



Self-Help Booklets Promote Mental Health Recovery

A new series of self-help guides for people with mental health disabilities offers practical and positive advice on topics ranging from making friends to developing a wellness lifestyle to reducing the effects of trauma.

The six booklets, released in July, 2003 by SAMHSA's Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), are part of a publication series titled *Recovering Your Mental Health*. They offer specific information guided by an understanding of consumer self-help issues and are intended to enhance the quality of life for people from a variety of backgrounds. The booklets, ranging in length from 30 to 50 pages, are titled *Action Planning for Prevention and Recovery*, *Dealing With the Effects of Trauma*, *Speaking Out for Yourself*, *Developing a Recovery and Wellness Lifestyle*, *Building Self-Esteem*, and *Making and Keeping Friends*. They are available as single copies or in a packet containing all six copies, along with the original publication titled *Recovering Your Mental Health: A Self-help Guide*, published in 2001.

"The self-care skills and strategies outlined in the guides can be used to complement other mental health care treatment," said SAMHSA Administrator Charles G. Curie, M.A., A.C.S.W. "The guides offer practical steps that people need to keep in mind as they work on their own recovery."

Former CMHS Director Bernard S. Arons, M.D., said, "These user-friendly guides will help people living with mental illness to achieve wellness, stability, and recovery." Each booklet contains ideas, strategies, and resources that people from all walks of life have found helpful in managing their own illnesses and obtaining services, and in relieving and preventing feelings of mental and emotional distress.

- *Action Planning for Prevention and Recovery* gives simple, low-cost ideas for maintaining and supporting mental health, such as developing a "Wellness

Toolbox" and a daily maintenance plan, and identifying and dealing with trigger factors for stressful situations.

- ***Dealing With the Effects of Trauma*** discusses the difficulties in dealing with and overcoming upsetting, frightening, and traumatic events, and offers ways to heal and feel better on a daily basis.
- ***Speaking Out for Yourself*** tells people with emotional or psychological disorders how to advocate effectively for themselves and become their "own best champion."
- ***Developing a Recovery and Wellness Lifestyle*** talks about ways people can take charge of their lives, whether it's taking a course, eating less fast food, obtaining good health care, or getting enough exercise.
- ***Building Self-Esteem*** helps readers find ways to feel better about themselves, such as attending to their needs and wants, changing negative thoughts about themselves to positive ones, and engaging in activities that make them feel good about themselves.
- ***Making and Keeping Friends*** describes ways to meet new people, keep friendships strong, establish and honor boundaries, and resolve relationship problems.

Single copies of the six *Recovering Your Mental Health* guides, or packets of all six, along with the booklet *Recovering Your Mental Health: A Self-help Guide*, are available **free of charge** by contacting SAMHSA's National Mental Health Information Center at P.O. Box 42557, Washington, DC 20015. Telephone: 1 (800) 789-2647 or 1 (866) 889-2647 (TDD). Or log on to <http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov>, click on [publications](#).

-By Shelly Burgess and Peggy Dillon

If booklets are out of stock you may have to call back several times – they won't handle back orders.

OR

You can download each booklet separately and make your own copies. Connect with www.peersupport.org, Click "You Can Recover", then scroll down to the bottom of the page, under the heading "Developing a Wellness Lifestyle" – Each booklet is listed here.