Perspective Transformation Through Education: Taking Mental Health Skills Outside the Hospital Walls

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Brainstorming Exercise

- What expertise does a mental health nurse possess that would help community workers who struggle to address complex needs of people living with mental illnesses?
People with mental illness in the community

Background

Reduce Hospital length of stay
Financial Accountability/ Limited Resources
Client & family rights to chose
Recovery model
Deinstitutionalization
Increased community support
Psycho pharmacology interventions
Community Requests

- Broad variety of requests from the community to
  - Reduce staff fear and increase their understanding of mental illnesses
  - Enhance skill and ability to work comfortably and effectively with individuals with mental illness
Community Requests

- Community groups
  - Shelters, Outreach teams
- Health Discipline
  - Professional groups
    - HIV network
- Government organizations
- Church Clergy groups
- Long term care facilities
- Nursing students
- High school students
- Volunteer groups
- Security workers
Opportunity for Social Responsibility

- Opportunity for mental health nurses to:
  - Assess the mental health educational needs of community workers
  - Develop resources to meet these needs
Approach to Adult Learning

Andragogy: Core Adult Learning Principles

1. Learner’s Need to Know
   - why
   - what
   - how

2. Self-Concept of the Learner
   - autonomous
   - self-directing

3. Prior Experience of the Learner
   - resource
   - mental models

4. Readiness to Learn
   - life related
   - developmental task

5. Orientation to Learning
   - problem centered
   - contextual

6. Motivation to Learn
   - intrinsic value
   - personal payoff

Andragogy in practice (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson, 1998).
Perspective Transformation

“conscious recognition of the difference between a previously held point of view and a new one and a decision that the new perspective is of more value.”

Jack Mezirow (1978)
Perspective Transformation
The transformational cycle

Jack Mezirow, 1978

Contractual solidarity

Reframing
Alienation

Critical appraisal - perspective taking - new meaning perspective - implementation - disorientation dilemma
Maturation through Perspective Transformation

M. Mezirow, 1978
Critical Reflection

- Essential element to the perspective transformation process is *critical reflection* where one's assumptions are scrutinized.
  - Through one's self-reflective processes, one begins to address issues in life, problem-solve, and reason at a more aware level.
Critical Reflection

- Dialogue and conversations with others enable the learner to engage in more rational discourse and action
  - Cultural and childhood assumptions are carefully evaluated for meaning and for forming newer ways of thinking and acting. Perspectives are changed when learners reflect on the assumptions.
Methodology

Your learning journey

Pre-test

Sharing

Application Exercises

Post-test

Application in Work Setting
Education Initiative

Workshop Format:

- First-hand experience from people living with a mental illness
- Experiential
- Participative
- Story telling
- Application Exercises
- Interactive Practice
- Video
- Discussion
- Reflection
- Standardized client

Understanding Mental Illness
Participant Workbook
Education Initiative

Workshop Content:

- Current facts & information
- First-hand experience from people living with a mental illness
- Self-care
- Resources
- Relevant to population served
Perspective Transformation Results

- Changed perception of mental illness:
  - Knowledge about mental illness
  - Comfort level working with person with mental illness

- Serendipitous change:
  - Stigma reduction
Session Feedback: Knowledge Shelter Workers [N=34]
Session Feedback: Knowledge Nursing Students [N=48]
Session Feedback: Knowledge
Church Clergy [N=22]
Session Feedback: Comfort Level
Shelter Workers [N=34]
Session Feedback: Comfort Level Nursing Students [N=48]
Session Feedback: Comfort Level
Church Clergy [N=22]
Session Feedback: Stigma Reduction [Shelter Workers]

- Feelings About Mental Illness *(Pre Workshop)*
  - Angry
  - Sad
  - Frustration
  - Very little knowledge
  - Afraid
  - Uneasy

- Feelings About Mental Illness *(Post Workshop)*
  - Understand more
  - Know more about what it is
  - Interesting
  - Identify myths
Session Feedback: Stigma Reduction [Nursing Students]

Feelings About Mental Illness (Pre Workshop)
- Crazy
- Aggressive
- Dangerous
- Stressful
- Scared

Feelings About Mental Illness (Post Workshop)
- Recovery
- Empowerment
- Communication
- Reversible
- Misunderstood
- Manageable
- Survival
Session Feedback: Stigma Reduction [Church Clergy]

- Feelings About Mental Illness *(Pre Workshop)*
  - Uneasy
  - Afraid
  - Incapable
  - Anxious
  - Stressful

- Feelings About Mental Illness *(Post Workshop)*
  - Calm
  - Comfortable
  - Equipped with strategies
Summary

- Mental health nurses have a social responsibility to share their expertise with community workers who struggle to address complex needs of people living with mental illnesses.
- Opportunity to be a “change agent”, enabling community workers to develop the knowledge and skills required to care for a person with mental illness.
- Reduce societal stigma towards people living with mental illness.
Your Questions & Comments