Let's talk about myths about mental health

When you think of someone with a mental illness, what type of person do you think of? Is it someone that has “completely lost it”, or someone you believe to be weak and who can’t “keep it together”? Despite a general increase in mental health awareness, these perceptions still have a strong hold on us. The best way to bring about change in attitudes is to break mental myths that force us to live up to being the *Super* student, friend or child - all the time.

Here are three t*op myths about mental health and some ways to debunk them:*

Myth #1:

“Counselling is only for seriously depressed or suicidal people who can’t handle the stress. I just need to deal with it.”

As we attempt to live up to unreasonable, self-imposed expectations, we push ourselves harder and go longer without mental (or physical) breaks. We continue to push forward at all cost instead of lowering our armour and reaching out for help..

Debunking myth #1:

Even Superman had his Kryptonite. Counselling is intended to help with issues, big and small. Consider reaching out for help as you need it in order to deal with daily stressors instead of waiting for your superpowers to disintegrate completely.

Myth #2:

“Asking for help is a sign of weakness.”

Keeping things to ourselves or trying to tackle issues alone can work sometimes. However, they can easily develop into serious burnout or depression when the stress is long-term, or when we push aside our own needs. This is especially hard for sandwich-generation parents, or for employees looking to make a good impression at work. Stress tends to be accepted as part of our lives instead of as a sign for a much needed break.

Debunking myth #2:

Batman never hesitated to ask Robin for help. Learn to ask for help with a small problem that you are dealing with, and experience some reprieve and support from someone you trust. Try to put yourself at the top of your list once in a while.

Myth #3:

“Everyone will know if I am seeing a counsellor”

Many people avoid reaching out for counselling help out of fear that their friends or family will find out that they simply can’t keep up with their school work or living aboard. This assumption prevents people from seeking help for stress or anxiety that in time can lead to larger mental health concerns.

Debunking myth #3:

Access to counselling in today’s modern world means it is available in online and can ensure you’re privacy if that is desired. Rest assured that your counselling assistance is confidential and will not be shared with anyone unless you choose to tell them.

Myths are powerful beliefs and so we need to look at how we contribute to their growth and allow them to build self-imposed barriers to getting the much needed help we may need. Take a step in the right direction and pick up one myth that is holding you back – and smash it. You know you’ve got the power to do it!