study has shown that people often label a person with mental illness with negative labels such as, 'crazy', 'weird', 'dangerous' and 'scary' and that they would be ashamed of it if their family members or themselves were to be diagnosed with mental illness. However, through the study, despite the negative viewpoint of mental illness, they would still stand up for a person suffering from mental illness if they were to be made fun of and would visit their friends if they were to be admitted. (this shows that they care about persons suffering from mental illness, despite their negative perception of it)

Another study has shown that despite the stigma and misconception of mental illness, a large number of people mentioned that they believe, the best therapy for persons with mental illness is to include them in the society rather than shutting them out. (This shows that people are more open and willing to accept persons suffering from mental illness in today's society)

In conclusion, I believe that the current community in Singapore are more open and accepting towards persons suffering from mental illness as compared to previous years, as they are made more aware of it through the educational talks thereby reducing the stigma, and misconceptions of mental illness. However, there is still a small percentage of people who still have stigma and discrimination towards persons with mental illness. Therefore, in order to end this stigma against people with mental illness, each and every one of us (the society, media, school and parents and every individual) has to do our part, to educate one another and that the person suffering from mental illness are humans after all, and they all need help. It is when we are open to them, and inclusive of them in our society, then the greater of impact/ benefit it is for them.