



Family Outreach & Response Program

Families Achieving Mental Health Recovery

FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY SERIES

Course Outline 2006

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Family Outreach and Response Program

Family Outreach and Response Program and Recovery

Background

Families of those recovering from serious mental health issues are probably one of the last groups within the mental health community to embrace the vision of recovery. Their experience of the mental health system is one of despair, hopelessness, helplessness, alienation, isolation and discrimination. Families are often told to grieve the loss of their loved one as they knew them, to lower all expectations and to make sure their family member takes their medications. This leads to a family environment that does not promote recovery. How can a family embrace recovery when they feel their lives are full of loss, sadness, anger and power struggles?

Traditionally, family support and education programs mostly focused on teaching families about diagnosis, treatments, mental health resources, crisis intervention, communication skills and self-care. There was little, if any, mention of recovery and no critical examination of the mental health system from a trauma-informed and anti-oppression perspective. These programs created like-minded thinking between families and mental health professionals, which further reinforced the idea that recovery is not possible.

In 2001, the Family Outreach and Response Program was introduced to Recovery. While the program had always worked together with consumer/survivor advocacy organizations and fought against coercive legislation – we really didn't have a framework for working directly with families that felt empowering for both families and their relatives. The philosophy, values, principles and concepts of recovery filled this void. Ann Thompson and Karyn Baker developed an eight-week course for families on recovery.

Challenges/Implications

Participants have responded extremely positively to the series, so much so, that they initiated the inception of an alumni group. This alumni group meets on a monthly basis so they can reinforce recovery principles and provide each other with support. The request for the Series is great and we are barely able to keep up with demand. To address this challenge, we are in the process of developing a train-the-trainer program, whereby alumni will be able to facilitate the Series. To date, we have trained 2 family members to be facilitators. We have also trained service providers from Thunder Bay, Guelph, Peel Region and York Region on the Family Mental Health Recovery Model. FOR is in the process of developing a certificate training program for the course.

The Series has also acted as a catalyst for families to demand change within the mental health system. The participants have now adopted a critical perspective of the system and want more alternative recovery-oriented services available to their family members. Families are inquiring as to whether our program can provide some of these alternatives

such as the WRAP program. Our program is considering expanding our services to meet this request.

Eventually, our vision is to have a Family Mental Health Recovery Centre, a community that provides all types of groups, educational and advocacy events that promotes recovery, peer support and is inclusive of the diverse families within the Toronto area.

Table of Contents

Week 1 - Introduction to the Concept of Mental Health Recovery	
Week 2 - Pathways to Recovery and Barriers Along the Way	6
Week 3 - Hopelessness and the Power of Hope	7
Week 4 - Role of Family & Resilience	8
Week 5 - Role of Family – Power, Choice and Decision-Making within the Family	9
Week 6 - Working with Strengths in the Family	12
Week 7 - Looking at Ourselves/Taking Care of Ourselves	13
Week 8 - Family Recovery Action Planning	15

Week #1
Introduction to the Concept of Mental Health Recovery

- 6:15 – 6:45 pm** **Measurements and Information Gathering**
- 6:45 – 7:30 pm** **Introductions**
- **Welcome**
 - **Overview** of series and **goals**
 - **READERS**
 - **Ground rules** – trust & safety – contracting to each other as group members and as facilitators for the group Individuals **introduce** themselves and **share: Why are you here? What do you hope to gain from the series?**
- 7:30 – 7:40 pm** **Break** – refreshments and washrooms
- 7:40 – 8:00 pm** **Key Concepts and definitions** of Mental Health Recovery
Diverse Approaches to Mental Health and Recovery –see binder
- 8:00 – 8:25 pm** **What we do know about recovery:**
- *Individuals need to recover* from their severe emotional distress, the consequences of that distress, and also from their experience with stigma/discrimination within society and the mental health system itself.- **List with families: what are people recovering from?**
 - *Mental health recovery is not an either/or situation with the medical model* – it provides a new and critical perspective that goes beyond the traditional medical modes of treatment, searching for ways to understand and then educate about how individuals can and do recover from serious mental health problems
- What does this all mean for families/caregivers?**
- *What are the challenges* for families embracing a recovery approach – see binder
 - Best place to start is by looking at a summary of the *Windhorse Guiding Principles* of mental health recovery for families - that lead toward **healing and recovery** – see binder
- 8:25 – 8:30 pm** **Homework** – readings: Deegan – Recovering our Sense of Value After being Labelled
Mead & Copeland – What Recovery Means to Us: Consumers’ Perspectives
Windhorse Guide to Families
“Please Hear What I’m Not Saying”

Week 2 - Pathways to Recovery and Barriers Along the Way

- 6:30 – 6:50 pm** **Welcome**
- **Review safety contract and post**
 - **Introduction exercise, name your favourite activity and place**
- 6:50 – 7:00 pm** **Recap last session**
- Review handouts/readings
- 7:00 – 7:02 pm** **Goals for Week 2**
- To explore what recovery can look like in peoples' lives
 - To explore what conditions are necessary for recovery to happen
 - To explore potential barriers to recovery
- 7:02 – 7:12 pm** **Self-Reflection Exercise**
- Individually – then feedback to group
 - Group – Think of a time in your life when you needed to recover from something. What did you need from within yourself and from others to get through this experience. Brainstorm.
- 7:12 – 8:00 pm** **VIDEO Inside/Outside** (Ask participants to get food etc as there will not be a break)
- 8:00 – 8:25 pm** **Discuss Video**
- Feedback - reactions
 - Listen: - * what did c/s say they needed to recover from?
 - * What helped and what hindered
 - What recovery concepts were you hearing?
- 8:25 – 8:30 pm** **Homework**
- Mapping recovery for your family members
 - Binders and handouts

Week 3 - Hopelessness and the Power of Hope

- 6:30 – 6:35 pm** **Goals for Week 3**
- To explore the social construction of a “mental patient”
 - To introduce the concept of learned helplessness
 - To explore the importance of hope and what saps hope from families
 - To find ways to inspire and nurture the attitude of “holding hope” in our relatives
 - To identify turning points that might nurture hope
- 6:35 – 6:40 pm** **Recap** from last session
- Feedback –homework charts
- 6:40 – 6:55 pm** **How do we *know what we know* about “mental illness”?**
- Group brainstorm –**
- Construct the “job” of a “mental patient”
 - Look at language & the power of labels
- 6:55 – 7:15 pm** **Concept of “Learned Helplessness” that feeds a state of Hopelessness.**
- Exercise 1 – small groups – “A Toxic Potent Recipe: Building Readiness for Hopelessness”**
- (Explore things that happen to make you lose hope, when you have mental health issues - start with a few examples from Ridgway list – Toxic recipe)
- Full group**
Share and brainstorm a fuller list
- 7:15 – 7:25 pm** **What is Hope? Why is it Important?**
(Pathways handout)
- What saps hope from families?**
- Exercise 2 – full group brainstorm**
- 7:25 – 7:55 pm** **Video – Pat Deegan – Coke and Smoke Syndrome Discussion (5 min)**
- 7:55 – 8:25 pm** **How do we Inspire and Nurture an “Attitude of Hope” within ourselves?**
- Exercise 3 – brainstorm group (Antidotes to Hopelessness)**
- How do we Inspire and Nurture an Attitude of “Holding the Hope” for our Relatives?**

Review the handout, **“Hope-Inspiring Strategies for Families – Holding the Hope”**

Group discussion – Are there any strategies that are easier said than done? We’ll look at actions next session.

8:25 – 8:30 p.m. Homework – Hope Exercise
(Pg.36 – Pathways)

“What can you do today to make another person feel more hopeful”

Week 4 - Role of Family & Resilience

6:30 – 6:40 p.m. Welcome & Recap from last session

Feedback - **readings, Hope exercise**

6:40 – 6:45 p.m. Goals for Week 4

- To identify turning points that might nurture hope
- To introduce the concept of resilience in ourselves as individuals, and also in our families.
- To begin to explore the role of family in recovery.
- To look at what can help and hinder families.
- To begin to practice hope-inspiring strategies.

6:45 – 7:05 p.m. Turning Points that can Nurture Hope and Spark a Move Toward Recovery

- Introduce the idea of turning points – “Turnaround”
- **Exercise 1 – small groups** – pairs (5 minutes) – share turning points that their family member has had or they could envision their family member having.

Large group – share some of these turning points.

7:05 – 7:20 p.m. Resilience: What is it? Why is it important?

Theory Box: - Tapping Innate Resilience

Exercise 1: “Knowing my own Resilience”

- **individually** self-reflect on 3 questions (I Have/I Am/I Can)
- **in pairs, share one experience** when you’ve drawn on your resilience to get through a challenge. Back in **large group**, ask for 1 or 2 examples if they don’t mind sharing.

Summary – what family resilience involves

7:20 – 7:40 p.m. What is the role of family in mental health recovery?

Go round in the large group. Ask each family member to identify something that happened in the previous week and how their knowledge of recovery caused them to either:

understand the situation better

– OR –

helped them to pause and think about how something they have learned might apply to this situation, e.g. instilling hope, seeing a moment as a turnaround, or actually trying out a new way of approaching a situation.

Using their responses, help families start to see their potential role in recovery.

Use the handout on “**What Helps and What Hinders Families**” in a group discussion.

7:40 – 7:45 p.m. BREAK

7:45 – 8:25 p.m. Practicing Hope-Inspiring Strategies “Modeling the Hope”

Explain the concept of role plays and the value of first trying out new information or different ways of doing things in a practice setting.

Divide the group into **pairs**. Each pair is given a challenging scenario and asked to reflect on how they would inspire hope in their situation. The pair is then asked to share their scenario with the group by role-playing a hope-inspired strategy.

Following each scenario, the **full group** is asked if there is anything they would add to help get across the message of hope. Each pair is also asked to share what their initial response to this situation might have been.

8:25 – 8:30 p.m. Homework - “Strategies for Tapping Resilience Checklist”

- assess to what degree you and your family create an environment that nurtures resilience

“Family Resilience”

- **Individually**, read over handout on family resilience, which gives examples of 5 themes of resilience in families.

Choose one of these areas in which to share an example of your own family’s resilience with the rest of the group.

Week 5 - Role of Family – Power, Choice and Decision-Making within the Family

6:30 – 6:45 pm Welcome

- Warm-up exercise
- Homework – individuals/families asked to share an example of resilience within their family or their ill family member.

6:45 – 6:50 pm Goals for Week 5

- To explore power, choices and decision-making within family relationships
- To explore the stages of change and to increase understanding of motivation
- To pause and reflect at mid-series point

6:50 – 7:00 pm Mid – Series Reflection

Facilitators' reflection at mid- point

- **Our expectations/hopes** at this point in the series that:
 - o Participants have gained an **understanding** of mental health **recovery concepts**
 - o The importance of **hope**, and awareness about creating a **nurturing environment** for recovery and the **challenges** that this entails – we provide some examples we have noticed.
- **Our expectations/hopes** that participants will have begun to learn some **recovery “tools”** and hopefully will be thinking about or trying to put them into practice. Ask participants to volunteer some “tools” (hope-inspiring techniques, modeling, tapping resilience).

7:00 – 7:30 pm

The Concept of Choice and Recovery

- The way we approach the choices a relative affects the recovery process.

The Neglect- Over Protect Continuum – Give Handout

- Discuss the continuum – what does it look like when we neglect, when we overprotect
- What happens when we limit choices –**Learned Helplessness**
- **The Dignity of Risk and the Right to Failure** – Sometimes growing and learning involves taking risks and failing. Your relatives do not want to be protected from growing and learning in the same ways other people do.
- Exercise – Turn to the person next to you and do the following:
Tell about a time when you did something or made a poor choice. After pose the question: what do you think would have happened if you had a diagnosis?
- Do not assume that a person’s poor choice is reflective of mental illness – normalize the choice a relative is making

Discussion about Navigating Choice within a family -Use Handout

7:30 – 7:35 pm

BREAK

7:35 – 7:55 pm

Tools that Help Families When in the Conflicted Zone – Using Pat Deegan’s Tools

- 1. Using the Intervention Assessment to Safeguard against Toxic Help** – Use Intervention Assessment Tool
 - **Exercise** – Handout the Intervention Assessment Tool – ask family members to think of an intervention that they are considering and how this tool might be helpful.
- 2. Decision- Making and the Decisional Balance Sheet – the example of Joan – Use Pat Deegan Handout**
Group Discussion - Can you see this tool being helpful? What would be the challenges?
Using Power Constructively within the Family – Handout

7:55 – 8:25 pm

Motivation and the stages of change

Patricia Deegan Video (Part 2) – Not Ready to Change (30 minutes)

Full group discussion- participants are asked to share their thoughts on the stages of change and whether they can identify any family experiences or challenging situations that they have faced with their ill family members in the last 4 weeks. How have they tried to apply recovery techniques and how can knowledge of stages of change help the recovery process?

Handout Module 7-six stages of change; pre-contemplation and contemplation stages and action steps

8:25 - 8:30 pm **Homework - A Story – “Is Being Well only About Medication?”**
- Read over this story and ask yourself how you would respond to the 5 questions at the end.

Week 6 – Working with Strengths in the Family

- 6:30 – 6:45 pm** **Welcome**
- Warm-up exercise – **emphasis on listening and showing respect**
 - Homework – **any comments on story?**
- 6:45 – 6:50 pm** **Goals for Week 6**
- To introduce the concept of a “strengths perspective”
 - To move from a problem orientation to a strengths orientation
 - To practice reframing negative views
 - To practice using a strengths approach
- 6:50 – 7:00 pm** **Introduce the Concept of “Strengths Perspective”**
- Exercise 1 – “What is Person-Centered?” – poem**
- Each participant reads the poem individually.
- As a group, everyone is asked to share their reflections E.g. “what does this poem mean to you?”
- 7:00 – 7:10 pm** **Theory Box – Strengths Perspective**
- 7:25 – 7:35 pm** **Reframing Negative Views**
- Exercise 2** Divide everyone into 2 groups and assign a column of words from the handout – each group will work together to find strength-based words to replace the words in their column.
- 7:35 – 7:40 pm** **BREAK**
- 7:40 – 8:25 pm** **Practice Using a Strengths-Based Approach**
- Exercise 3** Separate the group into pairs. Each group is assigned a scenario and given 10 minutes to prepare a role play that will demonstrate attempting to take a strengths approach for the troubling issues expressed by the person with the mental health problems. As each scenario is played out, the rest will offer their support and feedback and discuss the issues being presented.
- 8:25 – 8:30 pm** **Homework**
- See handout – ask everyone to read over the article in their binder:
- Week 6 – Chapter Four – “Recovery is Self – Discovery: Discovering our Strengths”.**
- See the exercise on page 91. Do the first section of #3 on your handout sheet or the second part, depending on how your family member feels about being involved.

Week 7 - Looking at Ourselves/Taking Care of Ourselves

6:30 – 6:45 p.m. Welcome

- Warm-up exercise – “Name one strength you saw in your family member during the past week”
- Homework review – **strengths exercise**

6:45 – 6:50 p.m. Goals for week 7

- To explore within ourselves the barriers to creating a recovery environment.
- To share about the importance of boundaries and letting go.
- To identify steps for changing ourselves through taking care of ourselves.

6:50 - 7:00 p.m. Looking Within

Exercise 1 – Self- Reflection – Ask each group member to quietly reflect on the question: Is there anything in myself that is getting in the way of embracing what we are learning? Some examples may include: fear, need to protect, guilt, inability to put myself first, acceptance, not sure if I can trust, feeling out of control...Encourage members to write their thoughts down. After a few minutes, ask any group members if they would like to share with the large group. Try to identify themes that may relate to boundaries and letting go.

7:00 – 7:20p.m. Introduce the Concept of Boundaries

Theory Box – What are Boundaries and why are they important? Using the handout: Boundary Theory Box, explain what is meant by boundaries, the continuum of boundaries and the importance of setting your boundaries.

7:20 – 7:35p.m. Exercise 2 – Boundary Setting

Ask each family member to fill in the Handout: Boundary Setting. Divide the group into small groups of three and ask group members to share with each other. Bring the group back together and ask if there were any similarities in the areas where people were not able to set boundaries. (Depending on group, you may want to divide the group based on relationship, mothers, fathers, partners, and siblings.)

7:35 – 7:45p.m. Break

7:45 - 8:00p.m. Introduce the Concepts of Letting Go/ Detachment with Love

Exercise 3: Letting Go Poem

Handout Letting Go Poem. Ask each group member to read one line. Go around in the circle until the poem is complete. Ask the group members:

What lines in the poem resonated with you?

What do you need to “let go” of?

How will you do that?

Family Self-Care

8:00 – 8:25p.m Taking Care of Ourselves – A Love Affair

Read a quote from Melodie Beattie: ***The surest way to make ourselves unwell is to get involved in other people’s business and the quickest way to become happy is to tend to our own affairs.***

Share with the group the importance of self- care. Use the Handout: Family Self-Care,

Exercise 4: What are you *not* tending to? Post the flipchart paper – **Ann** from Lesson 2 – What is your favorite activity and place? Ask each group member to share with the group either the last time they did their favorite thing or went to their favorite place or something else they could do to ***tend to their own affairs.***

8:25 – 8:30 p.m. Homework

My Family Recovery Skills Toolbox – chart

Review skills learned to date & reflect on tools you feel most comfortable trying out.

End with Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity

To accept the things I cannot change,

Courage to change the things I can,

And wisdom to know the difference.

Week 8 - Family Recovery Action Planning

6:15 – 6:45 p.m. Measurements

6:45 – 6:55 p.m. Welcome & Warm-up Exercise

My Family Recovery Skills Toolbox – chart

Review skills learned to date. Reflect on tools you feel comfortable with now or want to try out.

Group discussion.

6:55 – 7:00 p.m. Goals for Week 8

- To review Family Recovery Skills Toolbox
- To explore Family Recovery Action Planning
- To revisit Windhorse Family Recovery Principles, “Creating a nurturing environment for recovery”
- To evaluate the Series and provide feedback

7:00 – 7:30 p.m. Family Recovery Action Planning

Present the 5 stage planning process with emphasis on:

- Wellness Toolbox and Daily Maintenance Plan for Wellness
- Triggers & Action Plan
- Crisis Plan & role of supporter

Ask group for suggestions and feedback in each section

7:30 – 7:40 p.m. Top 5 Do’s and Top 5 Don’ts – Supporting a Loved One

Exercise 1 – “If you met a new family today (they are in crisis for the first time and have no prior experience with the mental health system. The family arrived at a hospital emergency with their family member after a suicide attempt or psychotic break - this has led to a diagnosis)

What information would you share with them - best tips for supporting themselves and their loved one?

If time allows, split into 2 groups, and each group works with a list.

Groups report back.

Record ideas.

7:40 – 7:45 p.m. Return to Windhorse Family Recovery Principles

Recap the key family recovery concepts that create a nurturing environment for recovery to happen within.

- **Education/Empowerment Responsibility (“power with”)**
- **Hope**
- **Self-Care**
- **Support/Connection**
- **Unconditional Respect and Acceptance**

7:45 – 8:00 p.m. Closure Exercise

Everyone puts their name on the top of a sheet of paper(handout) which is entitled “**My wish for you is.....**”. and passes it to the left. Allow several minutes to write a comment on the page in front of you, and then pass it on until all the pages have returned to their owners.

8:00 – 8:30 p.m. Series Evaluation and Taped Interview

1. What has this Series meant for you? Did you get what you wanted out of it?
2. Most psycho-educational courses focus on treatments, understanding diagnoses, problem-solving, medication compliance, and dealing with crisis; our Series departs from this format. What do you think about this approach?
3. What could be added, changed – what do you feel you still need to support you?