

Five *on*
Friday

Musings on Mental Health

[Why I Ride for Mental Health](#)

written by Kathleen M. Pike, PhD
May 10, 2019

Five *on*
Friday

Musings on Mental Health

Last Sunday, thirteen riders from our WHO Collaborating Centre for Global Mental Health team braved the downpour to bike in the Five Boro Bike Tour in support of global mental health. The Five Boro Bike Tour is a recreational ride that takes about 32,000 riders through the streets of Manhattan, Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, and Staten Island. This year was our third year hosting a charity team for the tour.



With tons of enthusiasm (and extra warm socks!), our riders raised awareness and funds for mental health. Here's why they chose to ride with our WHO Collaborating Centre team:

Soa Andrian

I'm so excited to be participating in the Five Boro Bike Tour for a second year. GMHP does important work in reducing the global burden of mental illness through research that serves to: eliminate stigma, influence advocacy and policy change and produce more effective prevention and treatment services related to mental illness.

Michaela Baker

I have worked with the Columbia Global Mental Health Programs as an intern, and now a member of the Young Professionals Board. I ride to raise awareness about mental illness and support the amazing work of the GMHPs in advocacy and research for global mental health.

Kelsey Clayman

The Global Mental Health Programs work around the globe to improve the lives of individuals with mental illness, making sure every person affected has access to care, treatment, and understanding. Even though last minute I wasn't able to join the ride, I will make up the miles over the summer to fulfill my commitment to my sponsors in support of the GMHPs. It's always more fun to ride with our team, but mental health matters every day!

Lynn DaSilva

In 2019, two students from my school district, four months apart from each other, committed suicide. I was

devastated and felt helpless. Why? I ask myself daily. I could do nothing. For them, I have dedicated this ride in hope and to raise money to help people with mental illness.

Sarah Forthal

I am excited to join the Global Mental Health Programs for the first time on the Five Boro Bike Tour. While there have been huge strides made in mental health research, treatment, and awareness, there is also much more to be done.

Nicole Khauli

There is no health without mental health. We hear this statement often, but not often enough. For the third time, I bike alongside the Global Mental Health Program to remind others as well as myself that physical health is mental health. I am excited to join the movement for global mental health once again and help promote healthy lifestyles but, more importantly, advocate for good mental health as a human right for everyone.

Victoria Leonard

Lack of access to high quality mental health services has been a major problem in every academic, personal, and professional setting I have encountered- from schools in Rhode Island and Addo, South Africa to hospital wards in Dar es Salaam and New York. I am so proud to be a member of the Global Mental Health Programs team riding to boost access to this lifesaving treatment! The GMHP's commitment to training the next generation of mental health practitioners, researchers, and advocates is leading to systemic transformation of health systems that will serve and save millions worldwide.

Liza Magill

Mental health is intrinsically connected to all aspects of health, but it is grossly underrepresented in terms of global health research, advocacy, and philanthropic support. I am proud to ride to support access to affordable, evidence-based mental health care for everyone, whether they were born in Minneapolis, like me, or in Uganda, Bolivia, New York, or across the world like many of my friends. For all of us, mental health is health.

Kathy Pike

Mental illness is the leading cause of disability in the world. It is something most of us don't think about until things are not quite right with ourselves or others. This year, I opted to stay dry and serve as support staff to our team. I am overwhelmed by the dedication of these young people, even through the rain, to ride in support of our WHO Collaborating Centre!

Rachel Rattenni

This is my first year riding with the the Global Mental Health Program. I am thrilled for the opportunity to raise awareness and funding for a cause so important to me personally and professionally.

Tahilia Rebello

I am delighted to pedal alongside friends and advocates in support of enhancing mental health. My motivation to ride is both professional and personal. As a scientist, I have dedicated my life to understanding and addressing mental illness, and its associated burden, through research and advocacy. Personally, I have seen the sobering consequences of mental illness on those I cherish.

Ian Rodgers

I'm riding because, time and time again, mental health falls by the wayside. The health of my brain, the brains of my family, friends, coworkers, plays second fiddle to the health of the rest of the body. I ride to remind myself, and the rest of us, that that needs to change. There is no health without mental health.

Maya Tarabishy

I am riding to promote mental health. By participating, I pledge to raise money towards global research and advocacy initiatives to reduce the impact of mental illness around the world.

Brian Wong

My sister Jacqueline opened my eyes to these issues, and I really respect what she does for the community for mental health. I am excited to be riding beside her to support global mental health in the Five Boro Bike Tour.

Jacqueline Wong

From a college student with fleeting dreams of starting a non-profit, to now, a mental health therapist for underprivileged adolescents and adults in Trenton, I have always wanted to be a pillar of support for others. Mental health issues fall through the cracks in our society, leaving many unattended to, others afraid to seek help, and a shortage in proper care. Globally, this matter is considered taboo and those in need are ostracized. I aspire to help people achieve their full potential and "Stamp Out Stigma" on mental health. Please join me in support for mental health awareness!

The Five Boro Bike Tour is a great metaphor for addressing mental health globally – the ride has potholes galore, strenuous uphill climbs, and turns that are slippery when wet. It is also filled with thrilling moments of discovery, some great straightaways where we can pick up speed, and wonderful opportunities to see what is around us everyday from new points of view. The rain didn't stop our riders last Sunday. So too, we will continue the journey of pushing forward to advance mental health around the globe. Let's keep on riding!!

**** Many thanks to all our Five Boro Bike Tour sponsors! ****

*If any one else is interested in supporting our team, especially after their dedication in the rain, it's not too late!
You can email info@cugmhp.org.*