

## **Examples of Negative Behaviors**

Here are some negative behaviors

### **1. ) Coercion**

Forced Treatment

### **2. ) Avoidance**

Withholding work and independent living opportunities.

### **3. ) Low Priorities**

Provide resources for more deserving people and services first.

### **Lost Human Rights**

While no-one will come out and say that we are taking away your rights. The powers that be can and they surly have taken away the rights of the people with mental illness. This is manifested or passed off to us as something that we need for our best interest.

### **Segregation can Result**

Segregation often appears as an adjunct to coercion. Once forced treatment has been enacted then the clinical staff could be required to give the patient their medication because they are the ones who know what they need. Then the next step would be or could be to put the treatment in an asylum so that the community is safe or appears to be safe.

## **Passive Discrimination**

The subtlest form of discrimination is passive, namely, the community needs of people with mental illness is not a high priority. advocates seeking more funds for the mental health system have to compete with other causes. This priority issue is not limited to legislatures and budget issues.

Law enforcement, landlords and employers all receive a slew of requests and demands. Mental Health ends up at the bottom of the priority list because people in power endorse stigmatizing attitudes. Changing these attitudes can move mental health services up the priority list.

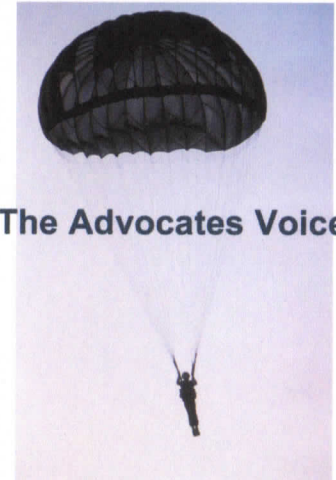
### **Legislatures Gridlock**

Finally the legislatures can support coercive measures through the statutes they enact. Research has shown that about a third of the states have laws on the books that in some way restrict civil rights (voting, jury duty, running for office) and family matters (divorce, child custody, and adoption) because a person has been identified as "mentally ill."

For more information contact  
Michael Peacock (808) 486-0902

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# **Pacific Islands Consumer Council**



## **The Advocates Voice**

### **What is Stigma ?**

Stigma is a mark or a sign that somehow discredits the person. These marks can include skin color, physical signs of gender, and body size. Labels and mean-spirited ways of talking about a group of people; such as calling a person "mentally ill", is also stigma and can create the attitude which results in negative behavior.

### **This is Manifested Stigma**

Discrimination is the negative behaviors that result from agreeing with stereotypes and prejudice

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## Six Stereotypes

Stereotypes are the negative beliefs about people with mental illness.

### 1. ) Dangerousness

Because of their mental illness, people are likely to become violent.

### 2. ) Unpredictability

Their violence is exacerbated by never being able to tell how a person with mental illness will react.

### 3. ) Incompetence

People with mental illness are unable to live independently or manage anything but the simplest jobs.

### 4. ) Childlike

People with mental illness need an authoritarian figure to make decisions for them just like a parent to a child.

### 5. ) Blame

People with mental illness choose to be sick because of a weak moral backbone.

### 6. ) Contagion

People who associate with the mentally ill will develop the same kind of symptoms and disabilities.

## Stereotypes and Prejudice

Researchers distinguish between stereotypes and prejudice. Stereotypes are thoughts about a group. Prejudice is agreement with those thoughts plus the resulting emotional reaction. In their purest form stereotypes are nothing more than statements about a group that we have all heard before. Most Americans can provide a list of stereotypes about various ethnic groups. Once we agree with these stereotypes we have entered prejudice. We have listed six Stereotypes and the Prejudice that results from them.

## Theory of Rational Actors

Our source handbook "Beat the Stigma and Discrimination", largely relies on this theory which states that attitudes produce behaviors. Psychologists have argued for more than a century that humans are fundamentally rational actors and behave in specific ways based on their logical understanding of the circumstances.

Therefore agreeing with stereotypes is likely to also lead to coercion that often appears in subtle forms. Such as the public endorses mandated treatments for people with mental illness because they believe that they are not capable of making fully informed decisions for themselves.

## Prejudice

Prejudice is the emotional reactions that result from endorsing stereotypes.

### 1. ) Fear

Because they are potentially violent; people with mental illness are frightening.

### 2. ) Anger

People with mental illness escape many of the responsibilities of adult life and are deserving of public anger.

### 3. ) Pity

People with mental illness are pitiful.

### 4. ) Disgust

At a gut level, people with mental illness are repulsive.

***Stereotypes combined with prejudice results in discrimination.***

## Discrimination Appears

People who believe some of the stereotypes about individuals with mental illness are likely to avoid them. In addition to a general avoidance of people who seem "mentally ill" on the street, this kind of discrimination can appear in work settings, housing and houses of worship.