

Family Mental Health Recovery

Bringing Families and Recovery
Together Through Education and
Support

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Family Outreach and Response
Program

Family Outreach and Response Program

- Community, non-profit, charitable mental health family initiative funded through the Ministry of Health
- Family-driven, Recovery Philosophy
- Small one part-time staff person with students and volunteers
- www.familymentalhealthrecovery.org

Why was a family program interested in Recovery?

- Our program believes that families are essential to the recovery process
- Mental health recovery was a good fit with our program's values
- It gives us a framework to work with families that does not alienate the experience of consumer/survivors or their right to self-determination
- Mental Health Recovery works well with diverse families

Why is it important to engage families in the Recovery Process

- Many (up to 70)% consumer/survivors live with family
- Recovery research shows that a supportive family can be a major attribute in the recovery process
- Improved quality of life for families

Family Mental Health Recovery: Issues to Overcome

- Little information exists about mental health recovery and the role of families
- Time-consuming to develop a new curriculum and research the outcomes
- Family skepticism about mental health recovery
- Our own fears – would it work and how would we know

How did FOR incorporate Recovery into its program?

- Individual approach when working with families
- Development of the Family Mental Health Recovery Series
- Alumni Group and Train-the-Facilitators Program
- Family Recovery Website
- Involvement in Education, Training and Community Development

Family Mental Health Recovery Series

- An eight week series which welcomes any family member or friend no matter what the diagnosis or family relationship
- Small groups - 12 people
- Based on adult learning/education principles
- Facilitated by Program Director and Recovery Educator
- Foundation Funding

Purpose of the Series:

- To educate families about Mental Health Recovery
- To understand their role in the Recovery process
- To develop skills which nurture a recovery environment
- To receive support from other families

Series Outline

- Week 1 – Introduce Concept of Recovery
- Week 2 – What are the Pathways and Barriers to Recovery?
- Week 3 – The Power of Hope
- Week 4 – Family Resilience

Series Outline

- Week 5 – The Concept of Power within a Family
- Week 6 – Relationship Building using a Strengths Approach
- Week 7 – Boundaries and Letting Go/Self Care
- Week 8 – Family Recovery Action Planning

Windhorse Family Recovery Principles

Unconditional Respect & Acceptance

Education/Empowerment

Hope

Responsibility

Self-Care

Support/Connection

SELF-RELECTION WORKSHEET

xercise

hink of a time when you were extremely troubled and
hought you might not survive/make it:

Q. What was it like mentally/ and physically for you?

Q. What did you figure out that you needed to do to get through this

Hope Inspiring Strategies for Families

Attitude - "HOLDING THE HOPE"

Value your relative as a unique human being - Believe in your relative's potential and strength

Accept your relative for who he/she is

Forgive your relative for past hurts

♥ Accept your relative's setbacks as part of the recovery process

♥ Tolerate your relative's challenges

♥ Trust the authenticity of the relative's experiences

♥ Confront and deal with your own internalized stigma about mental health problems

♥ Take care of yourself so that you can nurture your own hope for your relative



Role of Family in Mental Health Recovery

What Helps	What Hinders
Being Present - listen and support	Avoiding/Neglecting
Treating relative as a whole human being	Seeing relative as a diagnosis
Accepting the mental health issues and believing they can RECOVER-HOPE	Feelings of hopelessness and despair
Fostering interdependence within family	Fostering dependence and helplessness due to over responsibility and involvement

Giving relative choices and letting go - it is <i>his/her</i> journey	Controlling relative's decisions
Building on their strengths	Focusing on Problems
Support risk-taking and freedom to fail - Challenge in a Supportive Way	Overprotecting due to fear and guilt
Avoid Coercion and Forced Treatment	Explore Alternatives and prepare Advance Directives
Take care of Yourself	Letting the mental health issue consume your life

Family Recovery Series: Viewing My Relative's Strengths.

Moving from a Problem or Deficit Orientation...

...To a Strengths Orientation

Instead of focusing on my relative's problems, symptoms and deficits...

↳

I am primarily concerned with what he/she wants, desires and dreams of.

I don't spotlight my relative's pathology and difficulties...

↳

I seek to understand, use and build upon my relative's positive talents, skills, knowledge and abilities.

Rather than see my relative as a diagnostic label...

↳

I see my relative as a unique human being, with a strong mind, body and spirit.

Instead of letting others' perspectives guide and sometimes limit my choices...

↳

I honour my own standpoint, values and beliefs. I know that life holds many possibilities. I can choose a positive direction.

I don't believe that my relative's past predicts a negative future...

↳

I am concerned with the here and now and moving towards a positive future.

Rather than focusing on my relative's functional deficits, the things he/she cannot do...	↳	I know that my relative has many coping skills. He/She has made it this far and I know that he/she will make it in the future.
Rather than focusing on my relative's problems so that my life seems limited and stagnant...	↳	I am actively learning, growing and changing.
I don't let people around me focus on my relative's limitations...	↳	I seek relationships, role models and helpers who support and encourage our family in our recovery journey.

Week 7 – Exercise 1 – Looking Within Self-Reflection

Take a few minutes to ponder: Is there anything in myself that is getting in the way of embracing what we are learning? Some examples could be: fear of relapse, fear of being out of control, need to protect, guilt, inability see my own needs, not sure if I can trust... If you like, you can write your thoughts down below.

Outcomes

- Excellent Attendance and Participation
- Positive Feedback
- Have run 5 groups
- Initial research shows outcomes in increased hope and changes in attitude regarding recovery

Evaluation of Series

General themes and comments:

- Readings important and helpful
- Group –supportive and helpful – want to continue meeting
- Insight – “we can do something to help”
- Importance of holding hope and acknowledging pain

Evaluation of Series

- "I appreciate the positive aspect of this series- the underlying hope for recovery and some techniques which I may apply to help recovery"
- This series is like a diamond in a very black, overall non-hopeful, mental health caregiving picture, which discourages parental involvement. Thank you."

Three Month Follow-up

General Themes and Comments:

- Importance of self-care and boundaries
- Being a role model
- Talk about strengths – “My son is a hero”
- Changing own attitude – “I don’t have control. I need to stop trying to control and change everything.”
- “It’s his journey - I need to wait”
- Keep on reading and going back to notes – “I won’t give up.”

Next Steps

- Continue to revise curriculum based on outcomes
- Explore other recovery approaches including the relative
- Developing Peer Facilitation Training
- Enhance Peer Support Opportunities
- Finds more effective ways to serve more Diverse families
- Continue to advocate for A RECOVERY ORIENTED MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

Our website

www.familymentalhealthrecovery.org

THANKS!