For 75 years, May has been designated as mental health awareness month.

Anyone can struggle with mental health.

Americans live with a mental disorder affecting people across all ages, genders, races, incomes, and nationalities.

The good news: treatment works!

Among US adults diagnosed with a mood disorder who are currently in or have ever been in treatment, 80% found psychotherapy helpful in addressing their symptoms.

Look for signs that someone is struggling.

We all play a role in helping people access care, especially when they are in crisis.

Common signs that someone is struggling include:

- Prolonged sadness or irritability
- Excessive fears and anxieties
- Delusions or hallucinations
- Confused thinking
- Social withdrawal

Ask. Find a private place, be direct, and stay calm.

“Are you thinking about killing yourself?”
- Research shows being asked directly helps bring relief.

Listen. Express empathy.

“I’m so glad you told me this. Let’s keep talking.”
- Resist trying to fix problems or talk them out of their feelings.

Connect. Encourage them to reach out for help.

“Help is available, and I’m here for you.”
- Resources include therapists and free crisis lines like 988—call or text 24/7 or chat @ 988lifeline.org.

Check in with yourself.

Helping someone who is struggling can be overwhelming and scary, especially if they are having suicidal thoughts.

Connect with a friend or therapist to seek out your own support.

To schedule an appointment with Alaska Behavioral Health

Please call 907.563.1000

www.alaskabehavioralhealth.org

1 in 5 adults in Alaska experienced mental illness in the past year.

Mental wellness is part of overall health.