

Extension Education
Tasha Killian News Column
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Mental Health First Aid By Tasha Killian

Imagine you are in a car accident. You are hurt and need help. A stranger who witnessed the accident shows up on scene before the paramedics make it. This stranger is trained in first aid and CPR. They are able to help you with your injury until someone with more training is there to help you out. As you receive help from the paramedics and then care from doctors, they all mention the great help this stranger was able to provide. The only way they were able to provide this service was because they received training and certifications that led to them being able to help.

Now imagine you are struggling with a mental health challenge. You are hurt and need help. A friend notices you are struggling and is able to reach out to you. They are able to help you get in touch with the resources and aid you need in order to face the challenges you are experiencing. They know what to say, where to send you and what to do to keep you safe from any harm that could be done. When you begin to receive treatment for your mental health challenges, you realize this person helped you in a way that others couldn't, and they were able to do it because they had received the training to be able to help.

Approximately 1 in 5 American adults struggle with mental illness in a given year. If you think about it, that means that 1 in every 5 people you meet and interact with could be struggling with a mental health illness. That 1 in 5 could be someone in your family. It could be someone you work with, it could be your best friend. Unfortunately, many of these people begin to feel hopeless and lost. They don't know where to go for help and they feel their only solution is death by suicide. Knowing how to help them through their struggles with mental health is important. It is important because you can be the difference in this person's life. You can save their life. You can learn the skills to be able to support them, guide them to resources, and keep them safe. You can do this through becoming Mental Health First Aid certified.

Mental Health First Aid is an important training because, just like first aid training, it can save lives. The training is a simple, eight-hour course based on research and resources provided by the National Institute on Mental Health. It covers the major mental health issues faced today including Anxiety, Schizophrenia, Depression, Substance Use Disorder and much more. You will learn the truths regarding mental health. It helps you know where the resources are so that you can confidently talk someone through a struggle and help them find the right assistance they need. The course helps trainees build skills and confidence to be able to face difficult situations such as talking to someone about suicide. It goes over the signs and symptoms of each disorder and it helps trainees gain an understanding of what someone experiencing these disorders might feel.

Mental health is a challenge that many people face. It can be hard to talk about or even admit to facing these challenges. There are many barriers that make it difficult to reach out and ask for help. These include stigma, not knowing where care is available and feeling isolated and

alone in your challenges. Someone receiving Mental Health First Aid training is able to help a person suffering mental health challenges overcome these barriers and receive the help they need. By receiving this training, you can make a difference in someone's life.

The next Adult Mental Health First Aid training in Juab County will be held on November 17th, 2018 at 9:00 am. This training will be taught by myself and another certified instructor. It will last for the 8 hours, with a thirty-minute lunch break. The course will be held at the Cultural Hall in the Juab County Center building at 160 North Main Street, Nephi, Utah. This course is free of cost due to generous donations by American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Each participant will receive a manual and all study materials needed. This course could help you save a life. To register for the course, call the Extension office at 435-623-3450.