OBJECTIVES
Student will:

1. Identify common fears and misconceptions we have about people who have mental illness.

2. Discuss how stereotypes about mental illness are formed and affect our behavior.

3. Be informed about the nature of schizophrenia:
   - Symptoms
   - Possible causes
   - Psychotic vs. psychopathic
   - Numbers and age group affected

4. Discuss the role family, friends, community, and government can play in recovery.

Discuss or assign as homework: Someone who has a mental illness has moved next door to you. What do you expect the person to be like? What are the common characteristics you associate with people with mental illness?

Write student responses to questions on board: (examples)
- crazy
- weird
- drug addict
- insane
- violent
- suicidal
- retarded
- manic
- psycho
- dangerous
- reclusive

Discuss: How true are these stereotypes? Let’s test your knowledge about mental illness.

Reproducible test can be found on page 16 of this booklet.

Test (with answer key):

1. Serious mental illness can happen to any family. (True)
2. The suicide rate for people who suffer from mental illness is 10%. (True)
3. Psychopath and psychotic mean the same thing. (False)
4. The great majority of people with mental illness are not violent. (True)
5. Substance abuse (i.e. drugs and alcohol) may be a way people with mental illness medicate themselves to relieve their symptoms. (True)
6. Mental illness and mental retardation are the same thing. (False)
7. People with mental illness can really pull themselves together and be normal if they try hard enough. (False)
8. Mental illness strikes one in five people at some point in their lives. (True)
9. Mental illness is a physical illness affecting the brain. (True)
10. All people with mental illness live in their own world and are completely out of contact with reality. (False)