

*Mental Health:
Considerations for Postsecondary
Educational Institutions*

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Outline

- Mental Health: Where are we.... and
- What has happened?
- Mental health on campus: Goals and suggestions
- “Special Topics”

What is Mental Health?

A state of successful performance of mental functions, resulting in:

- Productive activities (e.g., work, academics)
- Fulfilling relationships (e.g., friends, family)
- Ability to adapt, change, and cope with adversity

We are content and we can deal with stresses

What is Mental Illness?

A term used to describe a range of mental disorders affecting:

- **Thinking** (e.g., difficulty in concentrating, memory)
- **Mood** (e.g., feeling sad, lacking a sense of pleasure, loss of hope)
- **Behaviour** (e.g., restlessness, difficulty sleeping)

**Associated with distress
and impaired functioning**

NCHA findings

**In the last year:
Felt things were hopeless**

	2016	2013
University of Waterloo	61.5	55.8
Reference Group	59.6	53.8

NCHA findings

In the last year:

Felt overwhelmed by all you had to do

	2016	2013
University of Waterloo	89.8	87.8
Reference Group	89.5	89.3

NCHA findings

In the last year:

Felt so depressed that it was difficult to function

	2016	2013
University of Waterloo	44.5	38.9
Reference Group	44.4	37.5

NCHA findings

**In the last year:
Seriously Considered Suicide**

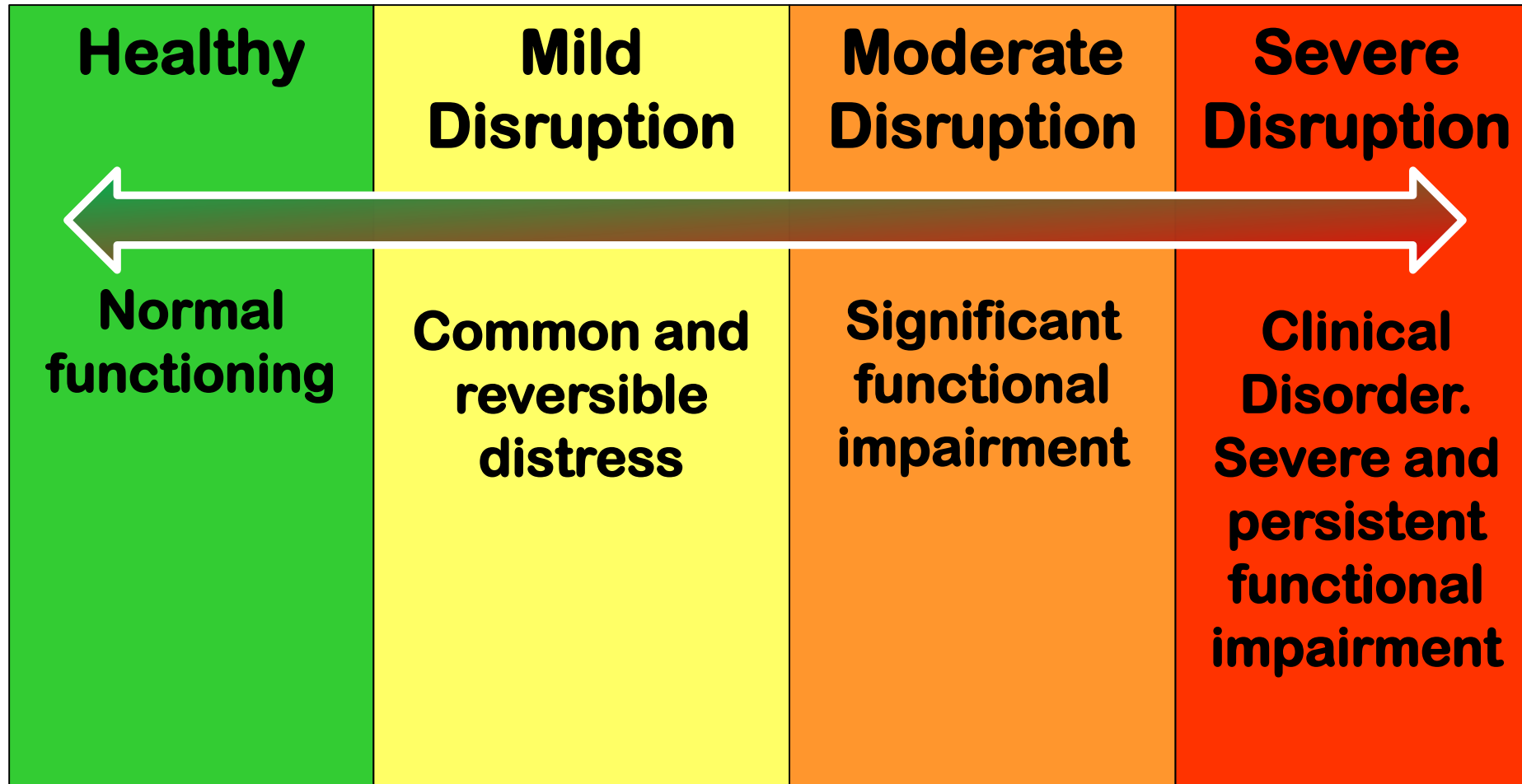
	2016	2013
University of Waterloo	14	11.9
Reference Group	13	9.5

WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

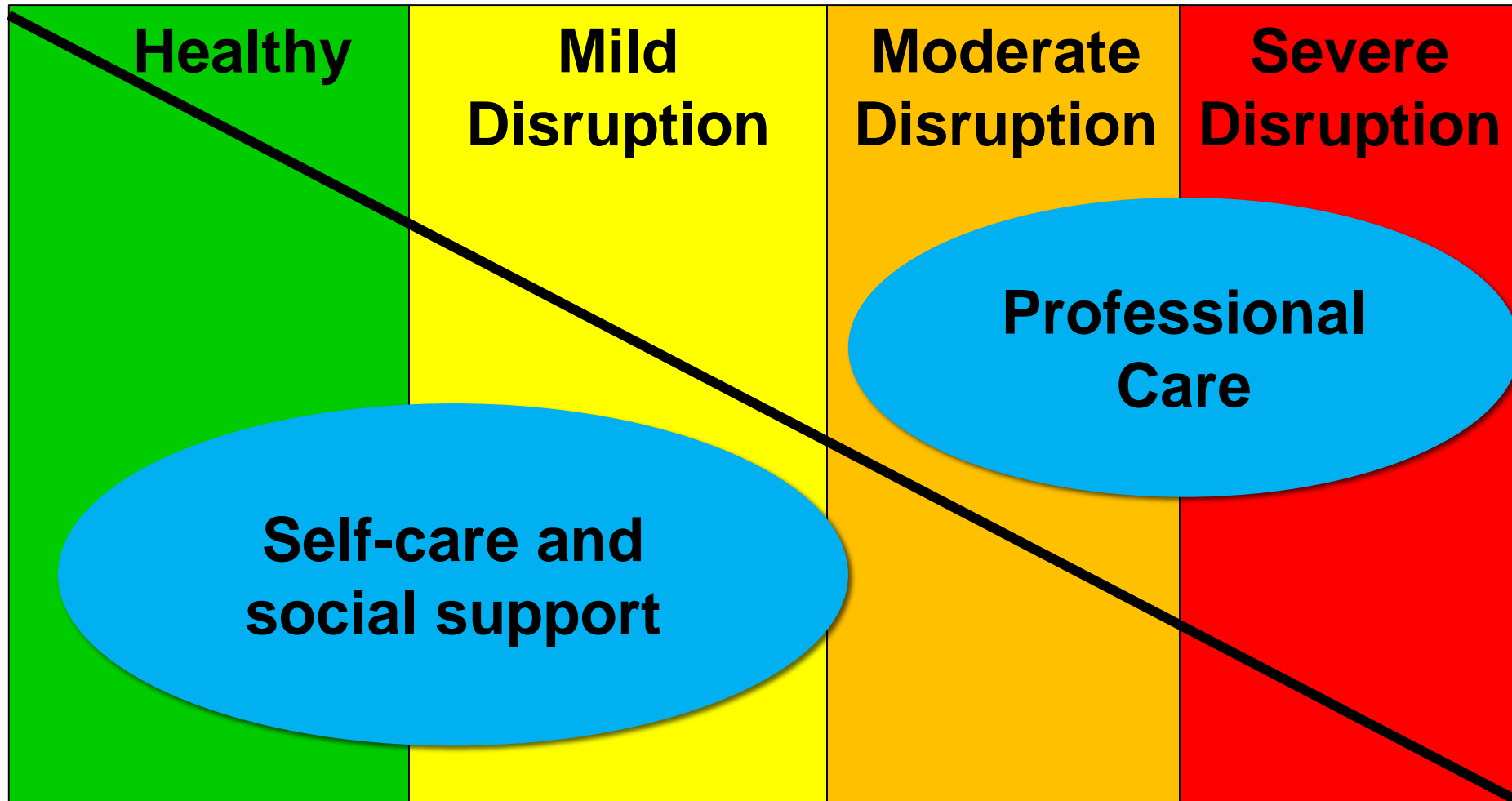
Mental Health on campus: Goals and suggestions



The Mental Health Continuum



Supports and Resources



What is Mental Illness?

- **Mood** (e.g., feeling sad, lacking a sense of pleasure, loss of hope)

Depression

How is depression different from a “bad mood”?

1. Lasts more than two weeks and is **persistent**
2. More disruptive:
 - Interferes with ability to work/study & have satisfying relationships
 - Causes **physical symptoms** and affects **thoughts, emotions, & behaviours**
3. Lack of precipitants or “triggers”

What else do faculty/staff/student leaders want to know?

Behaviours of concern and what to do

FOCUS ON:

Specific behaviours

- Signs of distress

- Markedly unusual thinking/behaviour

- Performance issues

- Provocative/aggressive behaviour

- Disclosure of distressing experience

Development of effective, compassionate response

- **Behaviours of Concern Form**
- Available at [St. Lawrence Collage](#)
- Click on MENTAL HEALTH – BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN

What else do faculty/staff/student leaders want to know?

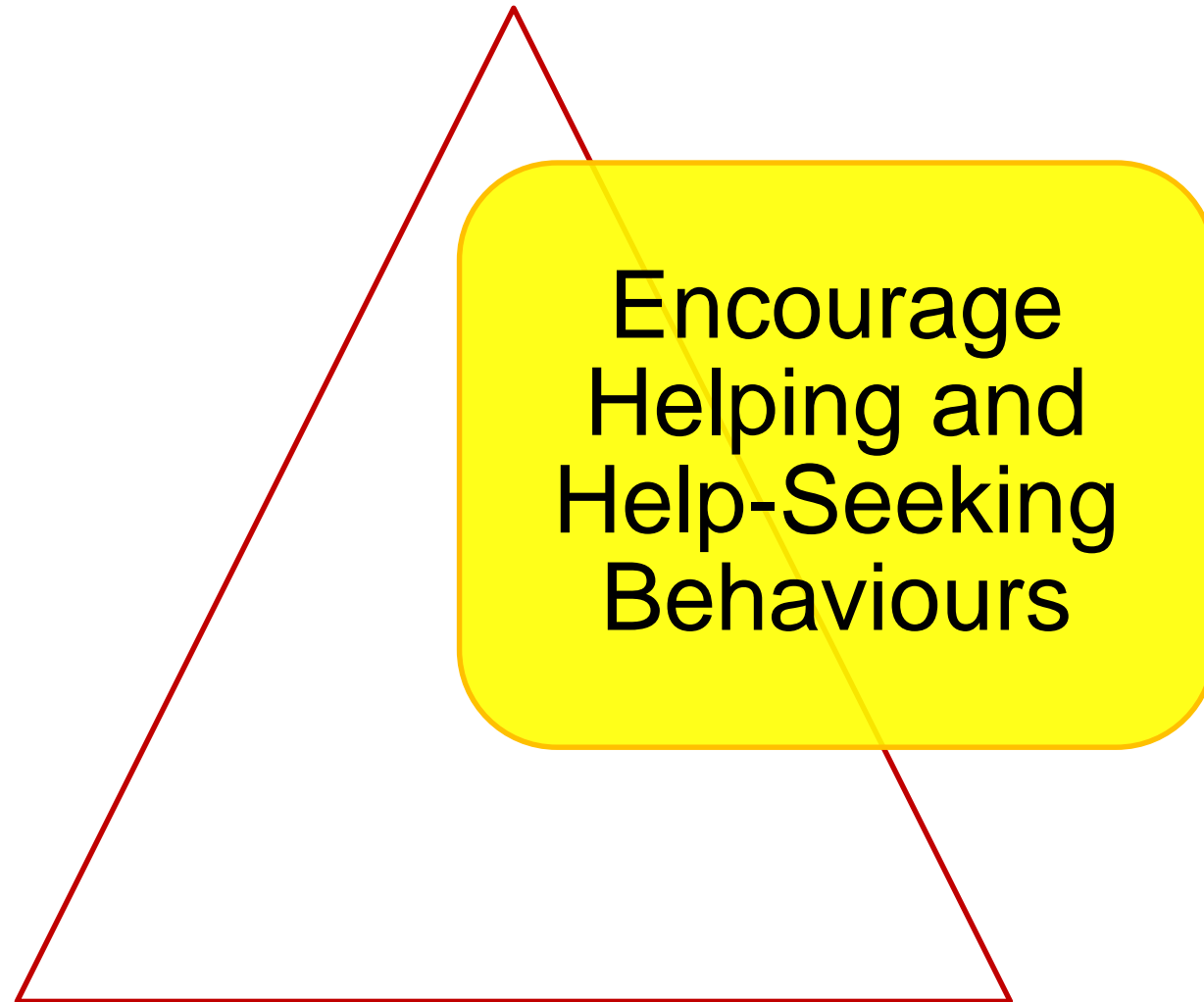
CONSULTATION WITH
FACULTY/STAFF/STUDENT LEADERS

“If in any doubt, call”
“We like false positives”

Encourage behavioural description

TAKE CARE OF YOUR “FIRST RESPONDERS”

Mental Health on campus: Goals and suggestions



TREAT SELF-DISCLOSURE

AS AN

ACT OF COURAGE

Social Stigma

Stupid

Inadequate

Crazy

Nut-Job

Scary

Incapable

Strange

Faker

Weak



Self-Stigma

Embarrassment

Burden

Stupid

Inferior

Weak



Nut-job

Weird

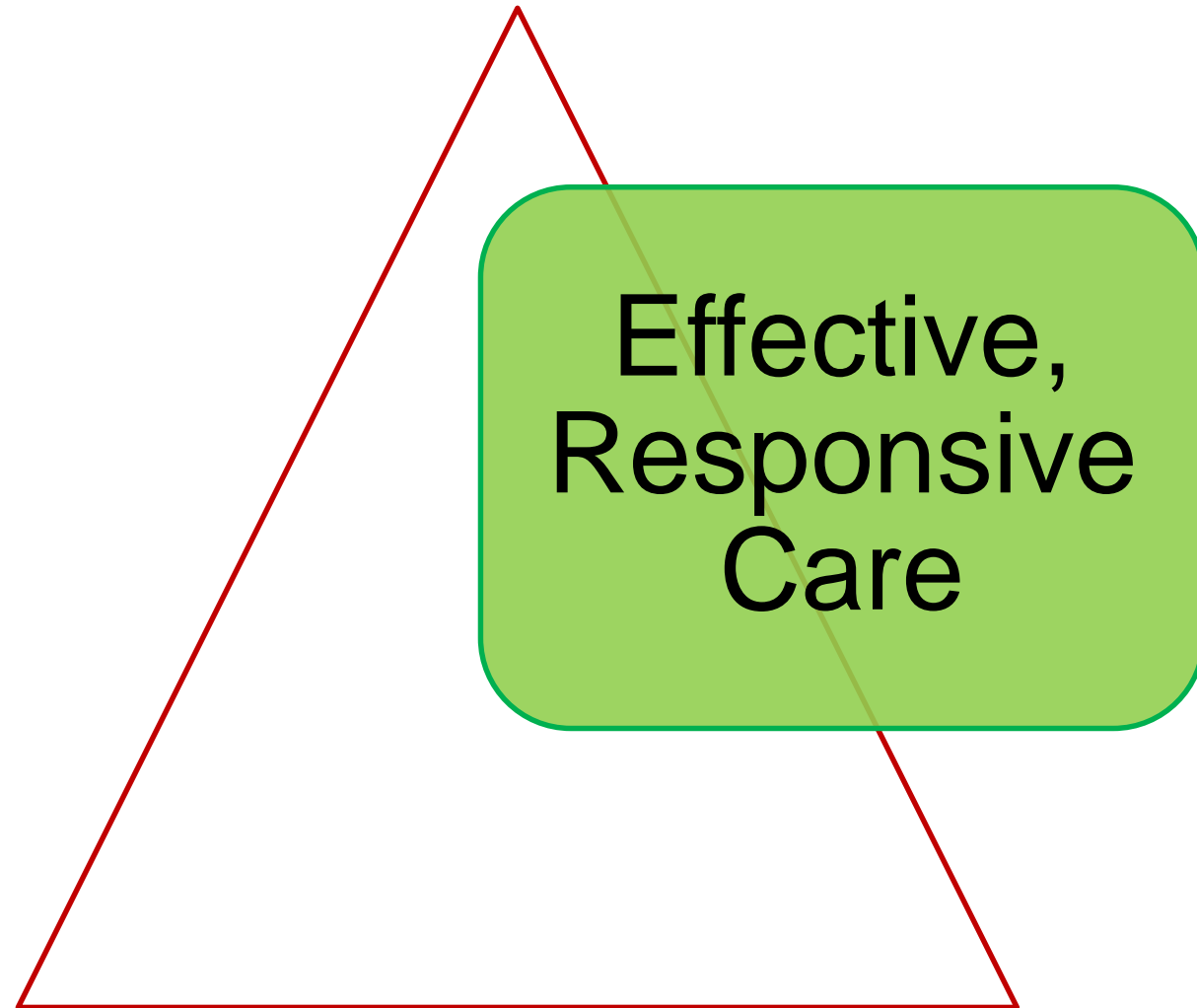
Crazy

Scammer

“THE EFFECT OF HUMAN KINDNESS AND FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION AND SUPPORT CANNOT BE OVERVALUED”

Report of the Principal's Commission on Mental Health NOVEMBER 2012

Mental Health on campus: Goals and suggestions



Care: Considerations and Principles

- **Layered**

- Peer support
- Counselling/Health – rapid access, needs-based, crisis-responsive, short-term
- Access to specialty care
- Linkages to the community – vital

- **Limits of services**

- Policy support
 - Voluntary and Involuntary withdrawal

WE TEACH MINDFULNESS

Do we practice it, model it?

Speaking of mindfulness.....

I saw a father in a coffee shop hand his young son a laptop to keep him busy .

The father was reading a book titled:

**"The Presence Process:
How to Be There in the Moment"**

SPECIAL TOPICS

CHALLENGES OF ACCOMMODATION

Recent changes

Procedural and Substantive Fairness

Flexibility

Information for students/parents

[Student Handbook](#)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Elements of Adjustment

The Safety Net

Instilling HOPE

