Exercise A: - Definitions of mental health and mental illness.

Mental health
The World Health Organisation defines mental health as, 'a state of well-being in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community' (WHO 2001). Mental Health is more than merely the lack of mental illness and everyone has mental health needs.

Mental health can affect how individuals think and feel about themselves and others, and how they interpret different events. Mental health also has a strong impact upon an individual's physical health because the way that we think and feel has a large influence upon our physical health.

The Mental Health Continuum
Adapted from K Tudor (1996) Mental Health Promotion: Paradigms and Practice

Maximum Mental Health

Has diagnosis of a serious illness but copes well and has positive mental health
No illness or disorder and positive mental health

Maximal Mental Disorder

Has diagnosis of a serious illness and poor mental health

Minimal Mental Health

No diagnosable illness or disorder but has poor mental health