

The statistic commonly used by leading charities and health workers is that 1 in 4 people will suffer a mental health problem in their lifetime. This is geared to eliminating the stigma around mental health issues. But a more helpful message is that everyone has mental health. A message I still don't hear and would like to.

If I was to say 1 in 3 people will suffer a serious physical health problem (or whatever the figure would be).. or equally to say 1 in 7 people might seriously injure their leg for example, it deters from the fact that we all have physical health, which needs looking after.

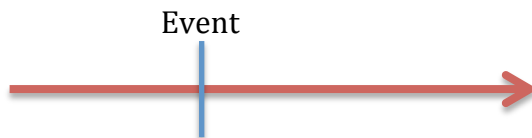
Having been in media about mental health and being open about my experience of it, people are generally very encouraging that I should speak about it. A comparison may be if I was to fall over a big rock and break my leg. After doing this I would certainly want to go and warn people about this rock so they didn't do the same, especially when I see people fall over it time and time again.

I would like to go into thought patterns which link to mental health, I believe everyone has these thought patterns and the purpose of sharing them is to encourage thought and discussion.

Time is linear

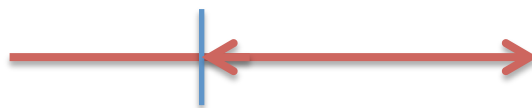


Events Happen in time



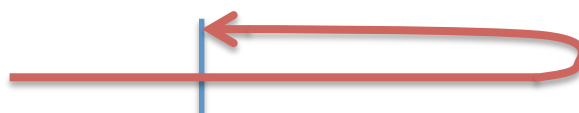
A healthy mind knows that you can't go back in time, but yet we all would like to sometimes, (fig 1 is impossible)

fig 1



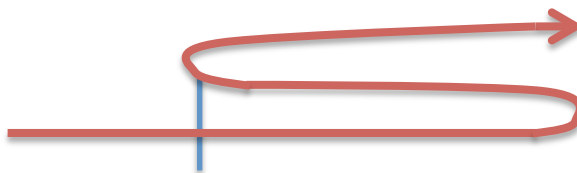
The result would be going back to the event but in a 'forward' thought pattern

fig 2



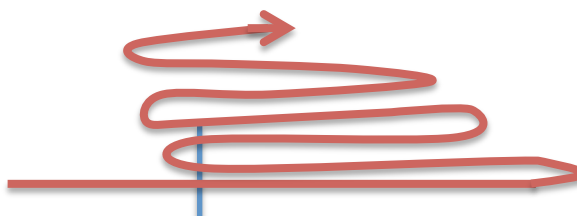
It is healthy to go back to think about an event, especially one that is important. A lot of problems with mental health, from my knowledge of it, are linked to loss. (financial, bereavement, relationship, loss of trust etc.) generally healthy minds like to spend as little time as possible thinking about such things so will move on as in fig 3

fig 3



An 'unhealthy mind state' may become unable to move away from the past event, and therefore to and fro between the forward motion of life and revisiting the event. If this cycle narrows life becomes more difficult and any forward motion becomes hard (eg going to work / going to the shop / getting out of bed)

fig 4



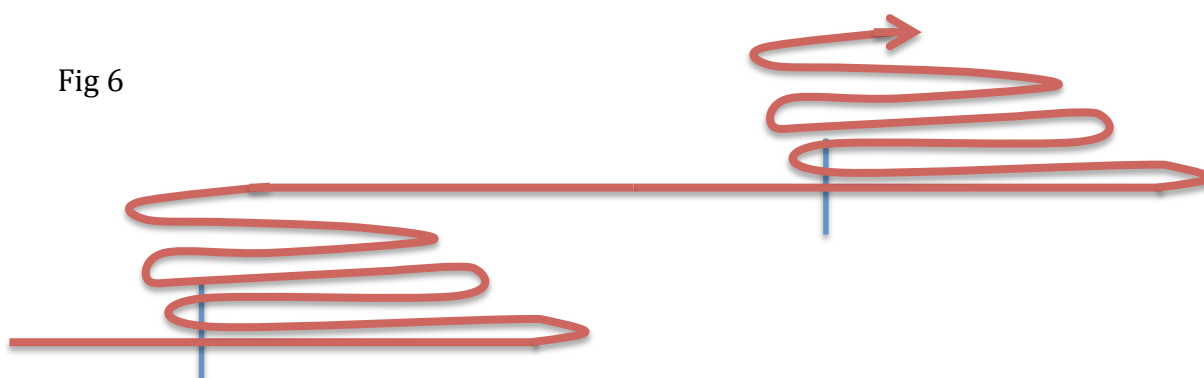
Events can build on each other, so a past event may become a trigger for a later unhealthy mind state. In the diagram Fig 5 a significant event is revisited in a 'healthy' way, but a subsequent trigger event makes an unhealthy thought pattern to a subsequent event. (an example may be a bad relationship split, and then a subsequent split with a new relationship)

fig 5



Compound events can make this sort of pattern, the more tight the loops and the less forward motion there is potentially the more ill someone may be

Fig 6



Humans have complex brains, and everyone will have events, and almost certainly have some of the accompanying thought patterns. Solutions to these problems are far harder to find than defining them. But I would suggest talking and accepting mental health as part of normal health discussion is a needed and positive step forward.