



# Mental Health Awareness Week

## It's OK to Not Be OK



Grades 9-12

## IT'S OK TO HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** Printout of the webpage [walkinourshoes.org/mental-health-challenges](http://walkinourshoes.org/mental-health-challenges), poster paper or butcher block paper (at least 8), markers

### Directions:

Before introducing the activity, print out the content on Walkinourshoes.org under the "Mental Health Challenges" tab. Cut out the descriptions of each of the mental health challenges (ADHD, Anxiety, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Bi-Polar Disorder, Depression, Eating Disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Schizophrenia) and place each description in a separate envelope.

Write the following mental health challenges on the board:

- ADHD
- Anxiety
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Bi-Polar Disorder
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Schizophrenia

Ask the class to share if they know anything about any of these challenges. Allow them to briefly share. Remind them that they may know someone who has experienced one of these challenges, but that **it is important to maintain confidentiality** and to allow those people to share their own stories. If students have experienced any themselves and feel comfortable, it's okay to share.

Let them know that the class will be learning more about these mental health challenges today. Divide the class into eight groups and provide each group with the paragraph printed from walkinourshoes.org. Allow each group to create a poster sharing about that challenge. They can include sentences, bullets, or even drawings. Ask them if they can **include any positive aspects** to the mental health challenge.

Allow each group 2-3 minutes to share their poster with the class. Try to notice and highlight any positive aspects that are shared.

End by highlighting that mental health challenges are incredibly common and normal. The more we learn about them, the more understanding and supportive of each other we are.