

ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH IN COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Take Care of Yourself

How you can care for yourself

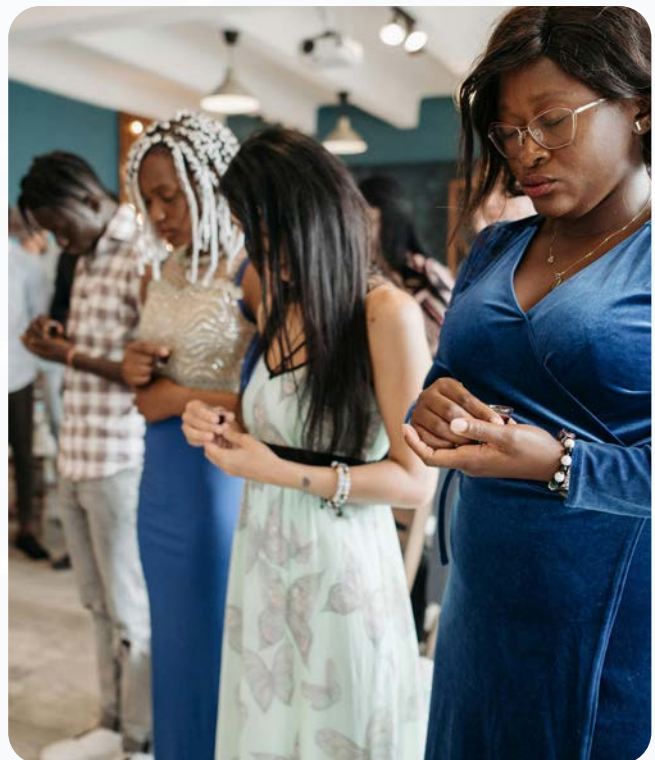
- Reach out to people you trust: a friend, a faith leader, or a supportive online community
- Nourish your spirit through journaling, prayer, meditation, dance, or storytelling
- Explore free digital mental health resources and tools like those at mhanational.org/bipoc and mhascreening.org
- Look for therapists who honor your identity and offer sliding scale or free options through networks like Inclusive Therapists
- Lean into traditions and cultural practices that have sustained your community
- Use visuals like bracelets or artwork to start conversations about mental health
- Move your body in ways that feel good, like dancing, walking, tai chi, or yoga

“As someone who has dealt with depression and anxiety, prioritizing and protecting your mental health is everything.”

— Janelle Monáe, musician and actress

How providers can support healing

- Offer sliding-scale or no-cost therapy options, especially for those often left out of care systems
- Offer telehealth options to the extent that your state and/or license allows.
- Integrate traditional healing practices with modern therapeutic models
- Promote free and accessible mental health screenings, helping people take first steps with dignity
- Build programs that honor storytelling, community rituals, and collective strength



Find and Take Care of Your Community

How you can support your community

- Create or join peer support spaces, healing circles, or community meetups
- Encourage emotional check-ins in everyday places — barbershops, faith gatherings, salons
- Share mental health resources in ways that feel natural — through text groups, conversations, or community events
- Learn basic crisis support techniques and pass them on
- Mentor someone or offer a listening ear to the youth in your life
- Celebrate emotional wisdom openly across generations

How providers can nurture community wellness

- Invest in training everyday leaders to become mental health advocates
- Partner with community hubs to embed healing conversations into familiar spaces
- Equip trusted spaces with culturally grounded mental health tools
- Support grassroots initiatives that center collective care
- Collaborate with those who already have the community's trust

"We must actively heal the community and its institutions at the same time an individual works on his or her own healing..."

— Don Coyhis, founder of the Wellbriety Movement

Advocate for Change

How you can advocate

- Learn about mental health and community care through free events, like Mental Health America's webinars
- Speak up for mental health resources in your schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods
- Back BIPOC-led mental health initiatives with your voice, time, or support
- Demand better policies through petitions, letter-writing campaigns, and community meetings

How providers can be advocates

- Teach self-advocacy strategies to clients and communities
- Build partnerships with local businesses and nonprofits
- Provide individuals with tools to engage safely and powerfully in activism
- Lead change within organizations by advocating for culturally responsive policies

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Learn more: mhanational.org/bipoc

Take a free mental health test: mhascreening.org