

Signs Your Mental Health May Be In Danger

A breakdown is often referred to in different ways such as a mental breakdown, emotional breakdown or the less commonly used nervous breakdown. All terms are used to describe a state in which a person can't function normally due to overwhelming stress.

When I was 19, & my mother raged at me after I came home late one night. Her screams woke my father who came in to see what was happening & then they began screaming at each other. I ran into the bathroom & locked myself in. I sat on the floor, unable to move, function or think. I was catatonic for about five hours.

Other times, like when my beloved grandmom passed, the breakdowns weren't quite as severe. The catatonia lasted much shorter durations, but they were still awful.

I really don't think most people take breakdowns nearly as seriously as they should. They don't believe such a thing exists or they claim the person having the breakdown is weak or seeking attention. The sad truth is that breakdowns are serious & can damage a person's mental health. It's vital to recognize the signs before one happens.

One of the first signs is feeling very anxious. I don't mean the normal anxiety that you feel before a job interview or a first date. I mean anxiety that threatens to overwhelm you when there is no obvious reason to feel anxiety, let alone to such an extreme. I mean panic attacks, headaches, tense muscles, tremors, upset stomach or high blood pressure.

Depression is another warning sign a breakdown may be on the horizon. Sometimes, depression overwhelms a person, & a breakdown can happen. Being over sensitive is another warning sign. It is a big hint that your emotions are at their limit. They're overworked which is why they're so sensitive.

Behavioral changes can be another sign of a pending breakdown. Because your mind is so overwhelmed, naturally your behavior is different. You may isolate yourself, lack patience, be short with people or lose interest in things that you normally enjoy.

Trouble with concentration is another red flag that a breakdown may be on the horizon. Stress makes concentration harder, but when that stress is ongoing, it's even worse. Ongoing stress can increase cortisol levels in the body which over time can deteriorate your memory, ability to make decisions & problem solving skills.

Sleep changes often happen if someone is coming close to experiencing a breakdown. Some people sleep too much while others sleep too little. The exhaustion of being overwrought emotionally can cause a person to sleep too much. At the same time, constant anxiety can cause a person to think too much, making sleep impossible.

Weight loss or gain & appetite changes can be another sign of a possible breakdown in the future. Some people when stressed don't like to eat while others overeat. When a breakdown is likely on the horizon, those changes can be even more prominent. Over eating in particular because cortisol can trigger cravings for high fat or sugary foods.

If you recognize these signs in yourself, it's time to take action now. Breakdowns can be avoided with proper self care. Pray. Talk to God like the Father that He is to you. Write in a journal. Talk to a trusted friend. Reduce as many activities that are unnecessary as possible so you can have more time to relax. Watch your eating habits to be sure you eat properly. You still can indulge in a slice of cake or whatever treat you enjoy sometimes though- the key is balance, not cutting treats out entirely. Get extra sleep, even if you need to take a sleeping pill to help you. Do things that make you feel nurtured & comfortable. Taking steps like these can truly help you avoid having a breakdown & are good for your mental health.