

# Girl Scout Mental Health Awareness Patch



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## [Mental Health Awareness Patch](#)

The Mental Health Awareness Patch objectives are to educate Girl Scouts about the brain and its influence on thoughts, feelings, and behavior, and through that knowledge, increase awareness and understanding of mental illness. Through education we can change perceptions and reduce the stigma of mental illness.

The Mental Health Awareness Patch was created and is supported by the International Bipolar Foundation (IBPF). IBPF is a nonprofit based in San Diego that was founded by parents of bipolar children and teens. Our mission is to improve understanding and treatment of bipolar disorder through research; to promote care and support services for individuals and caregivers; and to erase stigma through education.

Daisies, Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, and Seniors/Ambassadors can earn the patch. In this packet are activities appropriate for each age group.

Once earned, the Patch is provided for free by IBPF

If requested, a volunteer will work directly with service units and individual troops.

**For more information contact:** Ashley at 858-764-2496 or [ajacobs@ibpf.org](mailto:ajacobs@ibpf.org)

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## Patch Criteria

All levels must complete the REQUIRED FOR ALL listed below.

**Daisies/Brownies:** 1. Learn about the brain and its role in mental health 2. Take Mental Health Facts and Myths Quiz together. 3. Do 1 activity in Discover. 4. Do 1 activity in Take Action. 5. Do Reflection.

**Juniors/Cadettes:** 1. Learn about the brain and its role in mental health. 2. Take Mental Health Facts and Myths Quiz. 3. Do 1 activity in Discover. 4. Do 1 activity in Connect. 5. Do 1 activity in Take Action. 6. Do Reflection.

**Seniors/ambassadors:** 1. Learn about the brain and its role in mental health. 2. Take the Mental Health Facts and Myths Quiz. 3. Do 2 activities in Discover. 4. Do 2 activities in Connect. 5. Do 2 activities in Take Action. 6. Do Reflection.

*Please reference the Resource List provided for suggested websites with information, videos and activities that will facilitate completing the Patch.*

### Required For All Levels

1. Learn about the brain and its role in mental health. In the packet leaders will find “Learn About the Brain and Its Role in Mental Health” to use as background information. Complete 1 worksheet activity about the brain.
  2. Take the Mental Health Facts and Myths Quiz included in the packet.
- After completing all chosen patch activities:***
3. Reflection: Review the Girl Scout Law and discuss how it relates to what you have learned about mental illness. Discuss with your troop.

### Discover

1. Approximately one in four people will have a mental illness in his/her lifetime. Discuss whether mental illness is different than any other illness.
2. Find out about common mental health issues that children and teens experience.
3. Invite a mental health professional to speak to your troop and find out about mental illness and treatment.
4. Find out about bipolar disorder. Is the cause known? What are the symptoms? Is there a cure?
5. The dictionary defines **stigma** as a mark, scar or characteristic that causes embarrassment for a person. It causes society to exclude the person, similar to prejudice and discrimination. Like prejudice, stigma is based on a lack of understanding. Find out why stigma prevents some people from getting help. Read “The Golden Rule”
6. Discover whether there is an anti-stigma campaign in your community. Describe what you find out.
7. Review the Great Achievers with Mental Illness page. Find the names on the word search. Create a collage with the pictures of great achievers you find.

## **Connect**

1. Read a book or see a play or movie in which there is a character who suffers from mental illness. Discuss with your troop.
2. Read the words on the bookmark "Getting to Know Me" from Bipolar Magazine. Create a bookmark to help people understand mental health awareness.
3. Observe how people with a mental illness are treated in the news, TV shows or social media. Write about what you observed.
4. Role-play or act out one of the following scenes with your troop.
  - a. A child coming to school for the first time with hearing aids.
  - b. A student who has to go to the nurse to take medicine every day.
  - c. A child who overhears others calling her "weird" and "psycho."

Discuss your thoughts and feelings.

5. Interview someone with a mental illness. Find out how stigma affects them. Tell others what you learn.
6. Express through art, music or writing how you imagine a mentally ill person feels.
7. Write a story about a girl who has a family member with a mental illness.

## **Take Action**

1. Explore what resources are available for mental health at your school.
2. Explore what resources are available in your community, state or country. Interview someone who works or volunteers there.
3. Create an anti-stigma or mental health poster.
4. Volunteer at a local mental health event.
5. Create a skit in which you demonstrate a positive interaction with someone affected by mental illness. Present it to your troop.
6. PASS IT ON: Talk about mental illness and stigma with at least one adult and ask them to pass on the mental health awareness message to their peers.

## **Reflection**

1. *After* completing all chosen patch activities, review the Girl Scout Law and discuss how it relates to what you have learned about mental illness. Discuss with your troop.

## The Brain

### **Required Activity #1 Learn about the Brain and its Role in Mental Health**

Additional information, games, puzzles, both printable and online are available on this excellent website:

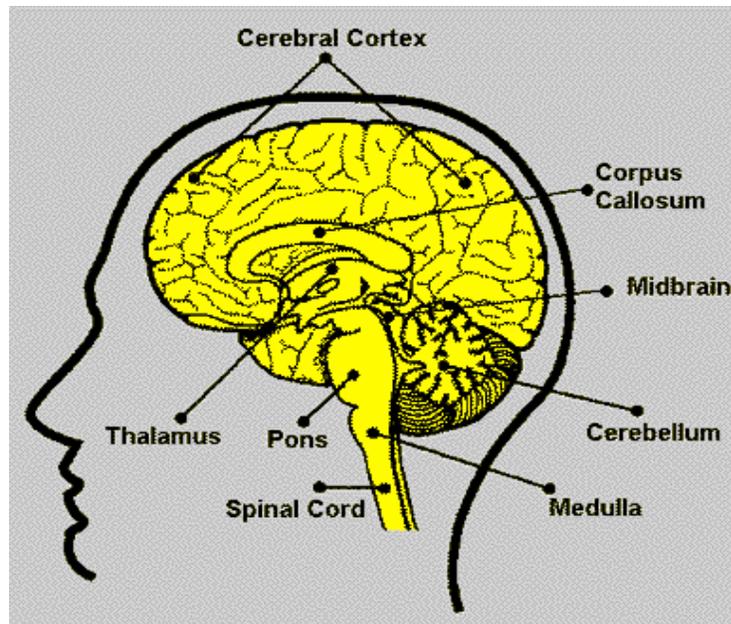
Neuroscience for Kids: <http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/neurok.html>

### **The Brain- The Director**

Before thinking about the problems that occur in the brain when someone has a mental illness, it is helpful to think about how the brain functions normally. The brain is an incredibly complex organ. It makes up only 2 percent of our body weight, but it consumes 20 percent of the oxygen we breathe and 20 percent of the energy we take in. It controls virtually everything we as humans experience, including movement, sensing our environment, regulating our involuntary body processes such as breathing, and controlling our emotions. Hundreds of thousands of chemical reactions occur every second in the brain; those reactions underlie the thoughts, actions, and behaviors with which we respond to environmental stimuli. In short, the brain dictates the internal processes and behaviors that allow us to survive.



Picture from: <http://hplusmagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/brain1.jpg>



**Cerebral Cortex:** This area is involved in thought, voluntary movement (raising your hand), language, reasoning (problem solving), and perception (seeing).

**Cerebellum:** This area is involved in involuntary movement (a movement you make without thinking about it first), balance, and posture

**Brain stem:** Basic functions such as breathing, swallowing, heart beat

**Thalamus:** processing of information you bring in through your 5 senses, and movement

**Hippocampus:** Learning and memory

**Basal Ganglia:** Movement

**Midbrain:** Vision, hearing and eye movement

**Corpus Collosum:** Connects right and left hemispheres

**Hypothalamus:** Hunger, body temperature, thirst, and circadian rhythms

**Query:** Did you notice how several areas seem to be involved in the same function? That's because many human functions require multiple systems to work together. How do they work together? They talk to each other! They communicate via cells transmitting information.

## **The Neuron- The Communicator**

How does the brain take in all this information, process it, and cause a response? The basic functional unit of the brain is the neuron. A neuron is a specialized cell that can produce different actions because of its precise connections with other neurons, sensory receptors, and muscle cells.

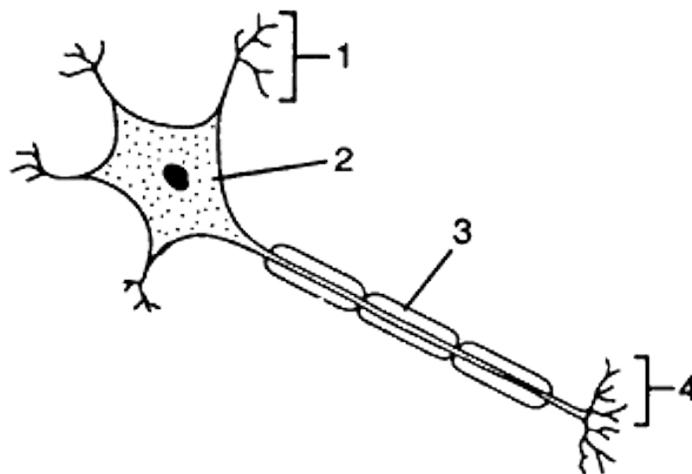
## Neuron

Dendrites

Cell body includes  
nucleus

Axon

Axon terminal or presynaptic



Neurons communicate using both electrical signals and chemical messages. The chemical messengers are called neurotransmitters. The neurotransmitter is formed in the cell body and travels through the axon to the presynaptic terminal where it is released and taken up by the dendrites of another neuron. In terms of mental illness acetylcholine, serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine are the neurotransmitters thought to play a significant role.

**Query:** What happens when there is miscommunication? When the neurons can not communicate effectively, either due to a brain injury (concussion) or abnormal neurons in certain parts of the brain, or too much or too little of certain neurotransmitters or a combination of any of the above, the result is neurological and psychiatric disorders.

For example, a concussion causes memory loss, confusion, and blurred vision. Alzheimer's disease patients have both structural abnormalities in their brains and too

little of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. Depressive symptoms are related to too little serotonin available for cells, and bipolar disease symptoms are related to several neurotransmitters.

To learn more about known and hypothesized causes of various mental illnesses, search out the resources listed in the Resource page.

To finish this REQUIRED activity, do one of the following included in this packet:

This is my brain it helps me\_\_\_\_\_. Color as you wish.

Beady Neuron

Brain Puzzle

Label a neuron

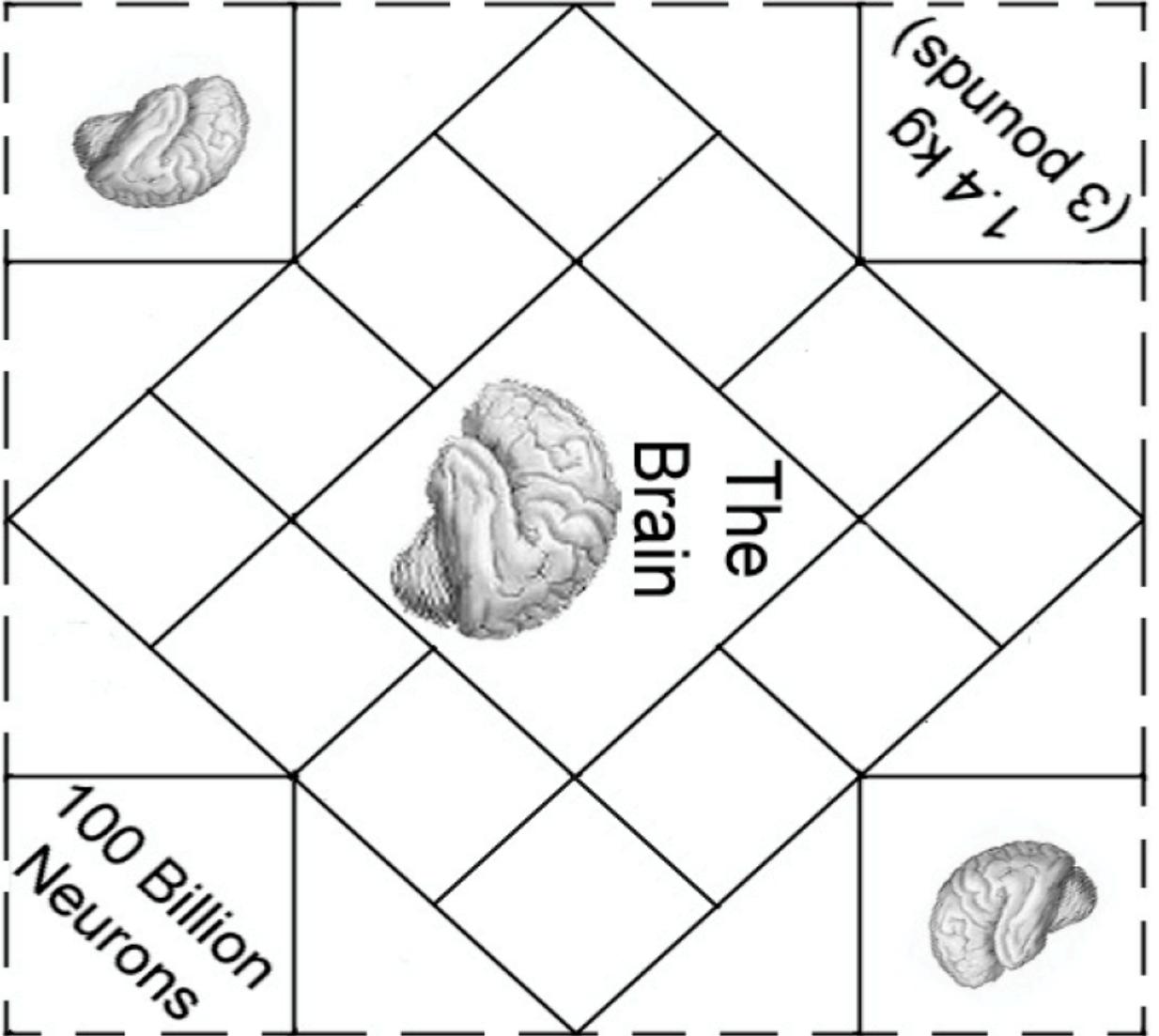
Brain Origami –Write brain facts in origami form

Brain Structure Dominoes

Sources:

<http://science.education.nih.gov/supplements/nih5/Mental/guide/info-mental-a.htm>

<http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/neurok.html>



## Brain Origami

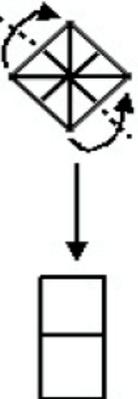
1. Cut along the dashed line to remove the pattern.
2. Turn the paper over so that the printed side is down.
3. Bend the four corners to the center of the paper.



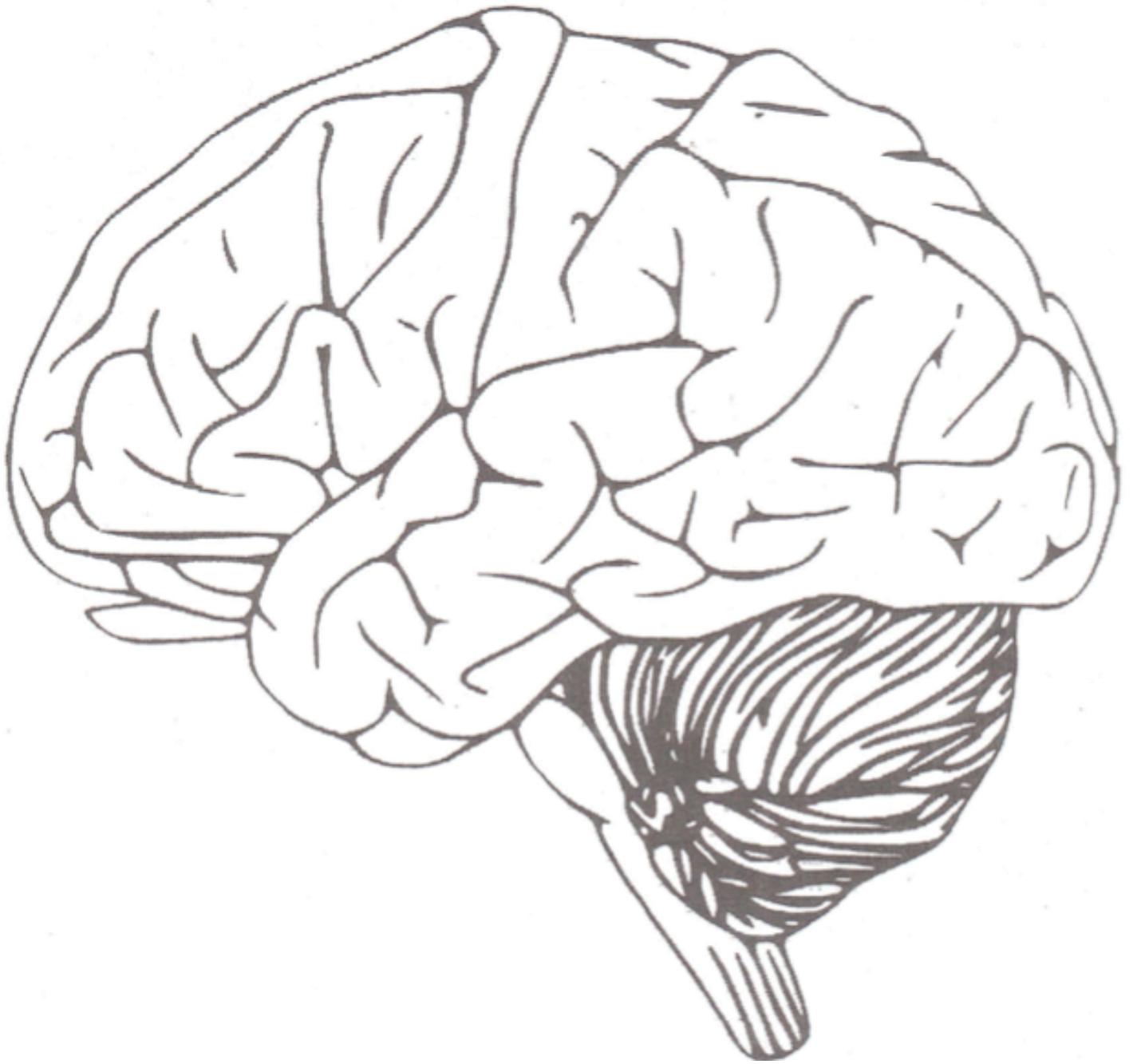
4. Turn the paper over.
5. Bring the four corners to the center of the paper.



6. Fold the paper in half.



7. Put your thumb and first fingers in the outside pockets.
8. Bring the corners together.
9. Open and close origami to reveal brain facts.



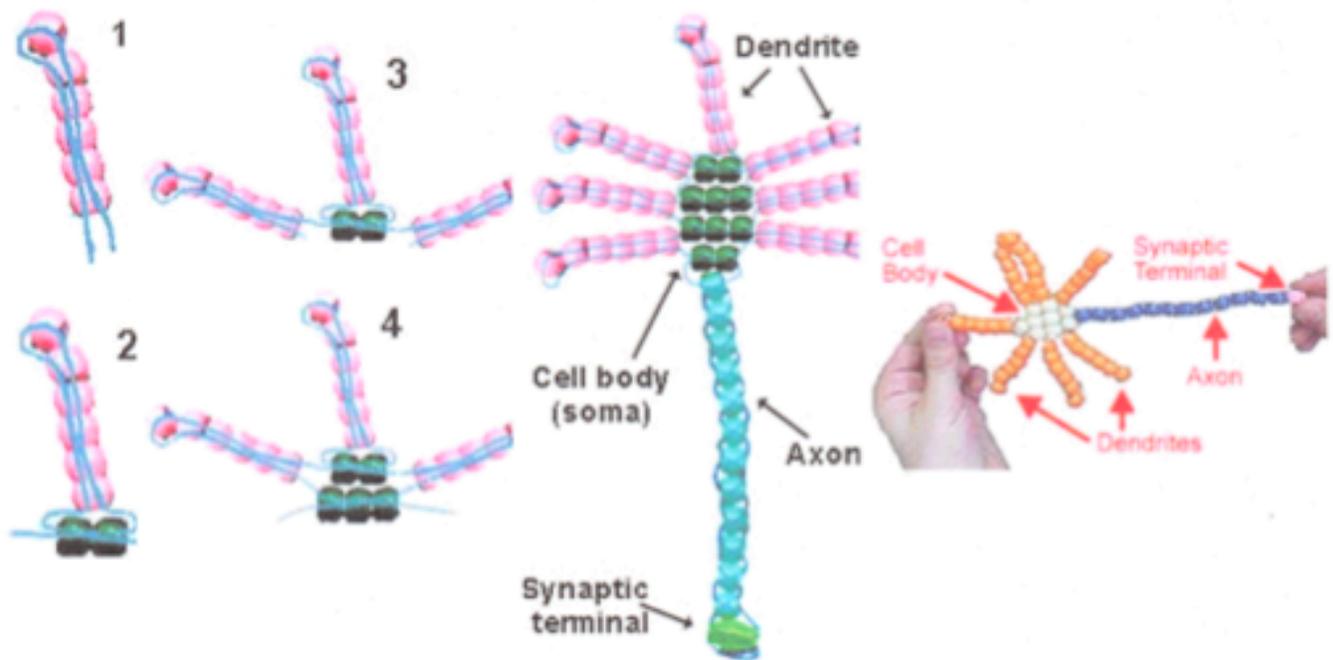
This is my brain, it helps me \_\_\_\_\_.

Color and/or label parts of the brain.

# Beady Neuron

For grades 3-12

Get out those beads and make a neuron! This neuron with seven dendrites requires 65 beads: 42 beads for the dendrites, 10 beads for the cell body, 12 beads for the axon and 1 bead for the synaptic terminal. String the beads using the pattern in the diagrams below. The string can be yarn, rope, or for the best result use flexible wire. You can also create your own pattern or use a different colored bead for a nucleus in the cell body.

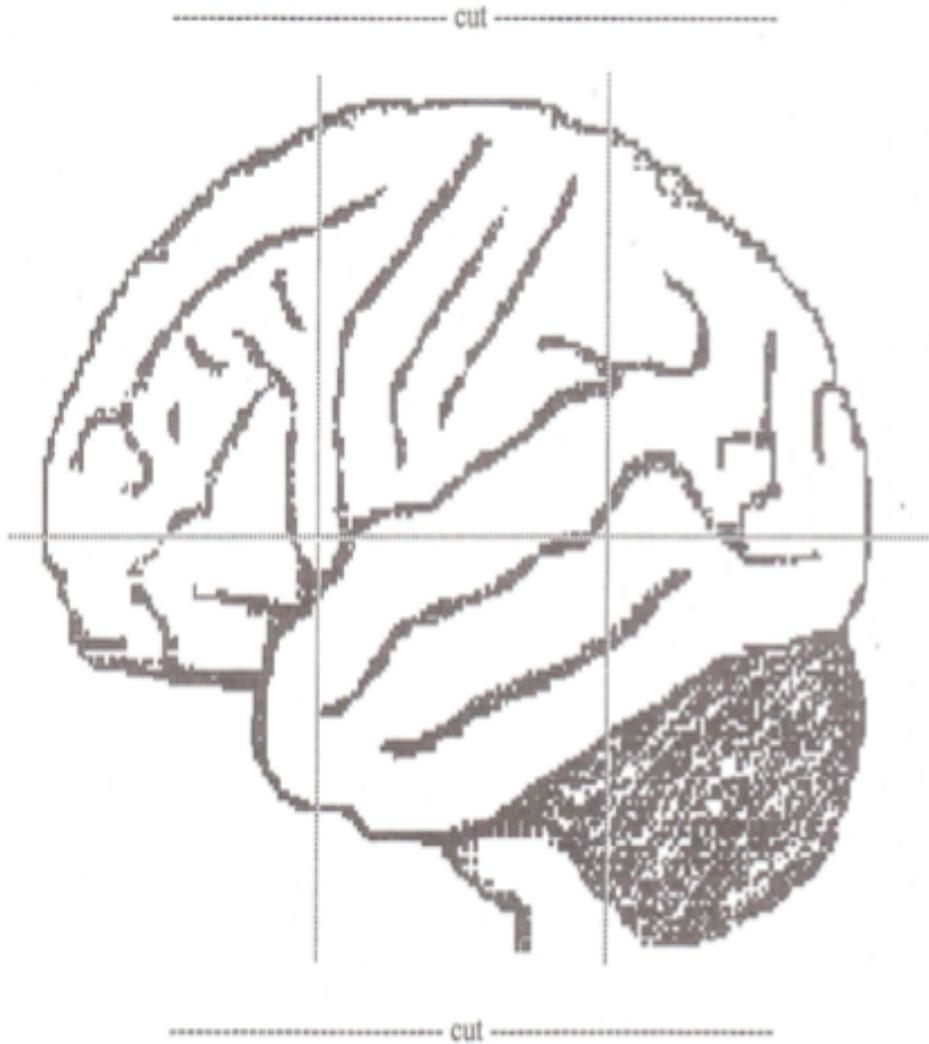


Materials:

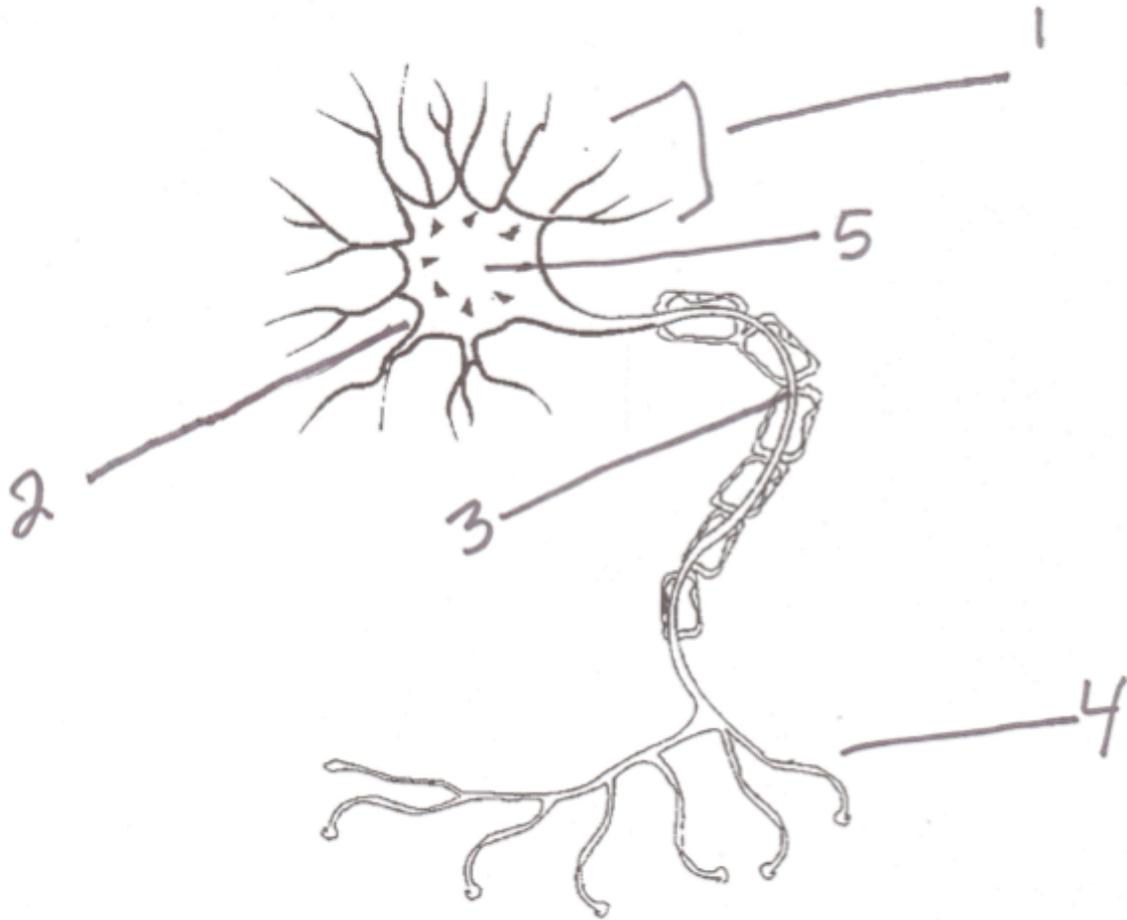
- Wire
- 65 beads

## Brain Puzzle

Cut out these pieces along the dotted lines. Mix up the pieces and then try to put the brain back together.



The Neuron



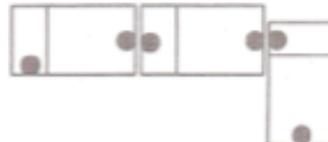
**Label Dendrite, Axon, Cell Body, Nucleus, and Presynaptic Terminal.**

## Brain Structure Dominoes

|                                       |   |  |  |                            |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| Cerebellum                            | Brain Stem  | Hypothalamus   | Thalamus   | Limbic System              |
| Breathing, heart rate, blood pressure | Hunger, body temperature, thirst, circadian rhythms | Sensory processing, movement, sends information to the cerebral cortex | Emotional response, memory, (amygdala, hippocampus and other structures) | Learning, memory           |
|                                       |   |  |  |                            |
| Hippocampus                           | Midbrain  | Corpus callosum  | Human Brain Weight   | Human Spinal Cord Weight   |
| Vision, hearing, eye movement         | Connects the right and left cerebral hemispheres    | 1.4 kilograms (3 pounds)   | 35-40 grams  | Movement, balance, posture |

Directions: Cut out each of the ten dominoes. Mix up the dominoes and then match each word with the correct description on another domino. Match the black dots of each domino. If you have matched the words and their descriptions correctly, you will have made a rectangle with all of the dominoes.

Example:



## Mental Illness Myths and Facts Quiz

**Daisy/Brownie/Junior**

Can be completed as a group or individually

Answer True or False?

1. You can catch a mental illness from someone else. \_\_\_\_\_
2. People who have mental illnesses are not smart. \_\_\_\_\_
3. People with mental illnesses don't care what people think or say about them. \_\_\_\_\_
4. People with mental illnesses are more likely to be a victim of a crime than commit a crime. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Mental illness is a medical problem just like diabetes or asthma. \_\_\_\_\_

## Mental Illness Facts and Myths Quiz

### Cadette/Senior/Ambassador

Can be completed as a group or individually

Answer True or False?

1. You can catch a mental illness from someone else. \_\_\_\_\_
2. People who have mental illnesses are not smart. \_\_\_\_\_
3. People with mental illnesses don't care what people think or say about them. \_\_\_\_\_
4. People with mental illnesses are more likely to be a victim of a crime than commit a crime. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Mental illness is a medical problem just as diabetes and asthma are. \_\_\_\_\_
6. People with mental illnesses can't work. \_\_\_\_\_
7. No one with a mental illness has contributed to our world in a positive way. \_\_\_\_\_
8. It's okay to gossip about or make fun of people who have a mental illness. \_\_\_\_\_
9. One in every four people will be diagnosed with a mental illness in their lifetime. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Depressed people can just “snap out of it” if they try.\_\_\_\_
  
11. Many mentally ill people don't go for treatment because of the stigma of mental illness.\_\_\_\_
  
12. Scientists already know what causes all mental illnesses.\_\_\_\_

### Answer Key for Mental Illness Facts and Myths Quiz- All levels

1. You can catch a mental illness from someone else. **FALSE**
  
2. People who have mental illnesses are not smart. **FALSE**
  
3. People with mental illnesses don't care what people think or say about them. **FALSE**
  
4. People with mental illnesses are more likely to be a victim of a crime than commit a crime. **TRUE**
  
5. Mental illness is a medical problem just as diabetes and asthma are. **TRUE**
  
6. People with mental illnesses can't work. **FALSE**
  
7. No one with a mental illness has contributed to our world in a positive way. **FALSE**
  
8. It's okay to gossip about or make fun of people who have a mental illness. **FALSE**
  
9. One in every four people will be diagnosed with a mental illness in their lifetime. **TRUE**
  
10. Depressed people can just "snap out of it" if they try. **FALSE**

11. Many mentally ill people don't go for treatment because of the stigma of mental illness. **TRUE**

12. Scientists already know what causes all mental illnesses. **FALSE**

As you explore the websites noted on the Resource List in your work toward completing the Patch you will likely learn more about these facts. You might want to retake the quiz at after completing all Patch activities.

## The Golden Rule

Every person is different. Some may be raised by two parents, or a single parent, or may be in foster care. Everyone has a unique personality.

To list some of the differences among our close friends and family would be a challenging task. It would be even harder to list the differences among those we don't know.

It is important to concentrate and think about what we all have in common. At the top of the list is: **Everyone likes to be treated with respect and kindness.**

It's true everyone has problems. Some may be more challenging than others.

Rather than jumping to conclusions or making assumptions when you encounter someone who may have a physical, mental or emotional challenge, keep in mind you may not have all the information you need. You may make a mistake you will regret.

Becoming informed about people will help you to learn not to judge in a negative way. Judging can cause them to feel **stigma** or shame.

Think about how to help fight stigma by changing how you treat others who may be different. Come up with some ideas on what you could do to make ALL people feel welcomed and accepted.

An effective place to begin is to learn and practice this positive statement: If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all!

*This information may be read aloud and discussed. It may be shared-reading with each section being read by a different person. "Popcorn" style reading would have the first reader picked the 2<sup>nd</sup> ready by saying "popcorn" and the person's name. Continue with all the sections. Or each section could be numbered and cut out and given to the ones to read aloud in order.*

## Famous Achievers with Mental Health Conditions

**I don't know anyone who has had a mental illness. YES YOU DO!**

People of all walks of life have mental illness. You probably know someone who has a relative with a depression, Alzheimer's disease, autism, bipolar, or any number of mental illnesses.

There are famous and successful people as well...

Abraham Lincoln: the 16<sup>th</sup> president of the U.S. - depression.

Mark Twain: perhaps one of our greatest American writers - depression.

Vinny Guadagnino: actor on The Jersey Shore - anxiety and panic attacks.

Vincent Van Gogh: one of the great artists - bipolar disorder.

Winston Churchill: prime minister of England during WWII - bipolar disorder.

John Nash: Nobel Prize winner for Economics and subject of the movie "A Beautiful Mind"- schizophrenia.

Buzz Aldrin: American astronaut - bipolar disorder

Mike Wallace: anchor for "60 Minutes" - depression.

Carrie Fisher: writer and actress (played Princess Leia in Star Wars) - bipolar disorder.

Catherine Zeta Jones: actress – bipolar disorder.

World Peace (aka Ron Artest): professional basketball player - depression

Pete Wentz: singer for Fall Out Boy - depression

Adam Levine: lead singer of Maroon Five - ADHD

J.K. Rowling: author of the Harry Potter series- depression

Michael Phelps: Olympic Gold Medal swimmer - ADHD.

\*To see videos of these people and others speaking about their mental illness:

<http://www.halfofus.com/video/?videoID=68&chapterID=1>

## Famous Achievers: Word Searches

Words Horizontal- Level: Easy



Vinny

Nash

WorldPeace

Wentz

ZetaJones

Twain

Fisher

Churchill

Lincoln

Wallace

Aldrin

VanGogh

Words Horizontal and Vertical- Level: Medium



Nash  
Wallace  
Twain  
ZetaJones  
Aldrin

Vinny  
Churchill  
Lincoln  
VanGogh  
WorldPeace

Wentz  
Fisher

Words horizontal, vertical, and diagonal- Level: HARD



Wentz  
Lincoln  
Wallace  
Churchill  
WorldPeace

Fisher  
Aldrin  
VanGogh  
Nash  
ZetaJones

Vinny  
Twain

Answer Key: Medium



Nash

Wallace

Twain

ZetaJones

Aldrin

Vinny

Churchill

Lincoln

VanGogh

WorldPeace

Wentz

Fisher

Answer Key: Hard



Wentz  
Lincoln  
Wallace  
Churchill  
WorldPeace

Fisher  
Aldrin  
VanGogh  
Nash  
ZetaJones

Vinny  
Twain

### **Getting to know me...**

I am not like the other people in your life. I can't get over it, mellow out, learn to live with it, take a chill pill, calm down, deal with it, or change the way you want me to change. It takes a huge amount of will just to survive this illness. Mania takes away my reasoning. Depression makes life pointless.

If you tell me to change when I'm in a mood swing, I won't believe that I can, or even hear you. My brain is telling me something different than you are telling me. People with bipolar disorder have a civil war going on in their brains--this war is between the real person and the ill person. And sometimes the ill person wins.

But I am here and I want to listen to you. Learn as much as you can about this illness and then ask me questions. Then we can communicate better.

Our relationship means so much. I promise to do all that I can to manage this illness.

*From : bp magazine Spring 2010*

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*From : bp magazine Spring 2010*

## Resource List

### Learning about the Brain

- Brain structure app (free) for iPhone, iPad, and Android products use search term: **3D brain**
- Neuroscience for Kids: This is an excellent site maintained by a professor at University Of Washington. Lots of didactic and hands on activities.  
<http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/neurok.html>
- This site has very basic information about the brain and if you use the search function you can find information about mental illness common in children.  
<http://kidshealth.org/kid/htbw/brain.html>

### Mental Illness Facts and Myths

- National Alliance for the Mentally Ill(NAMI): is dedicated to building better lives (through awareness, services, treatment support and research) for the millions affected by mental illness. On their website you can find information about the prevalence of mental illness as well as information about stigma. Via the local NAMI chapter you may be able to find a person to come speak to your troop.  
<http://www.nami.org>

Ending the Silence, is a NAMI campaign to increase awareness of mental illness signs and symptoms among teens.

<http://www.endingthesilence.org/students/student-information>

“Breaking the Silence”, is a school lesson plan developed by a parent of a mentally- ill child and endorsed y NAMI. <http://www.btslessonplans.org>

- WebMD is always a good source of information about medical issues including mental illness. <http://www.webmd.com/mental-health/brain-mental-illness>
- <http://www.about.com/health/#topic-list> contains content approved by medical review board about mental health including mental illnesses, and celebrities with mental illness.
- National Institutes of Health and National Institute of Mental Health: Tax supported research and education. The first link is a lesson plan “The Science of Mental Illness” for middle schoolers, and the second link is a presentation of “Brain Basics”, and the third is a high school lesson plan, “Making Sense of Mental Health: Past and Present”.  
<http://science.education.nih.gov/supplements/nih5/Mental/default.htm>

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/educational-resources/brain-basics/brain-basics.shtml>

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/literatureofprescription/education/c2HighSchoolHealth.html>

- Written for teens, info on mental health issues including anxiety, depression, eating disorders [http://kidshealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/](http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/)
- Mental Health America, another support and advocacy group, works to promote mental wellness. Information about specific mental illnesses is available on their site. . <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net>
- MINDS is dedicated to educating high school students about mental health. Website includes a recommended reading list as well. <http://mindsprogram.org/default.aspx>

### **Stigma**

- Bring Change to Mind, is an organization working to reduce stigma and discrimination against the mentally ill. Website includes personal stories. <http://bringchange2mind.org/>

See Also:

- <http://www.nami.org>
- <http://www.halfofus.com/video/?videoID=68&chapterID=1>

### **Famous Achievers with Mental Illness**

- TED talks: Talks by those affected by mental illness yet successful in life. Elyn Saks, successful law scholar, who has schizophrenia. Temple Grandin, famous animal expert with autism.. [http://www.ted.com/playlists/9/all\\_kinds\\_of\\_minds.html](http://www.ted.com/playlists/9/all_kinds_of_minds.html)
- **Half of Us** is a national campaign, which raises awareness about the prevalence of mental health issues on college campuses and connects students to the appropriate resources to get help. The videos below are contemporary rock stars, actresses, etc who speak about their experience. <http://www.halfofus.com/video/?videoID=68&chapterID=1>
- <http://www.about.com/health/#topic-list> has content approved by medical review board about mental health including mental illnesses, and celebrities with mental illness.

## **Community support and advocacy**

**It's Up To Us, San Diego** is a local campaign talk openly about mental illness, recognize symptoms, utilize local resources and seek help.

- <http://www.up2sd.org/>

## Mental Health Awareness Patch Completion Form

When you have completed the activities to earn the patch, please fill out this form and send it to Ashley Jacobs via email, fax, or mail. You only need to send this form, not the whole packet. Please submit one form for the entire troop, mark how many patches at the bottom of this form.

Email: [ajacobs@ibpf.org](mailto:ajacobs@ibpf.org)

Fax: (858) 764-2491

Mailing address: International Bipolar Foundation  
8895 Towne Centre Drive, Suite 105-360  
San Diego, CA 92122

| Required For All                 | Date Completed |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| # 1 Learn about the Brain        |                |
| #2 Mental Health Facts and Myths |                |
| #3 Reflection on Girl Scout Law  |                |

**Circle one: Daisy, Brownie, Junior, Cadette, Senior or Ambassador Girl Scouts**

Daisies and Brownies complete required activities and one activity from Discover and one from Take Action. (5 total)

Juniors and Cadettes complete required activities and one activity Discover, one from Connect, and one from Take Action. (6 total)

Seniors and Ambassadors complete required activities and two activities from Discover, two from Connect, and two from Take Action. (9 total)

| Discover | Check<br>√ | Date Completed |
|----------|------------|----------------|
| #1       |            |                |
| #2       |            |                |
| #3       |            |                |
| #4       |            |                |
| #5       |            |                |
| #6       |            |                |
| #7       |            |                |

| Connect | Check<br>√ | Date Completed |
|---------|------------|----------------|
| #1      |            |                |
| #2      |            |                |
| #3      |            |                |
| #4      |            |                |
| #5      |            |                |
| #6      |            |                |
| #7      |            |                |

| Take Action | Check<br>√ | Date Completed |
|-------------|------------|----------------|
| #1          |            |                |
| #2          |            |                |
| #3          |            |                |
| #4          |            |                |
| #5          |            |                |
| #6          |            |                |

Print Leader's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Leader's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of patches earned: \_\_\_\_\_ Troop Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Troop #: \_\_\_\_\_

IBPF would like to hear how you completed the Patch and what you learned. If you would like to share, please add a page with your comments to the end of this form, or email us at [ajacobs@ibpf.org](mailto:ajacobs@ibpf.org)