### Mental Health in America

#### How Do We Address a Growing Problem?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 1: Put Safety First</th>
<th>Option 2: Expand Services</th>
<th>Option 3: Let People Plot Their Own Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACTIONS</strong></td>
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<td>- Mandatory mental health tests should be required for anyone seeking sensitive jobs - working with children, for example or applying for a commercial driver’s license or a gun license.</td>
<td>- States and counties should build more psychiatric hospitals or expand existing ones to provide more inpatient mental health care for those who need it.</td>
<td>- Ratchet back diagnostic standards for mental illness so odd or idiosyncratic behavior is no longer seen as requiring professional treatment.</td>
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<td>- Medical boards can impose penalties for health-care practitioners who failed to spot people who “snapped” when warning signs were there all along.</td>
<td>- Require mental health practitioners to serve residencies in rural and underserved areas.</td>
<td>- Doctors can prescribe less medication and focus instead on counseling and talk therapy.</td>
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<td>- We should make it easier for doctors to commit potentially violent patients to psychiatric hospitals, even over the objections of patients or their families.</td>
<td>- Employers could reward people who take initiative to have their mental health assessed and treated.</td>
<td>- Increase the numbers and visibility of self-help communities, such as twelve-step and other support groups.</td>
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<td>- Individuals can tell professionals about friends, neighbors, and coworkers who are behaving in erratic ways.</td>
<td>- Provide convenient mental health screening sites throughout the community.</td>
<td>- Employers can make healthy-lifestyle programs like gym memberships and mediation classes available as a routine benefit of employment.</td>
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<td>- We should build a nationwide system for reporting hospital visits or encounters with police by those with potentially dangerous mental illness.</td>
<td>- Create a media campaign to promote mental health screenings and educate people on the importance of mental health.</td>
<td>- Drug companies can be prohibited from advertising prescription-only drugs on television.</td>
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<td>- Many people will be denied rights and privileges, including some who are not dangerous.</td>
<td>- This would lead to lengthier hospital stays for some, taking them away from their families and communities.</td>
<td>- Some seemingly benign behavior may be an early sign of more serious problems, and people who could be helped may not be reached until it is too late.</td>
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<td>- Medical-care providers may begin to over-diagnose mental illness just to avoid penalties.</td>
<td>- People may avoid entering these professions if they do not have the freedom to choose where to work.</td>
<td>- Some people who could use medication will not get the relief they need.</td>
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<td>- This may seriously erode the civil rights of people who have, in fact, committed no crimes.</td>
<td>- This may, in fact, further stigmatize people in the workplace who do not get screened, whether out of fear for other reasons.</td>
<td>- Self-help groups often make people feel better yet dispense poor advice that can, in some cases, be detrimental.</td>
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<td>- This may create a culture of informants and turn people against one another.</td>
<td>- People may avoid using such screening tools due to privacy concerns of fear of the possible diagnosis.</td>
<td>- This may be an unfair burden to place on employers.</td>
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<td>- This could increase the chances that an individual who does not pose a danger to others would be permanently labeled as a threat.</td>
<td>- This may create a culture where people find it appropriate to query one another about private issues or “diagnose” others.</td>
<td>- This interferes with people’s rights to learn about help and with companies’ rights to make potential patients aware of its products.</td>
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