THIS MONTH'S FOCUS

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

TURN OF PHRASE: ENDING STIGMATIZATION IN MENTAL HEALTH LANGUAGE
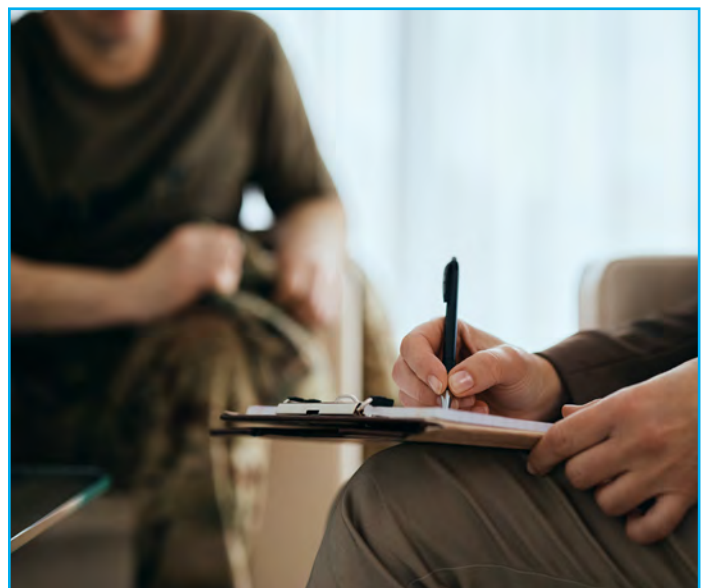
This year's Mental Health Awareness Month focuses on how surroundings influence mental health and calls for individuals to "look around, look within." Language is also a part of our surroundings, and unfortunately, stigmatizing language was once present in relation to mental health. This article highlights the DOD effort to destigmatize mental health and provide a safer environment for help-seeking individuals.
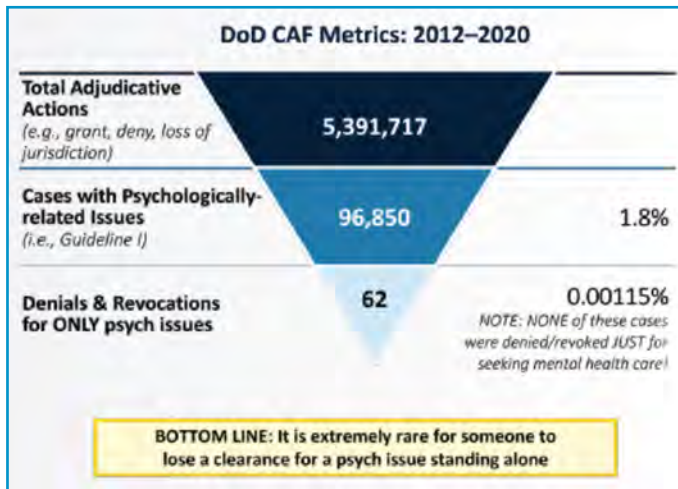
A November 2022 memo titled "**Review of Policies to Eliminate Stigmatizing Language Related to Mental Health**" outlined the DOD's efforts to encourage help-seeking behaviors amongst DOD military and civilian employees. It calls for identifying and eliminating stigmatizing language related to mental health in departmental policies, which can deter those seeking help with mental health struggles. Language matters and sets the tone for an organization. If it stigmatizes mental health issues and/or help seeking in our policies, then our leadership, Service members, and DOD civilian employees at all levels may inadvertently use stigmatizing language in everyday interactions. It can also cause misinterpretation regarding how to appropriately apply policies or procedures.

One example of how to fix this stigmatizing language is to use person-first language when describing anyone with any kind of health condition or disability. Calling someone "a person with schizophrenia" as opposed to just "a schizophrenic" makes a difference. It clarifies that the person has a condition that can be evaluated, managed, or treated. Negative terminology or language may also introduce bias. For instance, if you say someone is "suffering from," a disorder,

DoD CAF Metrics: 2012–2020

Total Adjudicative Actions (e.g., grant, deny, loss of jurisdiction)	5,391,717	
Cases with Psychologically-related Issues (i.e., Guideline I)	96,850	1.8%
Denials & Revocations for ONLY psych issues	62	0.00115%

NOTE: NONE of these cases were denied/revoked JUST for seeking mental health care!

BOTTOM LINE: It is extremely rare for someone to lose a clearance for a psych issue standing alone

it frames the disorder as an affliction, which contributes to stigma. You should say that person is "diagnosed with" instead. Just as **Rosa's Law** did in 2017, we must ensure federal policies as well as our colloquial exchanges with one another reflect appropriate professional sensitivities to mental health and developmental concerns.

The Defense Health Agency **Psychological Health Center of Excellence (PHCoE)** provides information and resources to assist Service members, veterans, and their families with psychological health care, readiness, and prevention of psychological health disorders. In November 2019, the PHCoE began a systematic re-evaluation of 169 policies to verify they removed stigmatized language. Here at CDSE, we are also making efforts to remove stigmatizing language from our courses and products to better support DOD's efforts to encourage military and civilian personnel to seek mental health treatment when needed. Now, more than ever, Service members and DOD civilian employees, face stressors as they strive to serve our country. They need to know that seeking treatment will not negatively impact their careers.

Seeking behavioral health treatment is a positive course of action that often mitigates security concerns, but avoiding it can increase those risks. Solid coping skills, drawing upon ways to both take care of emotions in a given situation and problem solve (when the problem is soluble), will allow personnel to feel and perform better when under stress. Your organization's Employee Assistance Program, or similar program, is a great source for resources and support. At the end of this article you will also find additional resources.

Remember, merely seeking mental health care will not impact your national security eligibility. Practicing mental wellness ensures that security personnel are able to carry out their duties effectively and defend the Nation.

Reporting Requirements
One of the biggest questions surrounding mental health and security is what actions are reportable in association with Section 21, Psychological and Emotional Health, of the Standard Form 86, Questionnaire for National Security Positions. The DOD Manual 5200.02, Enclosure 11 and Security Executive Agent Directive 3 outlines possible thresholds for what would merit reporting:

- Declarations of mental incompetence by a court or administrative agency.
- Court ordered mental health care or evaluation (inpatient or outpatient).
- Hospitalizations for mental health conditions (voluntary or involuntary).
- Diagnoses of the following conditions by a health care professional:
  - Psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, or delusional disorder.
  - Bipolar mood disorders.
  - Personality disorders such as borderline personality disorder or antisocial personality disorder. (**please note there is NO diagnosis that is considered automatically disqualifying**)
- Developing a mental health or other health condition that substantially affects judgment, reliability, or trustworthiness.

It is important to have factual data to counter the myth that an individual is likely to lose or fail to gain national security eligibility after seeking mental health care or experiencing mental health symptoms. The denial and revocation statistics in the graphic above show that this is not the case. To learn more, view the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA) Mental Health and Security **Fact Sheet** and **FAQs**.

Mental Wellness
Avoiding treatment hurts readiness and increases security risks. Seeking behavioral health treatment is a positive course of action that often mitigates security concerns. Practicing mental wellness ensures that security personnel are able to carry out their duties effectively.

Behavioral health resources* are available for cleared individuals who need them:

- Seek support and assistance when needed, such as through the organization's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or similar programs. **Remember: merely seeking mental health care will not impact national security eligibility.**

- Mindfulness and meditation are two excellent emotion-focused coping techniques. There are many excellent books, apps, and even a program called "Headspace," which is **currently streaming**, that can help develop these skills.

- In addition to the EAP and other programs mentioned above, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence has an **interactive resource** to help walk through mental wellness and what it can mean for the individual.

*Resources and information provided by psychologists at DCSA.

CDSE WINS FIRST AND SECOND PLACE BLUE PENCIL & GOLD SCREEN AWARDS

CDSE recently won two awards at the annual Blue Pencil & Gold Screen Awards ceremony held in Portland, Oregon on April 19, 2023. The Blue Pencil & Gold Screen Awards are an annual international awards program that recognizes superior government communication products and those who produce them. Submissions for the 2023 Awards were produced between July 1, 2021 and December 31, 2022.

CDSE placed first in the Reports-Annual Report category for the "**CDSE 2021 Year End Report**," which informs our stakeholders of the work that is being done for the security workforce's benefit. CDSE placed second in the Audio-Commercial/Public Service Announcement category for the CDSE PSA video "**CDSE Certificates vs. Certifications Public Service Announcement**," which explains the difference between CDSE's certificate and certification offerings for the education, training, and certification programs.

View the full listing of the award winners **here**.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR THE GSS COURSE AT THE NCMS ANNUAL SEMINAR

CDSE will be hosting the Getting Started Seminar (GSS) for New Facility Security Officers (FSOs) course at the NCMS Annual Training Seminar on June 5, 2023! This course is not only a great way to get started as a new FSO, but also a way for experienced FSOs to keep informed of policy changes, procedural changes, and emerging trends and concerns. Students work in collaboration with other security professionals, exploring security topics through practical exercises. Topics include the DD 254, insider threat, reporting requirements, counterintelligence, security and contractor reviews, security training and briefings, and personnel security.

Please preregister and complete the prerequisites at **https://www.cdse.edu/Training/Instructor-led/IS121/**. Registration closes on May 15, 2023, and only registered participants will be allowed to attend. Proof of registration (emailed by CDSE) and a photo ID will be required for class entry.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR FALL SEMESTER EDUCATION COURSES

Registration is now open for the fall semester of CDSE Education classes that run from August 21 to December 17, 2023. Classes fill quickly, so please register early to secure your spot in the fall semester.

CDSE Education Division offers:

- Tuition Free & Flexible 100% virtual instructor led courses
- Five Security Education Certificate programs
- Highly qualified instructors
- Real-world practical assignments
- Virtual networking with professionals throughout the security community

You can learn more about the classes being offered and register for them by accessing the links here: **https://www.cdse.edu/education/courses.html**. To register, log into STEPP via: **https://cdse.usalearning.gov/login/index.php**.

UPCOMING ILT/VILT TRAINING COURSES

Consider signing up for one of CDSE's instructor-led training (ILT) or virtual instructor-led training (VILT) courses! Training is free and the VILT eliminates travel expenses. Complete CDSE courses to earn professional development units (PDUs) toward maintenance of Security Professional Education Development (SPēD) Program certifications and credentials, and select courses have ACE CREDIT recommendations that may earn transfer credits at participating universities. Below is a list of ILT/VILT courses available June- August 2023. The full FY23 schedule can be found **here**.

Introduction to Special Access Programs (ILT)
June 13 – 16, 2023
This course focuses on the DOD Special Access Program (SAP) fundamentals and prepares students to become SAP Security Professionals.

DOD Security Specialist Course (ILT) ACE CREDIT CompTIA
June 21 – 29, 2023
This course provides students a baseline of fundamental knowledge to perform common DOD security tasks and practices. It incorporates industrial, information, personnel, and physical security disciplines to understand their interrelationships, related policies, programs, and procedures.

Physical Security and Asset Protection (ILT)
July 24 – 28, 2023
This course will provide students the ability to identify and utilize regulatory guidance, methodologies, and concepts for protecting DOD assets.

Assessing Risk and Applying Security Controls to NISP Systems (ILT)
Aug 21-25, 2023
This course provides students with guidance on applying policies and standards used throughout the U.S. Government to protect information within computer systems, as delineated by the Risk Management Framework (RMF) process. This course will also provide a comprehensive understanding of contractor requirements under the National Industrial Security Program (NISP).

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

CDSE's Amber Jackson - recipient of DCSA's Senior Employee of the Year award during the agency's annual award ceremony last month - was recognized for her work as the only federal SME in Insider Threat training, an accomplishment earned with just over two years of government service. **Learn more** about Amber's accomplishments.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNITS FOR SPĒD PROGRAM

After you've achieved your certification or credential, you're required to successfully complete at least 100 professional development units (PDUs) within their two-year certification maintenance period. The various ways you can acquire PDUs can be found on this Fact Sheet: **https://www.cdse.edu/Portals/124/Documents/certification/pdu-category-fact-sheet.pdf**.

★★★★★ WHAT THE SECURITY COMMUNITY IS SAYING

Virtual DSCA Security Conference for Industry:

"[Being an FSO] is great job but it is hard to do it alone. We need to synch together in order to better protect our clear industry and US Government. Thank you for this event."

"Great information on SEAD 3 reporting; very straightforward."

CDSE NEWS

CDSE offers an email subscriber news service to get the latest CDSE news, updates, and information. You may be receiving the Pulse through your subscription, but if you were forwarded this newsletter from another source and would like to subscribe to the Pulse or one of our other topics, visit our news page and sign up or update your account today - **https://www.cdse.edu/news/index.html**.

Insider Threat Bulletins	Weekly Flash	Quarterly Product Update