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Make an Impact

“Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices,” says mentalhealth.gov. Mental health related issues can be debilitating and if left untreated, start to influence everyday activities. I am pursuing a Masters of Social Work degree because mental health is important. Due to my strong desire to help others, I am motivated to give equal opportunities for everyone to get the help they need, guide others to live a healthy life, and become a mental health counselor.

I plan to use my degree to provide help to all ages. Getting help for mental health issues is something that should be accessible to anyone. I want to see people get the help they need even if they do not have anyone in their network to reach out to or access to proper resources. With my degree, I will be able to use my knowledge in the Social Work field to educate people about mental health, resources, and research. To best contribute my desire to work in the counseling field to the future of mental health, I will work in private practice after I have had experience working with other organizations.

Mental health issues are very common and witnessing people’s experiences has touched my life personally. My cousin’s depression and anxiety became so overwhelming that she decided to drop out of her senior year of college. She was so close to graduation and I know she

may have had a different outcome if she had got help. Anxiety and depression, as well as any mental health issue, can be overwhelming; but, that does not mean that we cannot get help to manage it. I am determined to help others so that they do not have to suffer like my cousin did. Mental health issues should not get in the way of everyday life, keep you from reaching your goals, cause you to dropout of college, keep you awake at night, or make you feel hopeless. I want to be in the mental health field so that I can help others live a healthy life; a life where they do not have to plan their day around their mental health issues. Instead, I want to offer help to those who are suffering so that they can keep on with their daily activities and are fully equipped to deal with their mental health issues.

A good friend of mine suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Her best friend passed away 10 years ago and she explained recently on social media, "I hit the lowest of lows. I had no idea what the following months would bring. Looking back, I did not realize how broken and lost I was at the time." Today, she is very successful, has a loving husband, and 2 beautiful girls. If she had not mentioned that she suffers from PTSD and if she had not posted on her social media about her past, you would not realize what she goes through. She still continues on with treatments for PTSD even though she has come a long way since she lost her friend. Her PTSD has not gone away and that is not uncommon for mental health issues; sometimes, they affect people for the remainder of their lives. A relative of mine suffers from schizophrenia and he is taught to manage his symptoms through medicine, therapies, and specialists, but it will likely never go away. I want to be a mental health counselor with a Social Work degree so that I can help other people manage their mental health issues while being able to gain experience in different environments.

During the three years I spent at high school, I was exposed to classmates addicted to drugs, alcohol, or pornography. In the past three years, we had 2 suicides and 2 car accidents that took the lives of 5 students. From personal experience, addiction and loss are top issues within our schools. During the times of loss, grief counselors were available at all hours of the school day. I want to be able to offer my help to those that need it since students are experiencing loss of peers more than ever before. Abuse of drugs and alcohol is evident in many families today. My peers at school are sons and daughters, friends, relatives, or acquaintances of addicts or they suffer from addiction themselves. It is hard to come across a family who is not affected by addiction which is why I want to learn the best and most effective way to help with addiction and grief treatments so that I can fully equipped to help anyone.

By getting a degree in Social Work, I will have the opportunity to help others live a healthy life and I will be able to use my degree for counseling, helping people manage their mental health issues, and working with grief and addiction sufferers. With a versatile degree, I will be able to help more people throughout the mental health and social work field. When people feel like they have nowhere else to go and they are struggling, I want to be someone who can help them. I was introduced to the mental health field by a mentor who knows me well and she encouraged me to pursue a career in the helping field. I realized where my heart was the whole time and I knew how I felt about helping people, I just needed to know which career I would succeed in the most. The field of mental health is where I am drawn to and I know I will be able to make the biggest impact with my life focused on this field.