



# Keep Your Head in the Game

FosterClub and the Better Futures Project at Portland State University





# Workshop Title: Keeping Your Head in the Game

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## Workshop Description:

When young people head off to adulthood and higher education and stretch their brains to build skills and knowledge, it's important that they "mind their Mind." Too often, mental health and wellness is overlooked for foster youth who are successfully transitioning to higher education and adulthood. Ignoring issues like stress and anxiety can sabotage the educational path of even the brightest minds. In this workshop we'll dive into the specific challenges youth transitioning from foster care might face while they are pursuing future goals like higher education, and we will discuss how young people and adult supporters can proactively help maintain mental health and wellness. We will provide resources and tools to better support these youth as well as share suggestions from youth who have transitioned successfully.

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## Sponsors:

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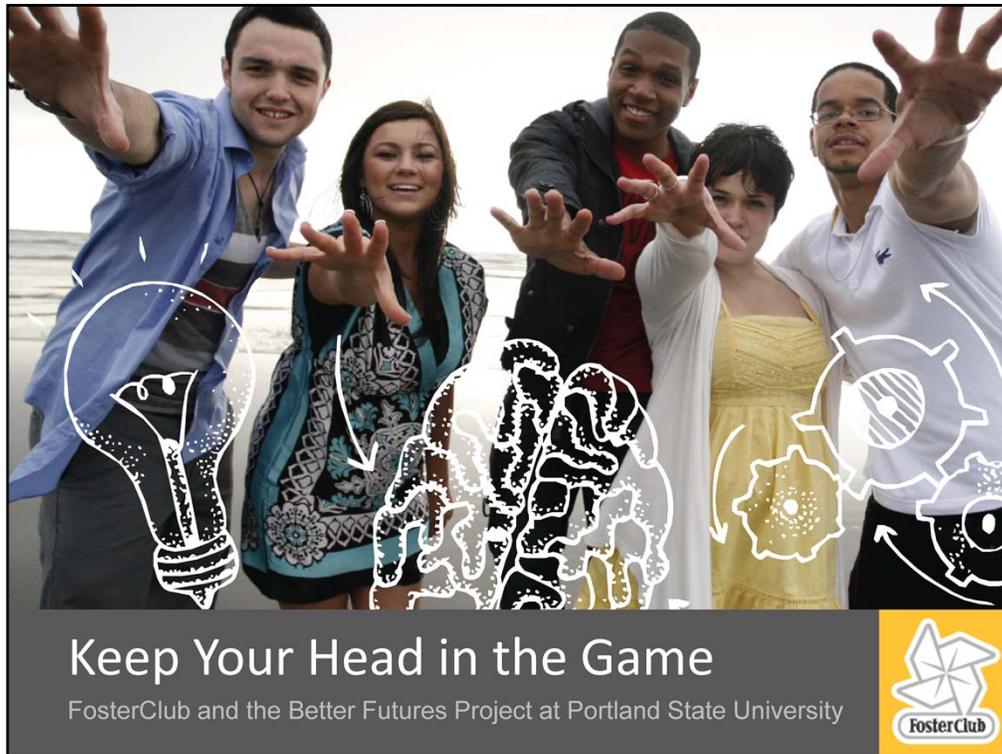
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b. <u>Handouts</u> (Celebrity Head in the Game pdf with pictures and Celebrity Head in the Game word document are distributed to audience members during Powerpoint presentation)	
c. <u>Answer key</u> (this is used by facilitators to provide right answers to celebrity quiz after participants have had a chance to guess; it is not distributed to audience members).	
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(to be distributed to audience at end of presentation and sent back to PSU at <a href="mailto:geenens@pdx.edu">geenens@pdx.edu</a> )	



## **FINAL MASTER**

If you have taken the option to “dress” the room with mental health memes and art pieces (suggested), address your favorite and ask others if they have a favorite.

Outline:

### **Workshop overview**

- > Introductions
- > Mastermind

### **Dealing with the stigma**

- > Society Mime – stigmas/treatment of young people with mental health
- > Celebrity mental health

### **Navigating**

- > Stacey’ s story

### **Mental health 101**

- Team trivia
- Charting a course (map)

### **DEBRIEF and END**

## Introductions

FosterClub: the national network of young people in foster care



**fosterclub**  
the national network for young people in foster care

Better Futures Project at Portland State University



Better Futures developed and validated an intervention to assist young people in foster care with serious mental health conditions to prepare for and participate in post-secondary education.

### **Introduce yourself:**

Name, years in foster care, School, Describe the workshop steps and what the participants can expect. We will be discussing Mental Health challenges today and how they can or cannot limit us from being successful, in going to college and in our lives. We will be talking about stigmas, biases, self care and wellness.

Do a brief overview of FosterClub and Better Futures Project at Portland State University. This workshop is to encourage participants to normalize MH issues and learn that MH challenges are NOT a barrier to reaching their goals. Anyone can go to college and have successful future lives.



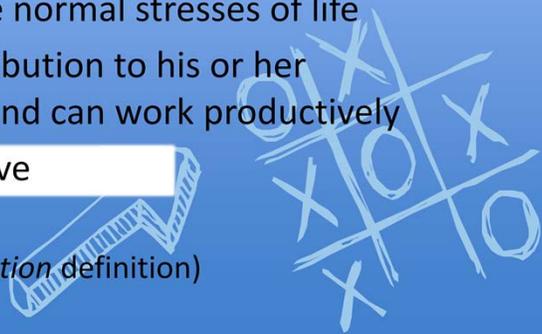
**How it works:** Break up in teams by table or numbering off. Should be larger groups.

**Directions :** Work within your teams. You'll have about 5 minutes to discuss the questions and to figure out the right answers. Then we'll score how each team did – at the end of the session, we'll see which team wins! Have candy to hand out to winners.

# Team Trivia – Round 1

1. Someone who has positive mental health has the ability to:
  - a. recognize their own abilities
  - b. cope with the normal stresses of life
  - c. make a contribution to his or her community, and can work productively
  - d. all of the above

*(World Health Organization definition)*



## Team Trivia – Round 1

2. Mental health challenges cross over all boundaries of race and class.

a. True

b. False



## Team Trivia – Round 1

3. According to recent studies, the percentage of young people in foster care identified as having a mental health condition is:

- a. Less than 5%
- b. 20%
- c. 32%
- d. Up to 80%

*While up to 80% of young people in foster care have a mental health issue, research shows that only about 30% receive treatment. (Dore, 2005)*



## Team Trivia – Round 1

4. People who access mental health services
  - a. experience a mental health challenge forever
  - b. can be intelligent, strong, and capable
  - c. are weak and unable to control themselves
  - d. are difficult to get along with and rarely have friends



## Team Trivia – Round 1

5. Environmental factors like trauma can play a part in the development of mental health challenges.

a. True

b. False



Hand out candy to everyone and discuss this activity.

**Questions to ask:**

Do you think most people think this way?

What are other ideas people have about mental health issues?

What other factors can play into the development of mental health challenges?

## Activity: Society Mime

**Activity:** Break up folks in groups. (Read below) and hand out sticky notes to everyone asking them to not look at them.

**Script:**

**We will be dividing into groups of approx 7-8 people**

**Each person in your group will receive a sticky note with a label on it. Some ideas are: Homeless person, Comedian, Drama Queen, Pit Bull, President Obama, Depression, Shark, kitten, cockroach, land mine**

**Do NOT look at your own label.**

**PLACE the sticky note on your forehead – WITHOUT looking at the label.**

**You will proceed to communicate with people in your group according to how you think SOCIETY would treat the label they are wearing.**

**At the same time, you should try to guess your OWN LABEL by the way you are being treated in your group.**

**Keep the label secret from the person you are talking to.**

**Remember – the objective is not to treat someone how you would want to be treated - but rather how they think SOCIETY IN GENERAL treats their character.**

**You'll have 5 minutes to interact.**

**Debrief:**

**Ask the group about the game and how did it feel to them?**

**Some of you may have played this game at parties and elsewhere but we think that it brings up a serious point about how mental health issues and mental health care are perceived by everyone. Stigma and bias are real especially about our Mental Health and how we all deal with stress in our lives. Societies perceptions are important because they may prevent us from feeling like we can be successful in our lives and we may believe the ideas people say about our challenges. Either way our view of our own mental health if not positive, may cause us to limit our choices in life like going to college or having a career. Does it have to be a barrier to our success in our lives or is it just a small part to all of what we are?**

**“How did you feel about how you were treated?”**



## Celebrity Mental Health Match Game

### **Activity**

#### **Script:**

Each group will receive a CELEBRITY MATCH worksheet

You' ll also receive a page with Mental Health CHALLENGES

Each of these celebrities – in real life – either currently (or has in the past) struggled with a mental health issue.

Here' s the challenge: your group will have ten minutes to match each celebrity with the diagnosis they were given.

Then – you' ll need to match the correct description with the celebrity and the mental health challenge.

Ready – GO!

#### **Debrief: Open up conversation about this activity. Did they like it? Were they surprised?**

Just like these celebrities:

- Mental health issues are often not visible by others
- People with mental health issues are capable of accomplishing great things
- We are not defined by these labels that we are given
- Each of these celebrities are successful in their lives and many have embraced and acknowledged their mental health challenge.



Introduce Stacey's story

## Stacey: background

1. Stacey is a high school senior and has a team: DHS, mental health, and CASA
2. Stacey's high school career was severely interrupted because of anxiety
3. Stacey is a bit socially awkward and very eager to please peers
4. Stacey wants to go to college

### SCRIPT:

Her teams over-protectiveness limits her goals and creates barriers of furthering and normalizing her education

Stacey's goal is to convince her team she is capable of going to college , which is her dream.

On the next slides a "Devils Advocate" will assume his roll. He will focus on the negative when others in the audience are giving positive feedback. Prompts are listed on next slides and the hope is the participants will see things differently than the Devil's Advocate.

## Stacey: question

Is college a realistic goal for a young person who struggles with mental health issues?



**Devil's advocate**- creates this dialogue below that is untrue to trigger discussion.

She's already struggled in high school – college takes a lot more effort and independence.

What if she melts down and she's not near home?

The workload will add to her stress.

She could put dangerous situations on campus – won't know how to deal with it?

What if she starts self-medicating – there's so much drinking on college campuses?

She could fall into depression and we won't know about it because we won't see her as regularly

She could have trouble navigating the campus – there are too many people, too many classes, too many options, just SO overwhelming..

## Stacey: request

Besides pursuing her college dream, she also wants to have more freedom to do school activities and to be with friends.



### **Devil' s Advocate:**

Less structure – more freedom = could make bad decisions

Could be pressured by peers into sex, drugs, alcohol

Lose focus on the academics

Could be rejected by peers – be made fun of or bullied

Could fall into depression if not accepted

She could become oppositional or defiant to her VERY strict and conservative foster parents

## Stacey: support team

1. How can Stacey's ally support her?
2. How would you approach the team if you were in Stacey's position?
3. What are the TYPICAL responses you would expect to hear from the team?

## Stacey: troubleshooting

Stacey's team has a lot of reservations — they don't believe she can handle the stress of college life.

Stacey wants to prove she is capable.

Stacey works with her mentor to make an action plan to convince her team that she can handle the responsibility and to achieve her goal of greater educational freedom.

## Stacey: potential solutions

Stacey takes one college course to see if she can manage

Stacey shows her initiative by taking on some extra-curricular activities

Stacey demonstrates responsibility by getting a job

Maintain good grades – engage a tutor

Show me your initiative

Increase extra-curricular activities

## Stacey: review

1. What ADDITIONAL challenges or roadblocks do you see Stacey facing (keeping in mind her mental health challenges) while in college?
2. What types of supports or accommodations will she need?

Academic advisory – set up regular appointments

Resources for people with disabilities

Peer support groups

Tutoring from the start

Planned visits home, and planned visits to campus – to stay connect

**Debrief:** Explain about the Devil's Advocate and ask what they were feeling about that person. Are there folks like this? What are some strategies to address them?



Break up into groups again for round 2 of Team Trivia

## Team Trivia-Round 2

Stress can be:

- a. Good
- b. Bad
- C. Both

Answer: C

## Stress and Mental Health Challenges are a typical part of life

What are examples of stress while in foster care?

What are examples of stress while in college?

ANSWER: ALL OF THEM Ask for more examples

## Other examples of stress

- Possible examples of stress while in foster care:
  - New environment (changing placements, schools)
  - Meeting new people
  - Court
  - School homework
- Possible examples of stress while in college?:
  - New environment
  - Living on your own
  - Meeting new people
  - College homework

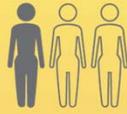
ANSWER: ALL OF THEM Ask for more examples

# Mental Health and College

Among ALL college students:



– Two out of three women and two out of five men have high levels of anxiety while in college. **TRUE or FALSE?**



– One out of three women and one out of four men report depression while in college. **TRUE or FALSE?**

– Between one-quarter and one-third of students in college have emotional difficulties that could be diagnosed as a mental health condition. **TRUE or FALSE?**

Answer: All of them Are TRUE.

## Tips for taking care of yourself while in college

What are some ideas, tips or strategies for taking care of yourself while in college?

Since we now know college and life in general can be stressful, let's talk about some tips for taking care of yourself.

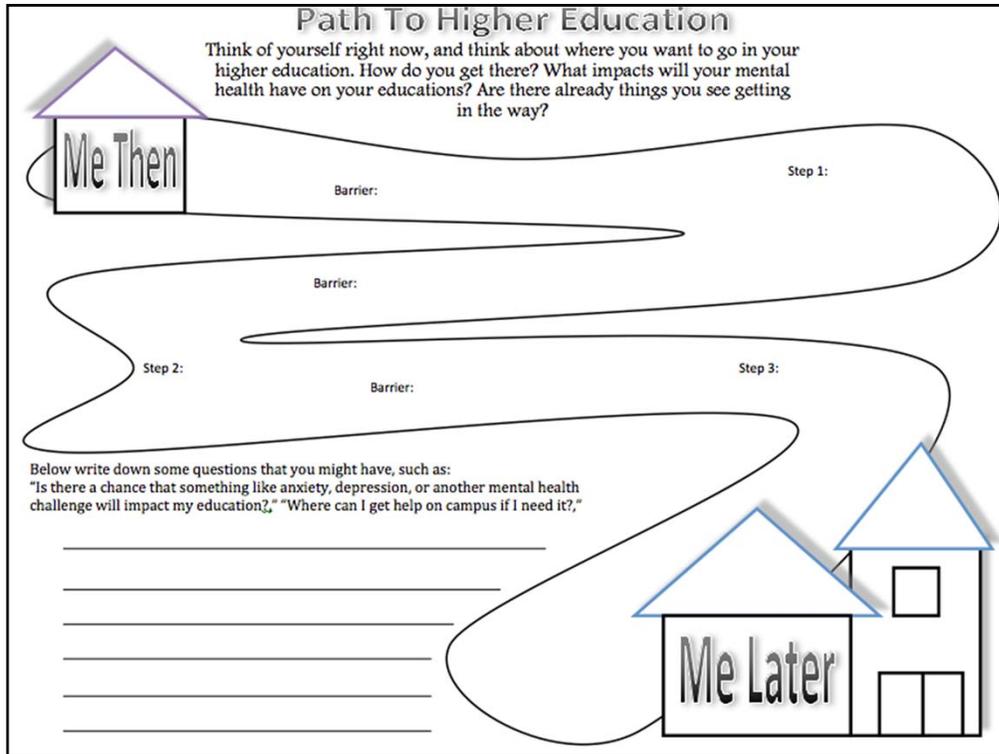
## Other tips for taking care of yourself while in college

- Know where to get mental health support (e.g. student health center, counseling center in the community)
- Learn about accommodations that may be available by visiting your college's disability office
- Explore other campus supports such as academic advisors, student affairs, dormitory resident assistants.
- Think about your living arrangements (e.g. pros and cons of staying in the dorms or having a roommate).
- Get enough sleep!
- Take time for self-care (e.g, relaxation breaks, writing in a journal, physical activity, listening to music)
- Connect with friends/allies.

## Tips around medication

- Know the name and dosage of your medications and what they are used for.
- If you would like to change your medication, work with your doctor to understand your options.
- “Partying” can happen in college. Talk with your doctor about how alcohol and drugs can affect your mental health and any medications you are taking.
- Other ideas/suggestions?

Since many of us at college may be on medication what is the best way to take care of ourselves while there? Read the list.



**How it works:**

This is a road map through the path to higher education. We ask that you consider where you started in your path. Many of us have had mental health issues be barriers at times while others may not be sure that they have faced any mental health challenges at all and that is okay. The point is that we are able to look at our lives and make smart decisions about our mental health regardless of the specific challenges we face in the same way that we think about our physical health or when we are thinking about career and job planning. Please take a few minutes to fill this sheet out and think about your personal challenges on your path as you may be referring to them later. List periods of stress or barriers and successes.

**Debrief:**

Presenters share their personal roadmap. Where are you going and what challenges do you face that you are comfortable sharing with the audience? What about others?

**What do we see about the lines. Do we all have something that get's in our way. And yet we all get there. Some faster then others. But we all meet in the end. What are some things to help us get there when addressing mental health and stress?**



Discuss Good stress vs Bad stress at college, resiliency and explain mental health challenges are experienced by many people who attend college. Discuss resources that can be used to be successful. (Health services, Wellness tools, Allies, friends, family and more). Stress and Mental Health Challenges are a part of life. (Foster Care, changing placements, saying goodbye, surviving Difficult events, college, meeting new people, living on own.) End with "What do you do to take care of self?"

What did you learn here today? Was it helpful?

Thank the audience and hand out resource lists and evaluations. Make sure to collect evaluations and return it to FosterClub.

Thank you.



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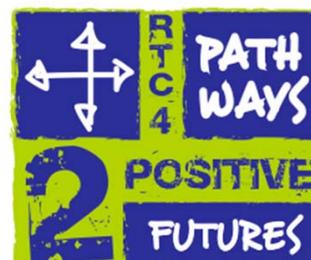
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the national  
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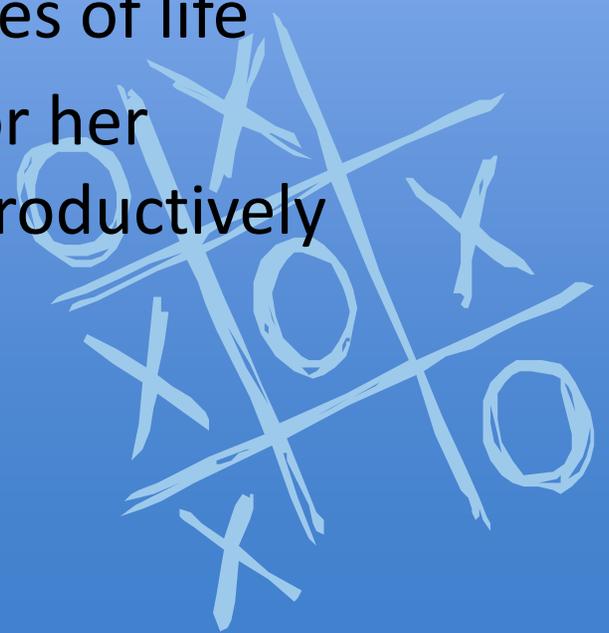
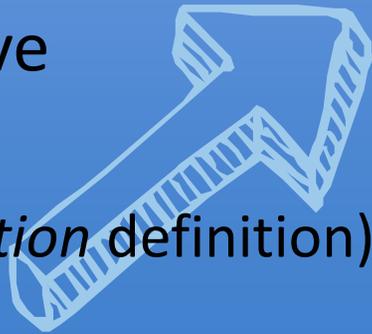
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# Team Trivia: Round 1

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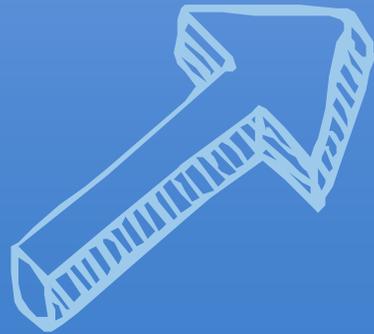
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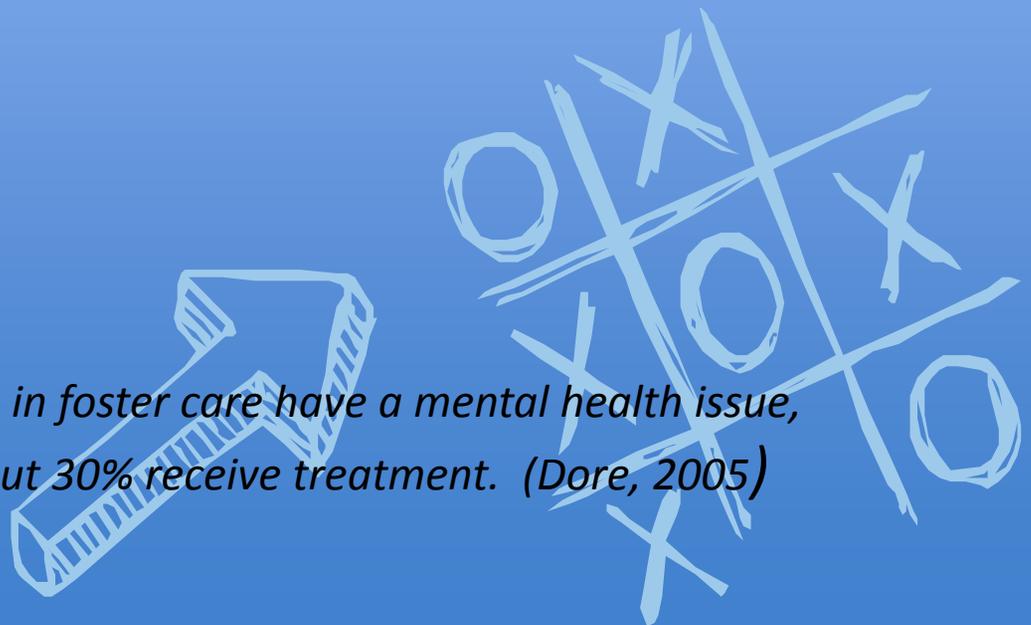
2. Mental health challenges cross over all boundaries of race and class.
- a. True
  - b. False



# Team Trivia – Round 1

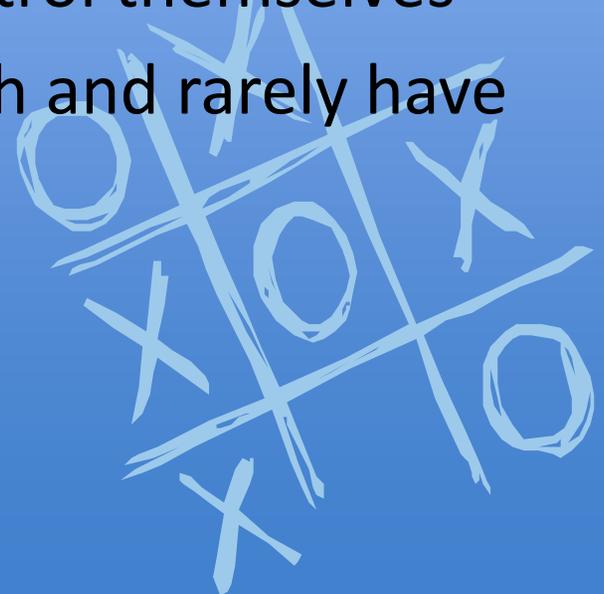
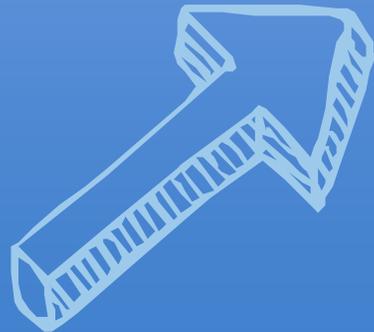
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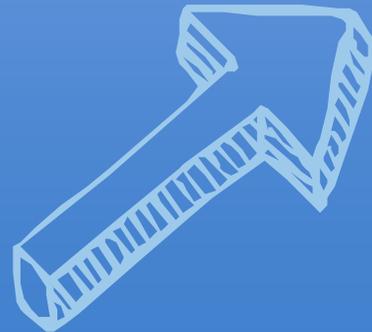
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4. People who access mental health services
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# Team Trivia – Round 1

5. Environmental factors like trauma can play a part in the development of mental health challenges.
- a. True
  - b. False



# Activity: Society Mime

# Celebrity Mental Health Match Game

A Look In the Life of a Foster Youth  
with Mental Health Challenges:

# Stacey's Story

# Stacey: background

1. Stacey is a high school senior and has a team: DHS, mental health, and CASA
2. Stacey's high school career was severely interrupted because of anxiety
3. Stacey is a bit socially awkward and very eager to please peers
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# Stacey: question

Is college a realistic goal for a young person who struggles with mental health issues?



# Stacey: request

Besides pursuing her college dream, she also wants to have more freedom to do school activities and to be with friends.



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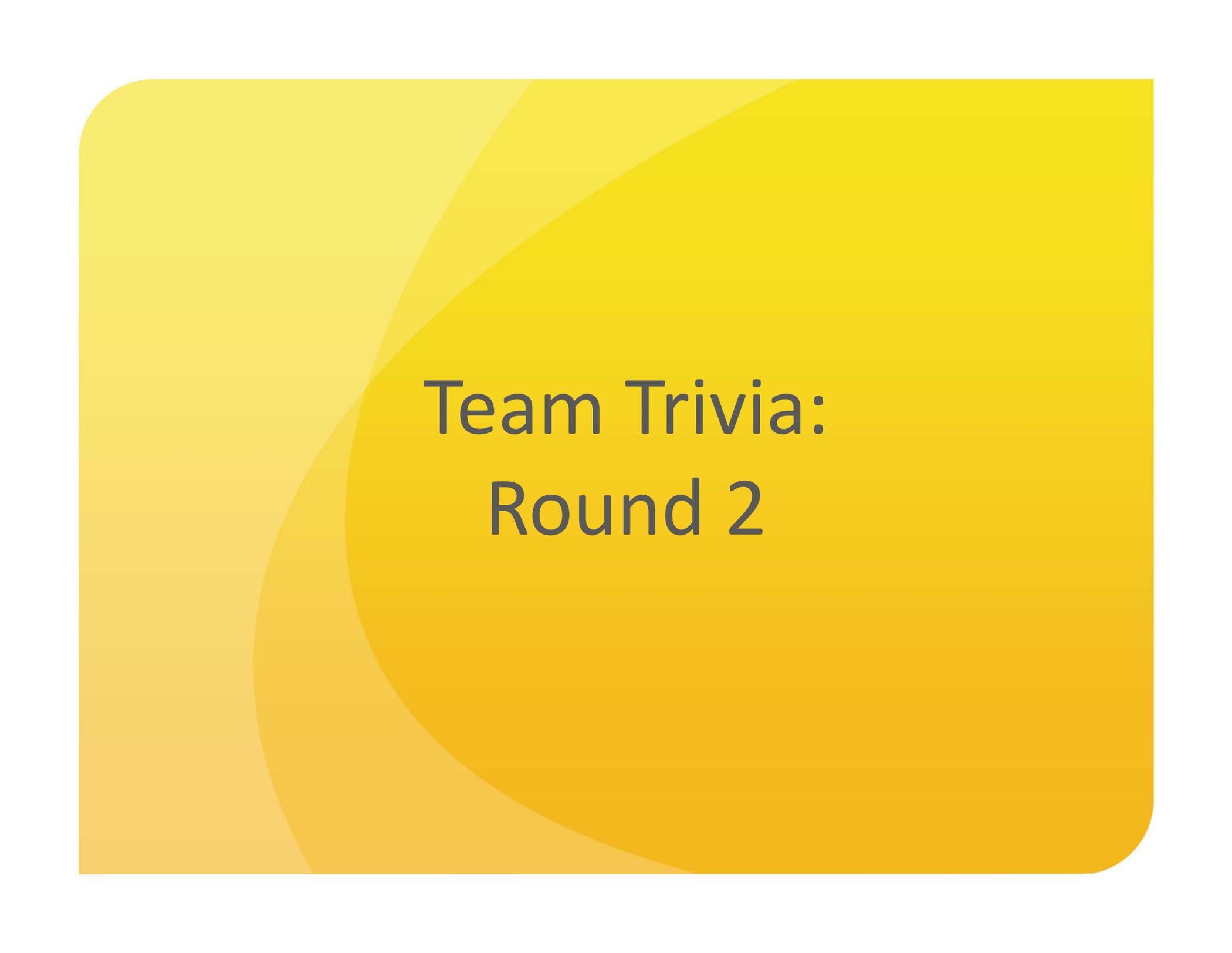
Stacey takes one college course to see if she can manage

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# Stacey: review

1. What ADDITIONAL challenges or roadblocks do you see Stacey facing (keeping in mind her mental health challenges) while in college?
2. What types of supports or accommodations will she need?

The background is a vibrant yellow with several overlapping, semi-transparent circles of varying shades, creating a layered, abstract effect. The circles are centered and overlap each other, with some appearing more prominent than others.

# Team Trivia: Round 2

# Team Trivia-Round 2

Stress can be:

- a. Good
- b. Bad
- C. Both

# Stress and Mental Health Challenges are a typical part of life

What are examples of stress while in foster care?

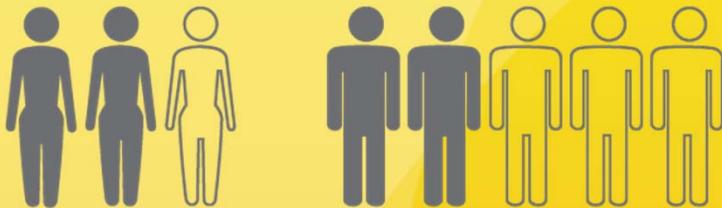
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# Other examples of stress

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# Mental Health and College

Among ALL college students:



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# Tips for taking care of yourself while in college

What are some ideas, tips or strategies for taking care of yourself while in college?

# Other tips for taking care of yourself while in college

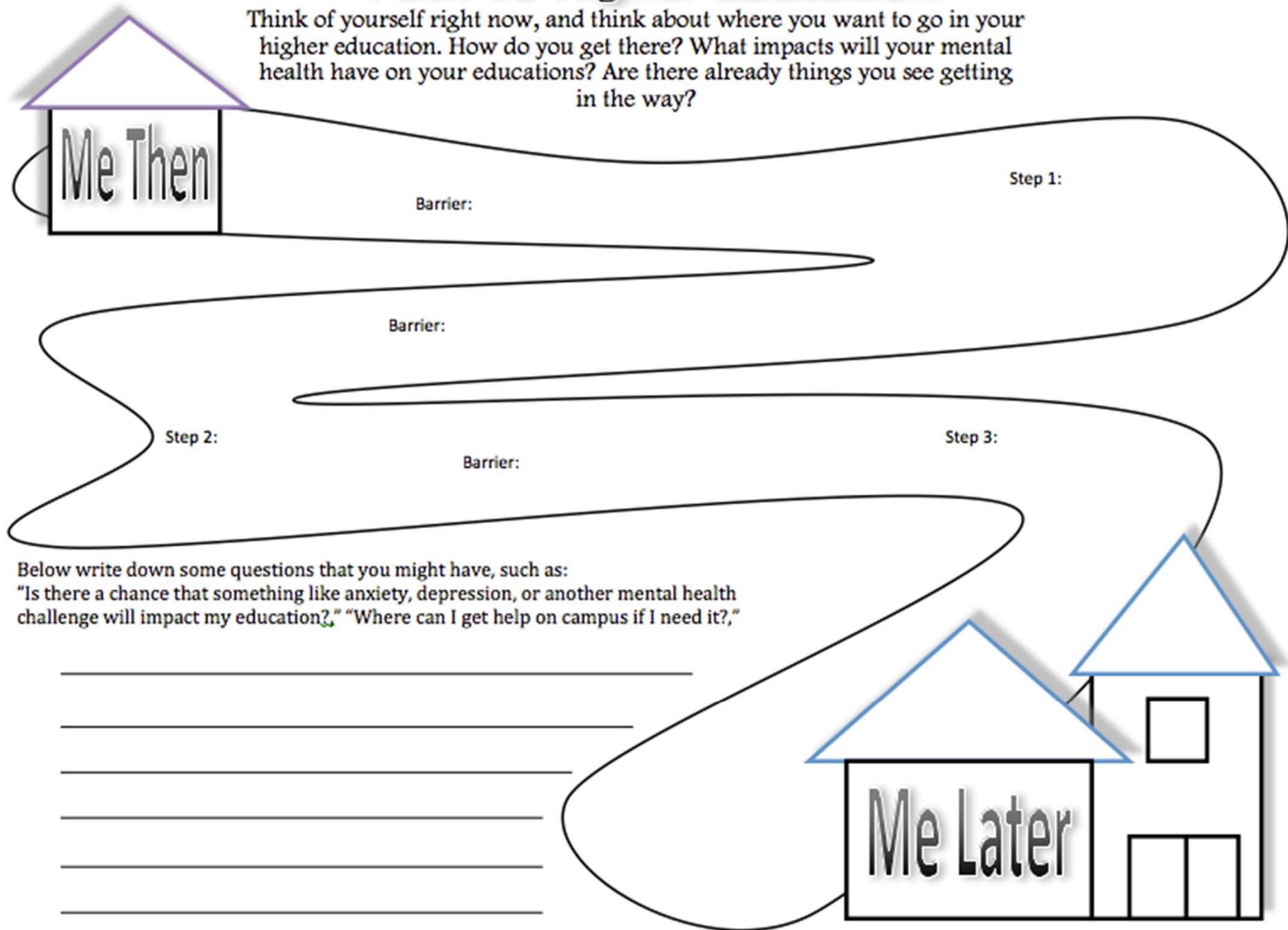
- Know where to get mental health support (e.g. student health center, counseling center in the community)
- Learn about accommodations that may be available by visiting your college's disability office
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- Think about your living arrangements (e.g. pros and cons of staying in the dorms or having a roommate).
- Get enough sleep!
- Take time for self-care (e.g. relaxation breaks, writing in a journal, physical activity, listening to music)
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# Tips around medication

- Know the name and dosage of your medications and what they are used for.
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- “Partying” can happen in college. Talk with your doctor about how alcohol and drugs can affect your mental health and any medications you are taking.
- Other ideas/suggestions?

# Path To Higher Education

Think of yourself right now, and think about where you want to go in your higher education. How do you get there? What impacts will your mental health have on your educations? Are there already things you see getting in the way?



Below write down some questions that you might have, such as:  
"Is there a chance that something like anxiety, depression, or another mental health challenge will impact my education?" "Where can I get help on campus if I need it?"

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# Thank you

For more information,  
contact FosterClub:

[www.fosterclub.com](http://www.fosterclub.com)

503-717-1552



## Case Study: Stacey's Journey to College

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### Part I:

Stacey was in her last year of high school and working closely with her peer coach around her goals to go to college to pursue a veterinary degree because she loves animals. Stacey has daily efforts to manage her mental health and she is a part of multiple systems. She receives services from Department of Health Services (DHS), Disability Services (DD), and Special Education therefore was on modified diploma and being tracked for sheltered work. Due to her disability she faces a lot of adversity from her team because they fear that she will fail or be disappointed with her goals. Although Stacey's ultimate goal is to be a college student at a public university, her team realizes that there are many barriers associated with achieving this goal. Stacey and her peer coach have attempted to receive supports from her team around her college goals. Put yourself in Stacey's shoes and in small groups please discuss whether or not going to college is a realistic goal to set. If so, how would you convince your team of supports that you are capable of going to college and the steps you would need to take to get there? If you are hesitant and think you would be in over your head and college is not an obtainable goal for you because of similar or different barriers that exist in your own personal life, please discuss your hesitation in what would keep you from pursuing college?

### Part II:

Continuing to put yourself in Stacey's place, you and your coach realized that the path to college wouldn't be an easy one so you both decide that approaching the team with your ideas and goals would be best. In the team meeting you express your desires to pursue college after high school as well as being able to attend a public school and the freedom to do activities outside of your foster home. In small groups, please discuss the different outcomes or possibilities of the team meeting as well as various responses you would expect to hear from the people that are a part of your transition team?

### Part III:

At first your team was very against you going to college, and wasn't supportive but in the end you were able to pursue your college goals. You could have easily given up on your dream or even worse, lashed out on your team but instead you and your coach decided to take your goals and break it up into smaller steps. During this process you realized you would have to negotiate and compromise so you asked the team if you could take one college course to prove that you could handle the responsibility. To their surprise, you did very well in the course and continued to build on that goal and finally were able to convince the team that with the right amount of supports and appropriate accommodations, you could succeed in that environment. Now that you are a college student what have you learned about yourself and how will this help you continue to be successful in college? Also, how will you continue to make sure your voice

and opinion about your life is being heard and validated if you face the same barriers in other areas of your life?

**Outcome:**

NOW, Stacey is a senior in public schooling and is taking some courses with the general population and is an enrolled college student at PCC. Stacey also rides her bike to and from school daily with no supervision and is able to go out with her friends outside of school and home and she knows how to get supports if she ever becomes anxious or overwhelmed. Although Stacey was faced with many obstacles and barriers and a team that did not initially believe in her, through Better Futures she learned many important life skills. For example, how to advocate for herself, how to be assertive and respectful, negotiation and compromise, to ask questions around what she needs, self-care and most importantly to not give up on her dreams.

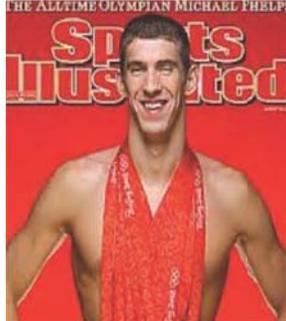


# Celebrity Match



Herschel Walker  
Football player & Heisman  
trophy winner

Definition # \_\_\_\_\_



Michael Phelps  
Olympic Swimmer

Definition # \_\_\_\_\_



Paula Deen  
Cook & TV Personality

Definition # \_\_\_\_\_



Catherine Zeta Jones  
Actress

Definition # \_\_\_\_\_



Sir Elton John  
Musician

Definition # \_\_\_\_\_



Jim Carrey  
Actor

Definition # \_\_\_\_\_



Michael Jackson  
Musical Legend

Definition # \_\_\_\_\_



Jessica Alba  
Actress

Definition # \_\_\_\_\_



Johnny Depp  
Actor

Definition # \_\_\_\_\_



# The Mastermind Celebrity Match

Lots of people struggle with mental health issues, including celebrities. See how many of celebrities you can match to the mental health issue they experience. Then see if your team can match a definition with each mental health issue.

## Challenge #1: Match each celebrity with one of these mental health challenges.

1. ADHD
2. Bipolar Disorder
3. Bulimia
4. Clinical Depression
5. Dissociative identity disorder
6. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
7. Panic Attacks
8. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
9. Self-injury

## Challenge #2: Match each mental health issue with one of these definitions. List # below.

\_\_\_\_\_ A person is influenced by two or more distinct personalities, or identities, which prevent them from acting like themselves.

\_\_\_\_\_ The act of deliberately harming your own body, such as cutting or burning yourself. It's not meant as a suicide attempt. Rather, self-injury is an way to cope with emotional pain, intense anger and frustration.

\_\_\_\_\_ A sudden episode of intense fear that triggers severe physical reactions when there is no real danger or apparent cause.

\_\_\_\_\_ Marked by intense mood swings, usually with remissions and recurrences. Depressive symptoms may be most common and can last at least a full day and perhaps several weeks or longer.

\_\_\_\_\_ A mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event.

\_\_\_\_\_ An eating issue in which people binge, or uncontrollably consume large amounts of food, and then expel the food by vomiting or using laxatives because they don't want to gain weight.

\_\_\_\_\_ Causes noticeable disruptions in daily life, such as work, school or social activities. May cause a loss of interest or pleasure in most activities, significant weight loss or gain, sleeping too much or not being able to sleep nearly every day, or feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt.

\_\_\_\_\_ An anxiety condition characterized by recurrent and persistent thoughts and feelings and repetitive, ritualized behaviors.

\_\_\_\_\_ A chronic condition that includes some combination of problems, such as difficulty sustaining attention, hyperactivity and impulsive behavior.



## Celebrity Match Answers

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- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder | <u>Michael Phelps</u>       |
| 2. Bipolar Disorder                         | <u>Catherine Zeta Jones</u> |
| 3. Bulimia                                  | <u>Elton John</u>           |
| 4. Clinical Depression                      | <u>Jim Carrey</u>           |
| 5. Dissociative Identity Disorder           | <u>Herschel Walker</u>      |
| 6. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder            | <u>Jessica Alba</u>         |
| 7. Panic Attacks                            | <u>Paula Deen</u>           |
| 8. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder           | <u>Michael Jackson</u>      |
| 9. Self-injury                              | <u>Johnny Depp</u>          |



# Wellness Workshop Evaluation

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Please circle the choice that best matches your answer to the question and share your comments.

**1. The workshop was useful to me.**

Not at all                                      A little                                      Quite a bit                                      A lot

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**2. I enjoyed participating in the workshop.**

Not at all                                      A little                                      Quite a bit                                      A lot

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**3. The workshop helped me identify some of my mental health challenges.**

Not at all                                      A little                                      Quite a bit                                      A lot

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**4. The workshop helped me develop a plan to address these challenges when pursuing higher education.**

Not at all                                      A little                                      Quite a bit                                      A lot

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. The workshop helped me learn how to prepare myself for college or vocational training.**

Not at all                                      A little                                      Quite a bit                                      A lot

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. The workshop made me feel more confident about preparing for college or vocational training.**

Not at all                                      A little                                      Quite a bit                                      A lot

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please share your experience of the workshop and any suggestions you have for future workshops. For each of the areas below, rate the Institute on a scale of 1 – 10, “1” being the worst experience and “10” being the best experience.**

1. Support to prepare for the workshop, 1 - 10 \_\_\_\_\_
2. Role play, 1 - 10 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Ice breaker activity, 1 - 10 \_\_\_\_\_
4. Group breakout sessions, 1 - 10 \_\_\_\_\_
5. Workshop speakers, 1 - 10 \_\_\_\_\_
6. Real stories, 1 - 10 \_\_\_\_\_
7. Question and answer period, 1 - 10 \_\_\_\_\_
8. Materials and handouts, 1 – 10 \_\_\_\_\_
9. Overall rating of the workshop, 1 - 10 \_\_\_\_\_
10. Which part of the workshop did you most enjoy and why?
12. What should be changed to improve the workshop?