The recent events in Tucson, Ariz., yell loud and clear that something has to be done.
More gun control? Actually, there are probably more laws than should be required to guarantee the safe use and discharge of any firearm.
A little more enforcement of those laws and a little more responsibility regarding that Constitutional right might be nice and necessary, but the real emphasis needs to be placed where it belongs – unveiling the shroud that has for far too long covered the quandary we call mental illness.
Here we are in the 21st century, believe it or not, and we still treat mental illness like a demonic possession.
We just plain don't want talk about it. Maybe, if we don't, it will just go away. But, as we continue to see on the national news, it doesn't ever go away and a lot of innocent people pay the price.
Nobody with mental illness has ever asked for that diagnosis. It isn't something you catch, like a virus.
Maybe that's the scary part about mental illness. We don't really understand it. We can't put a finger on who has it, and how, and we certainly don't plan on making it conversation fodder at the dinner table.

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But we need to talk about it and, more important, we need to understand it and help those who suffer from mental illness come to terms with it.
Not everyone who suffers from a mental illness will find themselves the center of a catastrophe.
Many with a mental illness can and do live a fairly normal life, if anything in life can be defined as normal.
But keeping this shroud intact only continues the shame and blame that has made life a living hell for those who suffer a mental illness, and their families.
Today's technology has given many of these patients a new lease on life, new hope for a better and brighter future.
Sometimes, though, the medical breakthroughs themselves carry too many risks to the point the medications are discarded, putting the patient back in risk as well as others.
Whatever the reasons, whatever the causes, whatever the current trend of discussion, we can't continue to let this dialog end back up in that deep, black hole of indifference.
A great number of people have suffered too much for too long, on both ends of the extremes, and it's time to just say "enough" and do something about it.
--Allyce Westphal