

More Resources

Questions? Email Laura at
laura.vellenga@intervarsity.org

or

Skip at skip.mcdonald@intervarsity.org
Put "Mental Health" in the subject line.

Ideas for other 3X3s on mental health or
disabilities? Email Deb at
debbie.abbs@intervarsity.org.
Put "Disabilities 3x3" in the subject line.

What is a 3x3?

Three-by-threes are quick start guides for ministry on
campus and beyond.

Each contains:
3 important facts to know
3 common mistakes to avoid
3 suggested activities to try on campus



**Welcoming
Students with a
Mental Health
Diagnosis**


3 Things to Know

- 1 One in 5 adults (52 million) in the U.S. have a mental health diagnosis.
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness>
- 2 Everyone experiences worry and feeling down. With a clinical diagnosis, symptoms last at least two weeks and keep people from functioning at their typical level.
- 3 There are many different mental health diagnoses including/not limited to bipolar disorder, depression and anxiety disorders. While there are common symptoms, each person's experience of the diagnosis is unique.

X Things to Avoid

- 1 Don't judge or spiritualize something that is biochemical. Ex: you wouldn't tell someone who has diabetes to stop taking their insulin and instead pray, read the Bible and have more faith.
- 2 Watch your language. It's easy to say things like, "I'm kind of OCD" but Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder is a real anxiety disorder. Be respectful.
- 3 Don't stop including your friends with mental health diagnoses. Let them decide if they want to participate or not.

3 Things to Try

- 1 Be an empathetic listener. Learn to say, "That sounds hard," and "I'm sorry."
- 2 Check out your campus counseling center to know what resources are available. Encourage friends to seek professional help if they've repeatedly tried to change thoughts, feelings or actions but have been unsuccessful on their own.
- 3 In a crisis, call the Suicide Crisis Hotline at 988 or text [988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#)