

# What's in a Meme:

## Using Social Networking to Promote Strengths-Based Mental Health

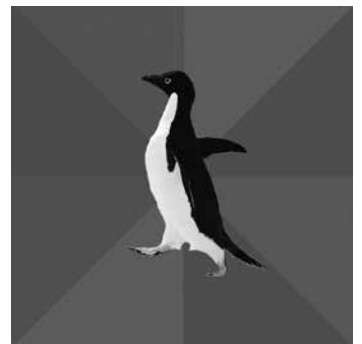
In December 2013, Pathways hosted its first-ever social media meme contest! If you're not sure what a meme is, don't worry: you're not the only one. Formally, a meme is a bit of cultural knowledge – an idea, behavior or style – that passes quickly from person to person. An Internet meme is a meme in the form of an image with a quirky caption that can go “viral” on various social media platforms.

Memes range from a cute dog speaking poor English, to manatees giving calming wisdom, to Keanu Reeves looking really sad. For young adults, memes are a way to connect with each other in a fun way. On a deeper level, memes can also serve to process, challenge, laugh at, and sometimes confront issues such as poverty, drug abuse, and celebrity culture.

Latching onto this concept, we asked our 18-30 year old fans on Facebook to create a strengths-based meme that demonstrates how they manage their mental health. The memes with the most votes won \$100, \$50, and \$25 respectively. The entries to the contest were funny, inspiring, and interesting.

### AUTHOR

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See the graphics that go with our 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners at [pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/memes](http://pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/memes):

