LIST OF MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS AND ISSUES

This list indexes, categorises and defines conditions and issues that result from, show the presence of, or affect the mental health and mental well-being of individuals, families, communities and society. Entries are placed using the Ubuntu matrix: individual, family (*ukama*), community (*ujamaa*), society (*ujamii*), environment (*umvelo*) and spirituality (*uroho*). Where a definition names more than one domain, the entry appears in both, with the second domain listed as well as the first.

Category	**Ubuntu term**	**Focus**	**Number of entries**
Individual	*Uyangu/ Ungu*	The person's own psychological, emotional and physical state.	28
Family	*Ukama*	Relationships and dynamics within the family.	14
Community	*Ujamaa*	Shared experience and collective response within the community.	17
Society	*Ujamii*	Structural, economic, political and legal conditions.	24
Environment	*Umvelo*	Relationship with the natural and physical environment.	4
Spirituality	*Uroho*	Relationship with parents, family Elders, spiritual and ancestral world and future generations.	4

Individual (*uyangu/ungu*)

Anxiety Excessive worry accompanied by physical symptoms such as a racing heart. Referred to as *kufunganya* in Shona, and as *kwesaba lokungachazeki* ("unexplained fear") in Siswati.

Anxiety disorders A general category of conditions characterised by persistent, excessive worry or fear that interferes with daily functioning.

Colonial mentality The direct behavioural and attitudinal expression of internalised colonisation. While internalised colonisation is the cognitive process of absorbing the oppressor's worldview, a colonial mentality is the resulting mindset that actively shapes a person's everyday choices, desires, and self-worth.

Dementia A progressive decline in memory, thinking, and daily functioning.

Depression Persistent sadness, loss of interest, and feelings of worthlessness that impair daily functioning. Referred to as *kufungisisa* in Shona (literally "thinking too much"), and as *kudvumala* in Siswati.

Down syndrome A genetic condition present from birth (not spiritual) which results in poor mental well-being for individuals and their families. A person with the condition has poor physical and cognitive development.

Fear of failure *Kwesaba kuhluleka*, Siswati. Intense apprehension about not achieving one's goals in a high-stakes environment, manifesting as self-doubt, procrastination, risk aversion, stress, burnout, depression, and anxiety. Described as the most prominent mental health challenge among aspiring entrepreneurs in eSwatini.

Grief A state of mourning and emotional distress following loss, addressed throughout the volume through community and healing circles rather than individual clinical treatment alone.

Hearing voices Hearing voices that no one else hears.

Hopelessness *Kupererwa*, Shona. A sense of despair and loss of expectation for the future, occurring alongside depression and anxiety, particularly in contexts of chronic stress such as climate change.

Internalised colonisation The cognitive process where colonised individuals unconsciously accept and apply the oppressive values, biases, and worldview of the coloniser to themselves and their own community.

Loving self excessively Excessive concern or liking of one's own body, including building and built.

Low or high cognition and functional ability Being of cognition or functional ability that is below (dull) or above (bright) societal expectations.

Mood disorders A general category of conditions, including depression, characterised by sustained disturbances in emotional state.

Personality disorders A category of conditions involving enduring patterns of inner experience and behaviour that differ from cultural and social expectations.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) A condition that can arise after exposure to trauma, marked by intrusive memories, heightened arousal, and avoidance of reminders of the traumatic event.

Poverty A severe state of economic deprivation that strips individuals of basic human needs like food, shelter, and education, acting as a form of systemic injustice that actively causes, aids, and complicates mental health conditions.

Procrastination *Kubambelela*, Siswati. A tendency to delay or avoid action, associated with fear of failure among aspiring entrepreneurs.

Psychosis / psychotic disorders Conditions involving a loss of contact with reality, which may include hallucinations,

delusions, lack of judgement, loss of connection with surroundings and behaving outside social expectations.

Racial battle fatigue Cumulative physiological and psychological strain arising from repeated exposure to racism and racial microaggressions.

Risky gambling A pattern of gambling marked by loss of control, preoccupation with betting, and continued gambling despite mounting financial loss, resulting in harm to the individual's and their family's financial security and mental well-being.

Self-doubt *Kutisola*, Siswati. Persistent questioning of one's own capability, and unfavourable comparison with others; described as the most common manifestation of fear of failure among aspiring entrepreneurs.

Sexual disorders or issues Include risky sexual behaviour, lust, homosexuality, masturbation, pornography, sexual dysfunction, prostitution and high libido or hypersexuality.

Skin bleaching The practice of using chemical substances to lighten Black skin, driven by complex psychological factors rather than simple aesthetic preference. When examined through a mental health lens, the practice often shares characteristics with deep-seated distress regarding self-worth, identity, and physical appearance.

Stress *Kucindzeteleka*, Siswati. Stress is an everyday reality; however, if a person fails to cope with or manage it, it impacts mental well-being.

Substance use disorders Using intoxicating substances above the limit considered normal. This is a criminal act or offence.

Suicide *Kuzviuraya*, Shona. Death caused by an individual's own action, discussed as a serious risk arising.

Talking to self Having coherent or incoherent verbal dialogue with oneself.

Family (*ukama*)

Botso A powerful cultural deterrent that prevents domestic violence against mothers, as the fear of triggering this multi-layered curse protects parents from physical abuse. When a violation does occur, it severely reduces the mental well-being of the perpetrator, who often suffers from intense, culturally bound anxiety, depression, or psychosis driven by guilt and social isolation. However, completing the *kutanda botso* ritual, whether through public penance or modern-day fines and formal apologies, effectively restores and enhances well-being, providing psychological closure, community absolution, and spiritual peace for everyone involved.

Chigumbu An internal emotional state of deep anger, hurt, or bitterness held toward someone for a past wrongdoing or unfair treatment due to a lack of forgiveness.

Chronic isolation from family and community A prolonged state of disconnection from family and community relationships and support networks.

Colonial trauma A multidimensional and intergenerational form of trauma originating in the psychological and structural harms of colonial rule, distinguished from trauma arising from a single individual event.

Colonising The violent extraction of indigenous economic wealth and psychological autonomy, reducing self-sufficient populations to dependent labourers for a foreign authority. It institutionalises systemic inequality, leaving a legacy of chronic financial deprivation and generational psychological trauma.

Cultural alienation A condition where individuals, families or communities disregard their culture for another.

Divorce The formal or informal dissolution of a marriage, ending the conjugal relationship and reshaping roles, obligations and support within the family, often accompanied by stigma, loss of status, or disputes over children and property that draw in the wider kin network and community.

Domestic violence A pattern of abusive behaviour within an intimate partner relationship, identified in the volume as a factor affecting children's welfare and a focus of gender-based violence counselling programmes. This is a criminal act or offence.

Excessive wealth Accumulation of wealth without uplifting family, community and society.

Family and intimate violence Violence occurring between family members, including intergenerational patterns that contribute to social disconnection and long-term psychological harm within the household. This is a criminal act or offence.

Intergenerational trauma Trauma that is transmitted across generations within families and communities, connected in the volume to the discussion of colonial trauma as a multidimensional, ongoing harm rather than a single past event.

Neglect A failure to provide adequate care, attention, supervision or support to a family member, particularly children or elderly relatives, often emerging in the aftermath of divorce or family breakdown, resulting in emotional, physical or developmental harm.

Risky gambling A pattern of gambling marked by loss of control, preoccupation with betting, and continued gambling despite mounting financial loss, resulting in harm to the individual's and their family's financial security and mental well-being.

Community (*ujamaa*)

Chronic isolation from family and community A prolonged state of disconnection from family and community relationships and support networks.

Community fear A shared psychosocial state in which an entire community experiences fear in response to a common threat, requiring a collective rather than individual response, such as community-based counselling.

Community sorrow A shared state of grief experienced across a community, often arising from a natural disaster or an act of violence, requiring community-level counselling and support rather than individual treatment alone.

Corruption The abuse of entrusted power for private gain that acts as a severe catalyst for systemic injustice, and directly causes, aids, and complicates mental health conditions by destroying public trust and depriving communities of vital resources. This is a criminal act or offence.

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Excessive modernity Excessive modernity which results in cultural alienation and the push and pull factors of modernisation.

Family violence Violence occurring between family members, including intergenerational patterns that contribute to social disconnection and long-term psychological harm within the household. This is a criminal act or offence.

Gender-based violence (**GBV**) Violence directed at a person because of their gender, addressed in the volume through community programmes offering counselling alongside support for grief and anxiety. This is a criminal act or offence.

Grief A state of mourning and emotional distress following loss, addressed throughout the volume through community and healing circles rather than individual clinical treatment alone.

Internalised colonisation The cognitive process where colonised individuals unconsciously accept and apply the oppressive values, biases, and worldview of the coloniser to themselves and their own community.

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Society (*ujamii)*

Burnout A state of physical and emotional exhaustion arising from prolonged stress, described as one of the manifestations of fear of failure among aspiring entrepreneurs.

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Low or high cognition and functional ability Being of cognition or functional ability that is below (dull) or above (bright) societal expectations.

Murder Killing another person. This is a major criminal act or offence.

Ngozi An avenging or aggrieved spirit in Shona cosmology that operates as an indigenous mechanism for restorative justice and

a cultural explanation for severe mental health crises, as it returns to inflict psychological torment, crippling paranoia, or sudden psychosis upon an offender and their entire lineage for major moral transgressions. Rather than being treated as a biomedical condition, *ngozi* is addressed through spirit mediums (*amadlozi* or *masvikiro*) and reconciliation rituals that restore relational and cosmological balance, particularly when triggered by severe social injustices. Beyond murder and maternal abuse (*botso*), these avenging spirits can be activated by severe offences such as rape, where the trauma and defilement of the victim provoke a curse against the perpetrator's lineage, as well as uncompensated theft or unfulfilled debts, where dying with unresolved grievances causes the deceased's spirit to return and torment the debtor's family until full material restitution is made. Instead of relying on punitive incarceration, this spiritual framework enforces community fairness and social justice by holding the entire family collectively accountable, ensuring that peace and psychological well-being can only be restored when the family publicly admits the wrong, pays the required compensation, and formally achieves emotional closure and collective mental healing for everyone involved.

Paedophilia Sexual contact with children. This is a criminal act or offence.

Personality disorders A category of conditions involving enduring patterns of inner experience and behaviour that differ from cultural and social expectations.

Poverty A severe state of economic deprivation that strips individuals of basic human needs like food, shelter, and education, acting as a form of systemic injustice that actively causes, aids, and complicates mental health conditions.

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delusions, lack of judgement, loss of connection with surroundings and behaving outside social expectations.

Racial battle fatigue Cumulative physiological and psychological strain arising from repeated exposure to racism and racial microaggressions.

Rape Forced or non-consensual sexual contact. This is a criminal act or offence.

Recurring criminal behaviour A pattern of continuous or habitual engagement in illegal activities. This is a criminal act or offence.

Skin bleaching Define earlier.

Substance use disorders Using intoxicating substances above the limit considered normal. This is a criminal act or offence.

Thieving chronically When a person engages in the persistent, repetitive pattern of stealing over a prolonged period. This is a criminal act or offence.

Wandering (*uzungu*) Moving from place to place with no fixed abode or having no permanent home.

Environment (*umvelo*)

Cruelty to humans and non-humans Deliberate acts of harm directed at humans or animals.

Epilepsy A neurological condition marked by recurrent seizures, which largely emanates from environmental (no spiritual) causes such as brain infections, including those from infected pork, or damage to the brain due to accidents and head injury. Prevention therefore sits substantially within the *umvelo* domain: safe food handling and animal husbandry, and safer physical surroundings that reduce head injury risk, can reduce the occurrence of seizures before they arise. Seizures themselves are a source of long-term stigma, social isolation, exclusion and low

mental well-being, and it is this relational harm, not the seizures directly, that community-level restoration needs to address.

Excessive disregard for the environment A pattern of neglect or harm directed at the natural environment.

Hopelessness *Kupererwa*, Shona. A sense of despair and loss of expectation for the future, occurring alongside depression and anxiety, particularly in contexts of chronic stress such as climate change.

Spirituality (*uroho*)

Botso Defined before.

Disrespect of the dead or burial sites Involves the mistreatment of deceased human bodies, graves, tombstones, or places of burial.

Identity crisis or loss Mental wellbeing can be impacted if a child or person loses or fails to identify or be accepted into their biological identity, which in turn means disconnection to their ancestry and spirituality.

Ngozi Defined before.