

Hope, Help, & Healing – Positive Approaches to Mental Health

Recovery – The Role of Families and the Power of Hope

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What do we mean by Mental Health Recovery?

- A journey - a process, ongoing, one step at a time, not an end result
- It is unique, personal experience – can only be done by the individual recovering
- It involves **HOPE**, personal empowerment, connection, meaning and purpose
- It means living well in the absence or presence of distress

Where does mental health recovery come from?

- People have always recovered
- Consumer/survivors telling their stories
- Longitudinal research studies

Your Recovery Experience

- Think of a time in your life when you had to recovery from something. E.g. death of a loved one, divorce, loss of job, immigrating to a new country etc.
- What did you need **from within** yourself to recover?
- What did you need **from others**?

Why is it challenging for families to embrace mental health recovery?

- Feelings of despair and hopelessness
- Not their lived experience
- Education and Information for families is primarily medical model – poor prognosis and low expectations
- Confront hostility if family disagrees with treatment approaches
- Internalized stigma

Why is it important for families to embrace a recovery approach?

- Many (up to 70%) consumer/survivor 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
- The recovery approach works with diverse families and communities

Role of Family: What Helps and What Hinders

What Helps

- Being Present - listen and support
- Treating relative as a whole human being
- Accepting the mental health issues and believing they can RECOVER-HOPE

What Hinders

- Avoiding
- Seeing relative as a diagnosis
- Feelings of hopelessness and despair

Role of Family: What Helps and What Hinders

What Helps

- Fostering interdependence within family
- Giving relative choices and letting go - it is *his/her* journey
- Building on their strengths

What Hinders

- Fostering dependence and helplessness due to over responsibility and involvement
- Controlling relative's decisions
- Focusing on Problems

Role of Family: What Helps and What Hinders

What Helps

- Support risk-taking and freedom to fail – Challenge in a Supportive Way
- Explore Alternatives and prepare Advance Directives
- Take care of Yourself

What Hinders

- Overprotecting due to fear and guilt
- Coercion and Forced Treatment
- Letting the mental health issue consume your life



What is Hope?

Why is it important?

What is hope?

- Hope is an inner feeling or positive emotion that allows us to believe good things can happen for us/our relative in the future.
- Hope is a vital ingredient – the cornerstone of recovery
- Our degree of hope can influence our physical and mental well-being.
- The very idea that recovery is possible gives us renewed reason to hope
- Hope always involves a degree of uncertainty – if everything was certain – we wouldn't need hope

HOPE

"Hope is not a dream, but a way of making dreams a reality." L.J. Cardina Suenens

"Hope works in these ways; it looks for the good in people instead of harping on the worst; it discovers what can be done instead of grumbling about what cannot; it regards problems, large or small, as opportunities; it pushes ahead when it would be easy to quit; it 'lights the candle' instead of 'cursing the darkness'." Anonymous

" Hope is crucial to recovery, for our despair disables us more than our disease ever could." Esso Lette, Consumer Leader



What takes hope from
families?

How do you rekindle
your hope?

What renews our hope?

- Surround yourself with people who believe in recovery – avoid those who don't. HOPE IS CONTAGIOUS
- Read Recovery Stories and research
- Increase your spirituality
- Use humour
- Develop hope-filled rituals
- Surround yourself with symbols of hope
- Find ways to share hope with others – join a support group

How do families “Hold the Hope” and “Model the Hope” – Hope- Inspiring Strategies

- Attitudes/Beliefs
- Actions

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- www.familymentalhealthrecovery.org

Thanks!!