



Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation

Groupe de travail canadien sur le VIH et la réinsertion sociale

Positive Outlook – How to work with the depressed client who experiences episodic disabilities.

Introduction:

This workshop will assist any person who works with clients that suffer from depressive symptoms. The participant will learn assessment tools and treatment techniques that are taught using interactive teaching techniques and case studies. The participant is also provided valuable follow-up consultations to ensure the teachings are effectively learned and can be enmeshed into the work environment. This workshop will provide much needed resources to the front-line professional and the ultimately improve the care that they deliver to their clients.

Description:

Many health and social service professionals work with clients who have chronic, episodic disabilities. Research has indicated that depression is present in the majority of this population, and the symptoms that manifest with depression impact on everything that the client experiences including therapeutic interactions and the quality of life.

This workshop will provide valuable tools for front-line health and social service professionals who meet directly with clients and feel that depression is limiting the client's quality of life. Many professionals feel intimidated and powerless when trying to assist a client who is weighted down with symptoms of depression. This often leaves both the worker and the client feeling helpless and hopeless. This dynamic and interactive workshop will provide effective tools for the assessment of mild, moderate and severe depressive symptoms, as well as teach evidence-based techniques to positively impact the client's mental state, no matter how short the interaction may be.

Participants will learn the elements of:

- Motivational Interviewing
- Solution-Focused Therapy
- Cognitive Therapy
- Marginalization and Stigma
- The face of depression
- Working with the challenging client
- Therapist self-care
- Screening tools to assess depression

This lively workshop uses practical real-life experiences to determine how to best approach and understand difficult issues and provides the tools necessary to ease the burden for both client and professional alike. Both peer and professional supervision will be provided in a safe, confidential space that allows the participants to share and learn in a non-judgmental environment. Exercises and role-play training is utilized to ensure that all participants are comfortable and understand the benefits of this valuable workshop. The strongest outcome of the training is the sense of confidence that each participant will receive. This will allow them to work with more clients in a streamlined method that will also prevent the worker from taking home the daily stressors that work can often present.

This workshop is delivered in two days for small groups (maximum 16 people). Participants feel that they not only have learned prescriptive tools to enhance their practice, but also the skills necessary to make a positive, lasting change for their clientele.

To facilitate integration of newly acquired skills, professional consultation sessions are offered by the instructor to participants for several months after completion of the workshop. This can be provided either through email, telephone or in person, depending on needs and availability. There will also be an online peer-led and instructor moderated component that participants will be encouraged to partake in. This will ensure that the participant will retain the practical education and be able to discuss real-life efficacies of their work.

The principle of this teaching is that all people experience elements of depression the partnership of a chronic illness. To truly be able to practice and receive rehabilitation in a holistic manner, a person must understand their depression and own their solution. This intensive workshop can be the catalyst to make that happen. At the end of the day, everyone has the right to feel good about themselves.

Intended Audience:

The intended audience for this workshop is any clinician that sees clients that show signs and symptoms of depression. This would include all front-line staff. Any person, no matter her or his academic credentials will benefit from this pragmatic and effective approach.

Biography:

Jordan Lewis, MSW RSW had worked for over ten years as the social worker in the HIV team at St. Michael's Hospital. Over the years he has experience working with marginalized populations that include homelessness, mental health, palliative care, addictions and HIV. He has taught both at College and University levels for several years and continues to teach annual workshops at various institutions. He has lectured at national conferences as well as been a key member of research initiatives. Jordan has won the "Education Excellence Award" at St. Michael's Hospital in 2007 and again in 2010. Jordan also maintains a thriving private practice.