Mental Health Video Transcript

Hi everyone, I’m Katy, your Vice-President Welfare and I am going to talk to you today about mental health. This week is Mental Health Awareness Week and it is more important than ever right now to support one another, look after our mental health and be aware with how we are feeling.

Mental health has lots of different definitions but the Mental Health Foundation define being mentally well as: you are making the most of your potential, you are able to cope with life so the day-to-day tasks as well as struggles which can sometimes get in the way and lastly playing a full part in different roles whether that is part of your family, in the workplace, amongst friends or any other community you are a part of. Mental health is on a spectrum, as circumstances change people’s mental health can change, it can also change with age and other factors.

It is important to recognise that everyone has days of feeling stressed, down or scared and most of the time those feelings pass however for some people, those feelings manifest themselves in to something more serious and some extra support is needed to help someone manage those feelings. In certain communities and sometimes in society in general, there is a stigma of mental health and people are seen as weak for reaching for help but just like physical health, it is important to get treatment if you are not well and it is important to remember that you do deserve support.

Mental ill-health or mental health problems can range from feeling a little worried about a few things in life to serious long-term conditions which may need regular monitoring and treatment. You may have heard of conditions such as anxiety and depression, these are the two most common mental health conditions and they can affect people in different ways. They might also present in people differently and this is why a non-judgemental approach to mental health is so important.
In this country alone, 1 in 6 people report experiencing a mental health problem each week and there are many reasons for this including worries about finances, employment, social media pressures, workload, broken relationships etc. there is so much for people to balance in the world and some people just need a bit more help than others in helping them cope during the tougher times.

As part of this video I also wanted to give a bit more information on the two most common mental health conditions: anxiety and depression. This information will just explain a summary of what the condition is and the different signs and symptoms to look out for if you are worried about someone you know. Anxiety  or Generalised Anxiety is an umbrella term for lots of different types of anxiety disorders however anxiety is defined as uncontrollable worry about different things in your day-to-day life, some symptoms of this include feeling restless, faster breathing, feeling of your heart beating really fast, sweating or hot flushes and sometimes panic attacks. There are lots of different triggers which can cause anxiety but some are childhood trauma, feeling lonely or isolated, being out of employment and ill physical health.

Depression is the other very common mental health condition which again can affect people in different ways. Depression is a low mood which lasts for a long time and in mild cases it can make day-to-day tasks feel worthless and harder to do, in more severe cases it can be life-threatening.  When the low feelings are interfering more and more in your life and not going away, it could be a sign that some help is needed. Some symptoms of depression include: feelings of guilt and worthlessness, low confidence or self-esteem, finding no pleasure in things you usually enjoy and sometimes suicidal thoughts. In some people depression is caused by bereavement, big changes in life e.g moving house, feeling isolated, alcohol, drugs and sometimes it can be genetic.

So why am I telling you all this? As mentioned at the beginning, this week is Mental Health Awareness week as it says on the tin, it is so important to raise awareness of mental health because it affects to many people and help is out there. Over the course of the week, I am holding different events relating to mental health from a virtual drop-in to a quiz but also focusing on the theme of this year which is ‘kindness’. I think everyone can agree that in the last few weeks there has been so much uncertainty and people have pulled together more than ever to lend a hand and provide support in lots of different ways. During someone’s darkest times, a small and simple act of kindness really can uplift someone’s mood and can give them that encouragement to take that brave step in asking for help.

Here at the Students’ Union, we may be working remotely but we are working hard to represent students and provide support. Please know that you are not alone, talk to someone and sharing a problem really can be the first step to recovery.

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, please call 999 or go to your nearest A&E department.