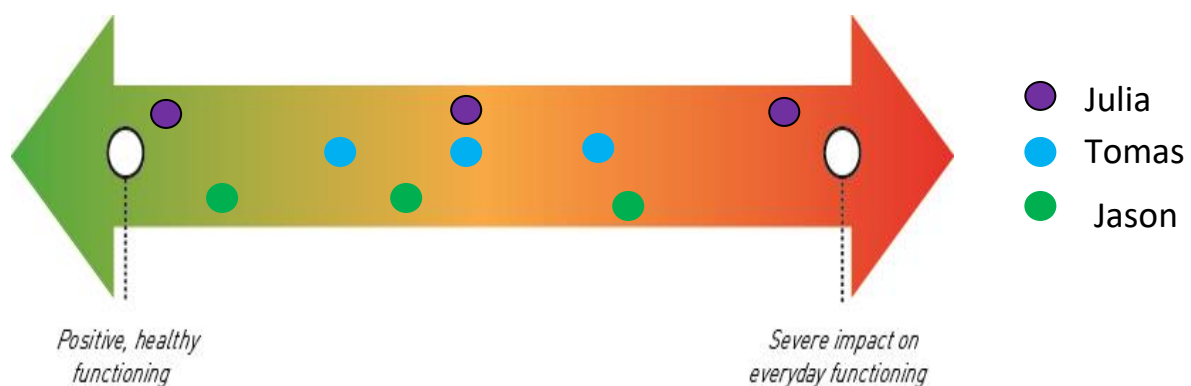


THE CONTINUUM MODEL

Be honest, when someone talks about mental health you think of two distinct mental states. One, completely amazing, happy with not a care in the world and another sad and depressed. No one would blame you for this black and white view on the mental landscape; it is how most of us are taught about it but today I want to tell, you the reader, about a concept called the continuum model.

The continuum model (first thought up by Gordon Allport) addresses the fact that people aren't just mentally well or mentally unwell there's a grey area furthermore you could be in multiple mental states at once. Let me show you.



Let's say Julia suffers from insomnia this has a severe impact on her as seen by the far right purple circle. Her constant tiredness leaves her a bit stressed to get work done on time but since she always surrounds herself with good friends and family she is very happy!

Tomas has to go to school like every other child but he suffers from social anxiety. At school he doesn't have many friends since he doesn't talk much. This leaves him slightly lonely not the worst but not the best of feelings.

Jason has a decent friend group who he can have a laugh with and he does. Unfortunately when he gets home his parents put him under immense pressure to get good grades meaning at home he can't relax, instead spending all of his time studying.

THE CONTINUUM MODEL

From these three scenarios and the diagram I hope you can see the ways that people can be feeling multiple ways at once making. In turn making putting mental health into two different boxes problematic.

Finally it's all well and good knowing a new perspective on an issue but in this final section I hope to show you why you may have thought that mental health was two separate areas in the first place. I say this because by finding the way we believed in one subject can help us not fall prey to false information in other subjects.

Through my research I have found that the main reason that people think mental health is one of two states is because...comparisons.

By comparisons I mean comparing mental and physical health. Physical health is the most similar thing we know of to mental health so it is not surprising, but the harmful thing about this comparison is with physical health you are either ill or not ill. A quality that its mental counterpart does not share.

In conclusion mental health cannot be put into boxes because it is much more than that. A continuum is a better and more factual way of looking at it.

I hope you enjoyed my piece!