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

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# Brainstorming Exercise

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- 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?



# Background



# Community Requests

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- 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

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- 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

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- 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 in practice (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson, 1998).*

Source: Malcolm S. Knowles, Elwood F. Holton III, Richard A. Swanson (2005). *The Adult Learner*, Sixth Edition, Elsevier Inc. p.4.

# Perspective Transformation

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“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.”

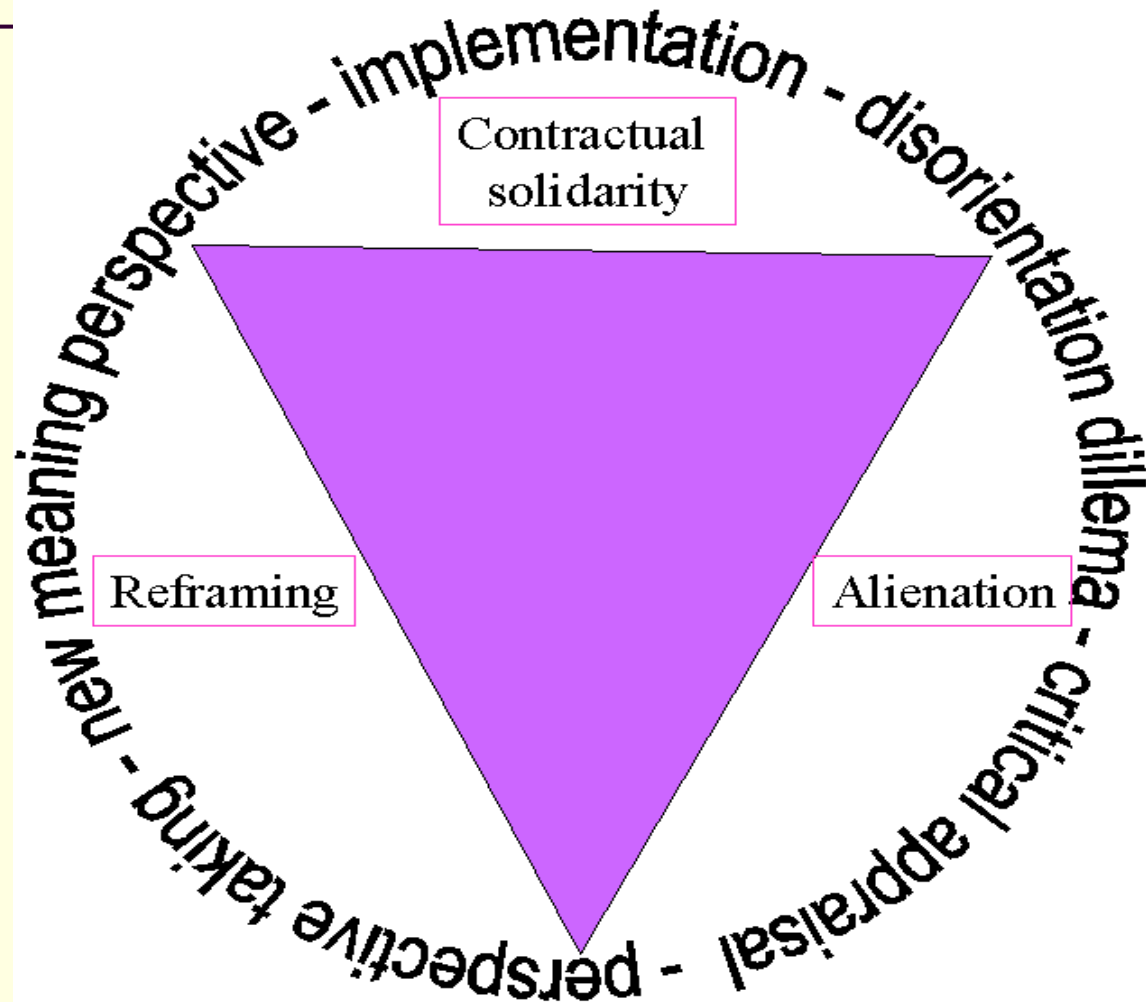
Jack Mezirow (1978)



# Perspective Transformation

## The transformational cycle

Jack Mezirow, 1978





# Critical Reflection

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- 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

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- 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

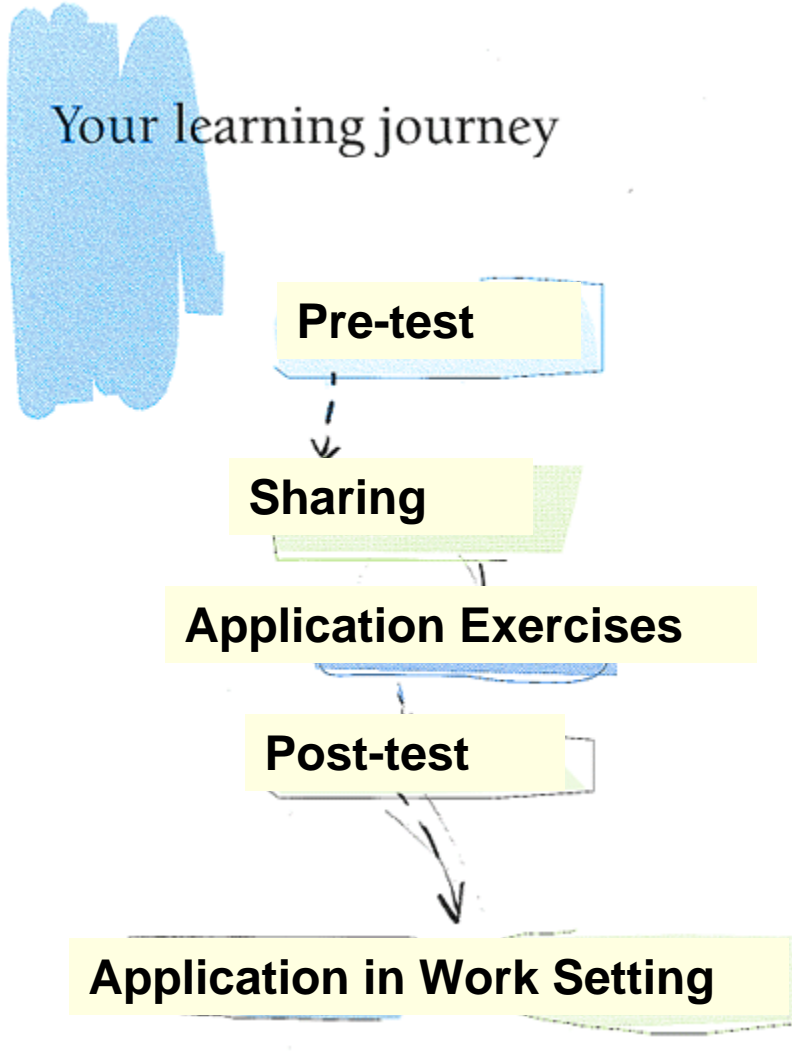
**Pre-test**

**Sharing**

**Application Exercises**

**Post-test**

**Application in Work Setting**



# Education Initiative

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## 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

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## Workshop Content:

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



**Understanding Mental Illness  
Participant Workbook**

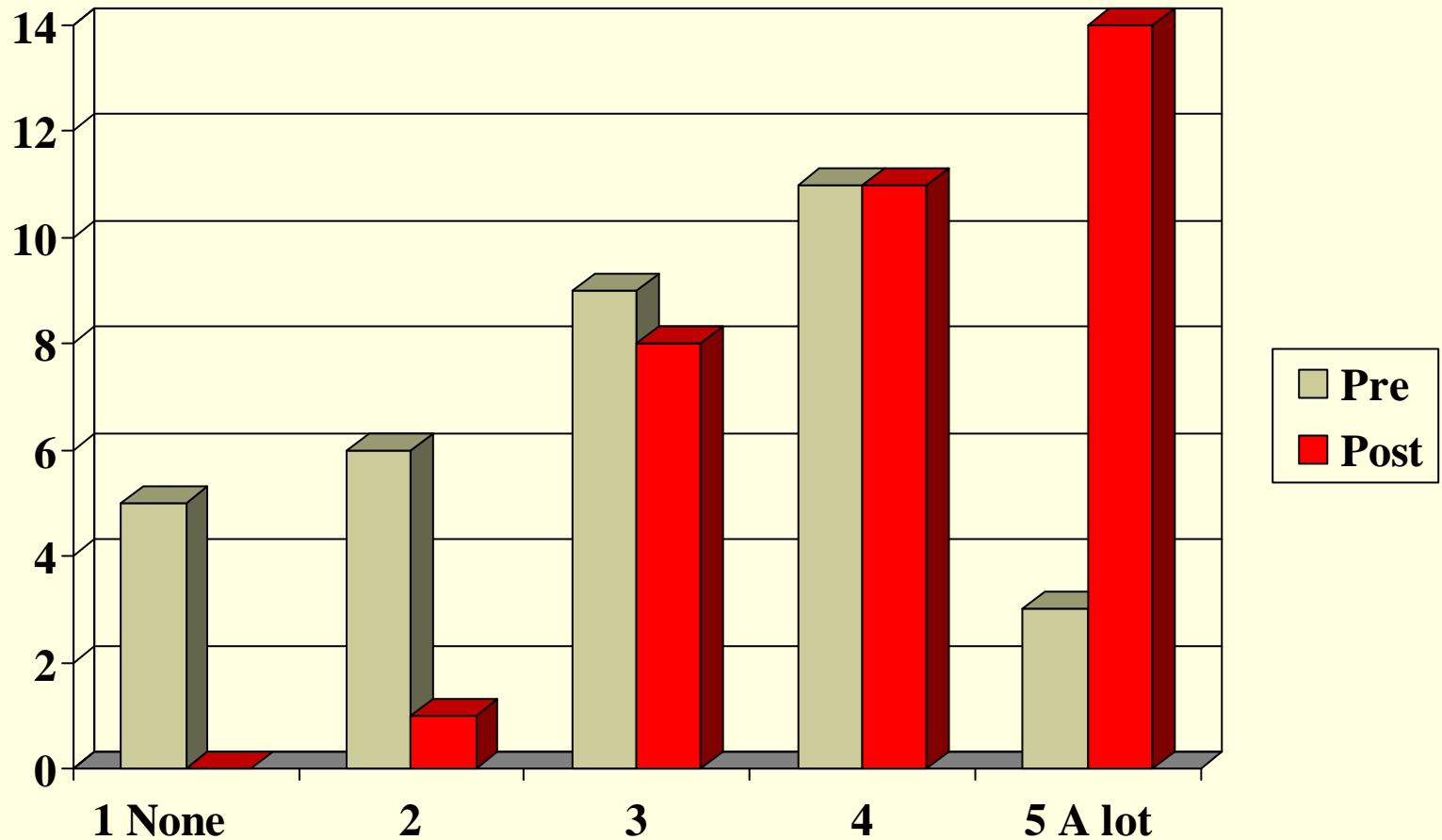
# Perspective Transformation Results

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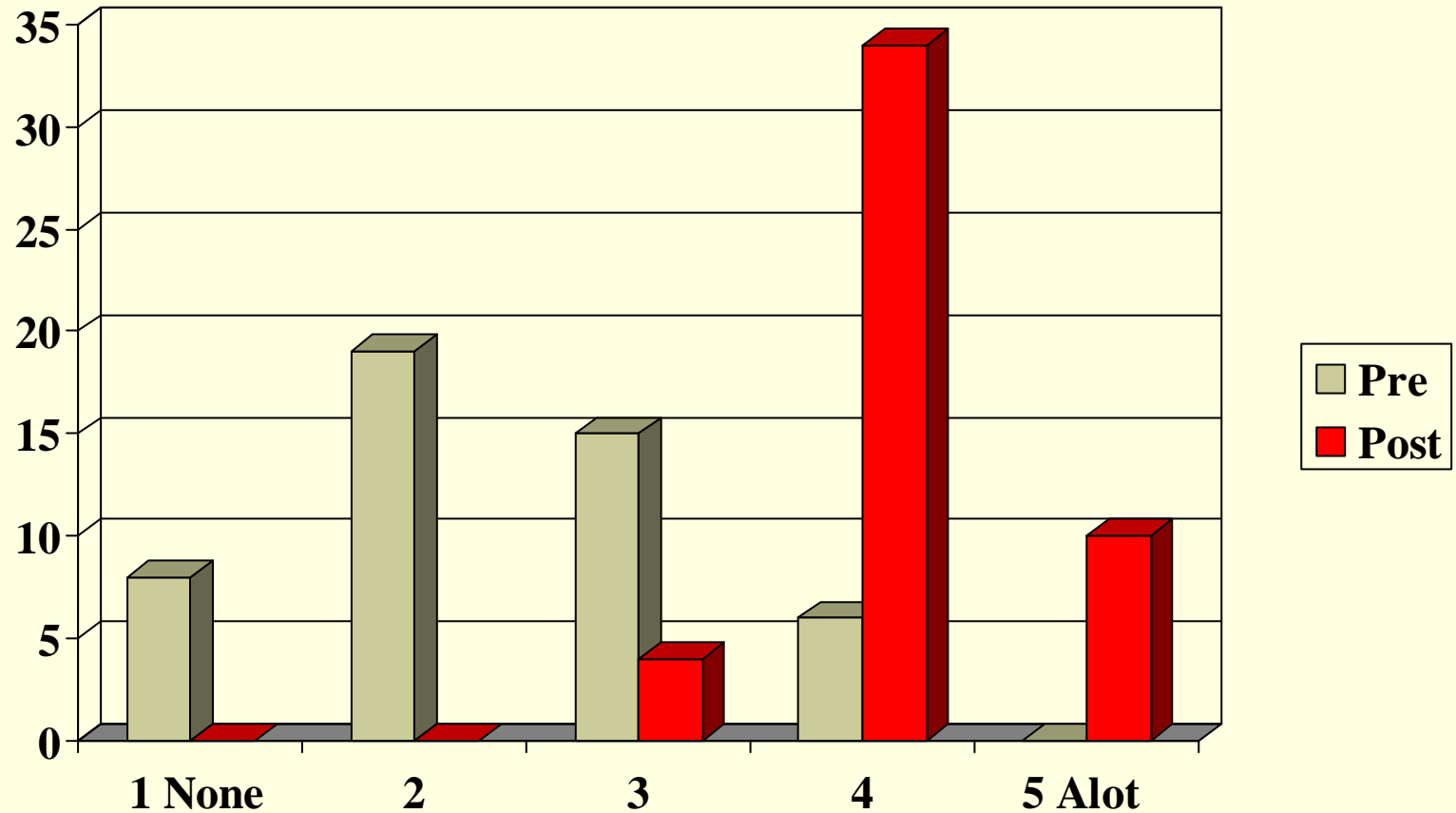
- Changed perception of mental illness:
  - Knowledge about mental illness
  - Comfort level working with person with mental illness
- Serendipitous change:
  - Stigma reduction



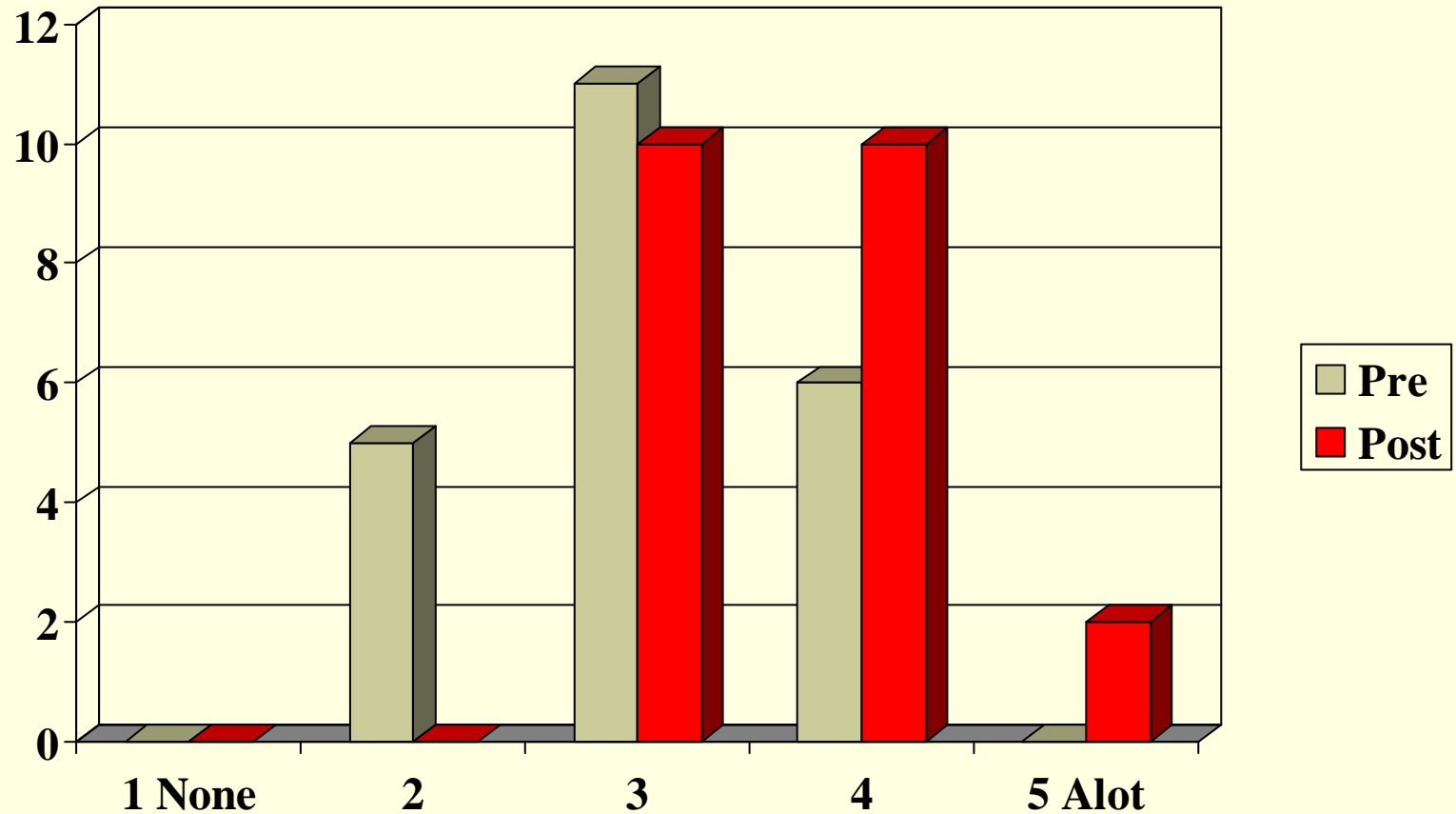
# Session Feedback: Knowledge Shelter Workers [N=34]



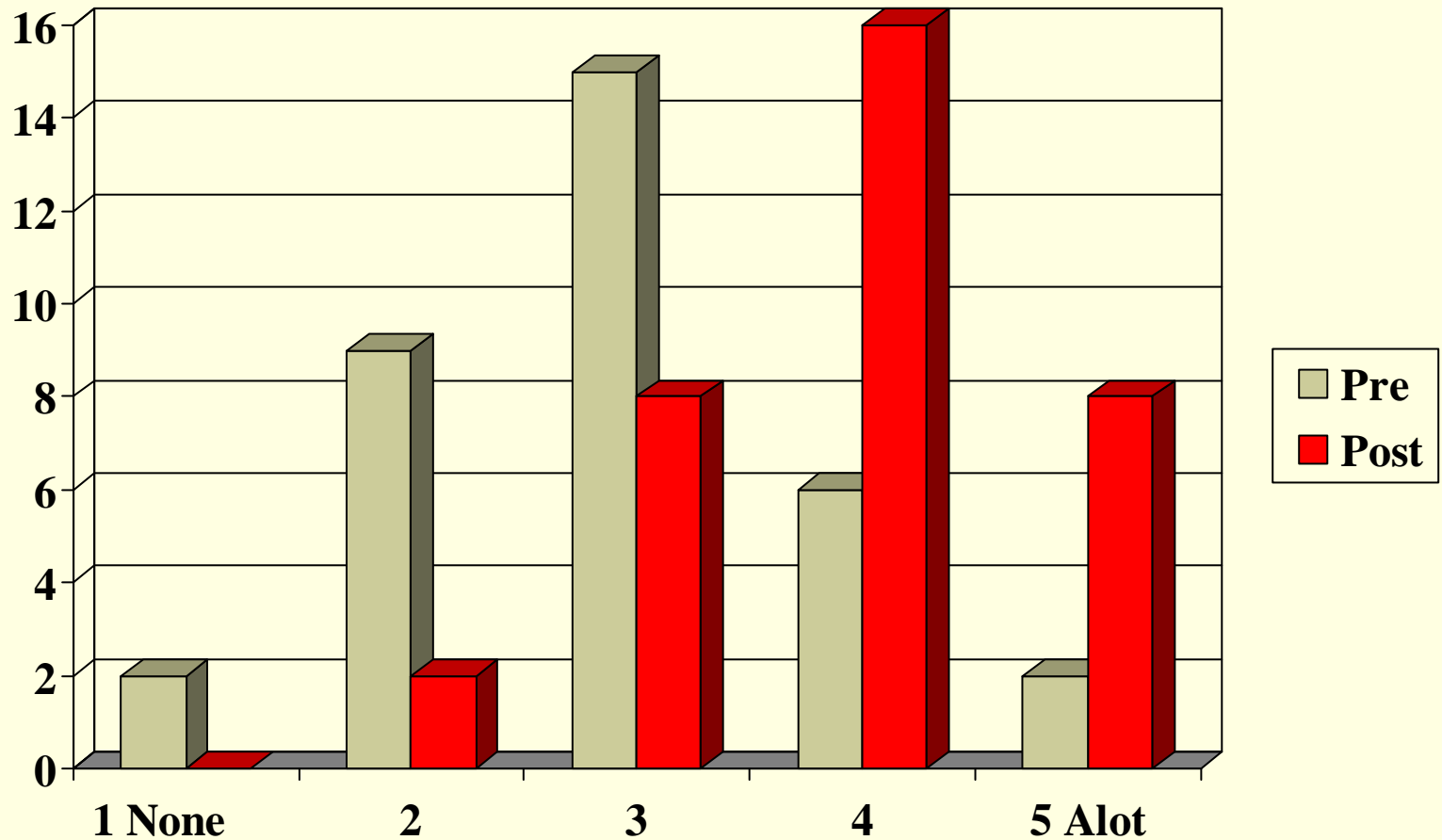
# Session Feedback: Knowledge Nursing Students [N=48]



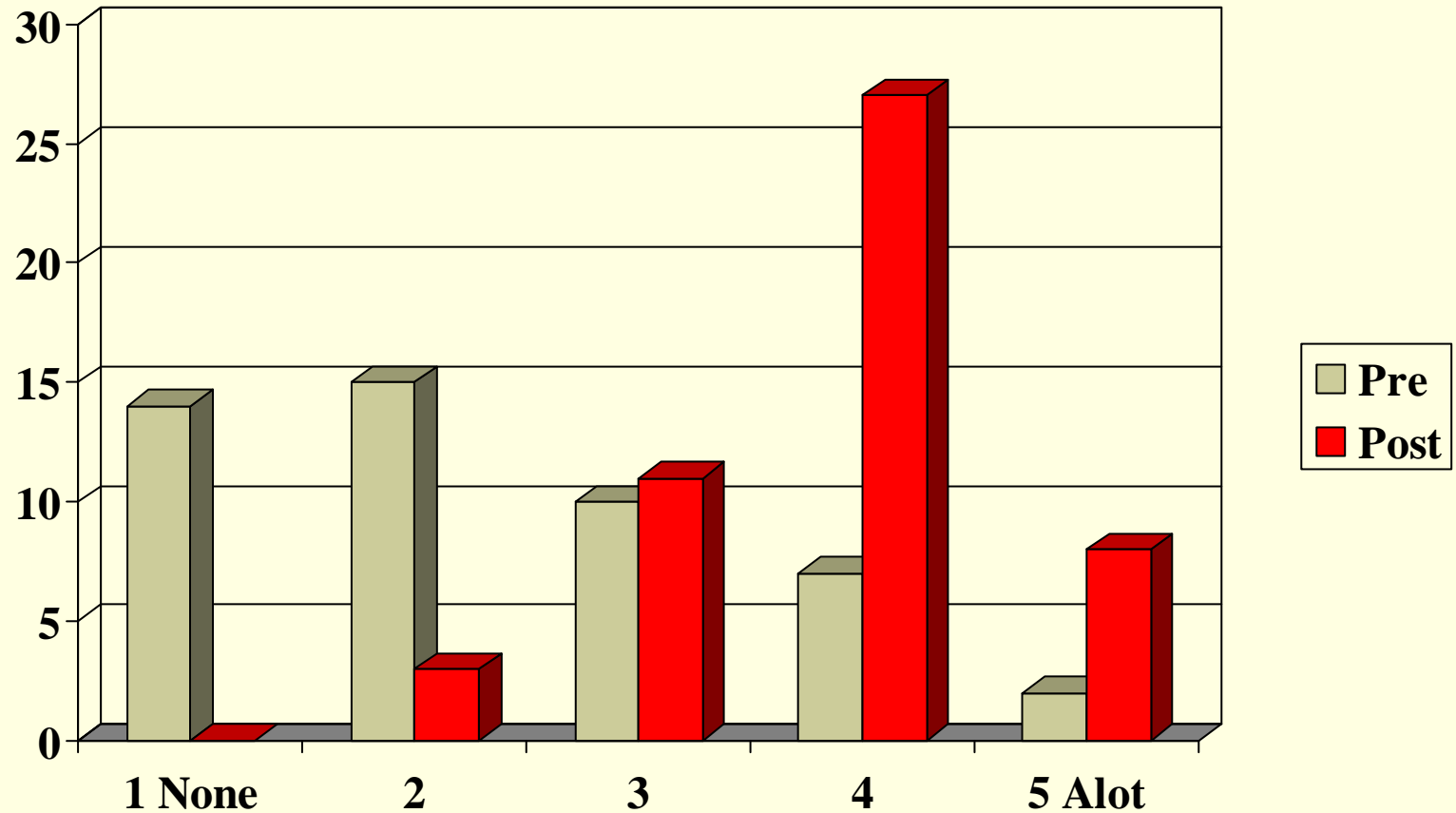
# Session Feedback: Knowledge Church Clergy [N=22]



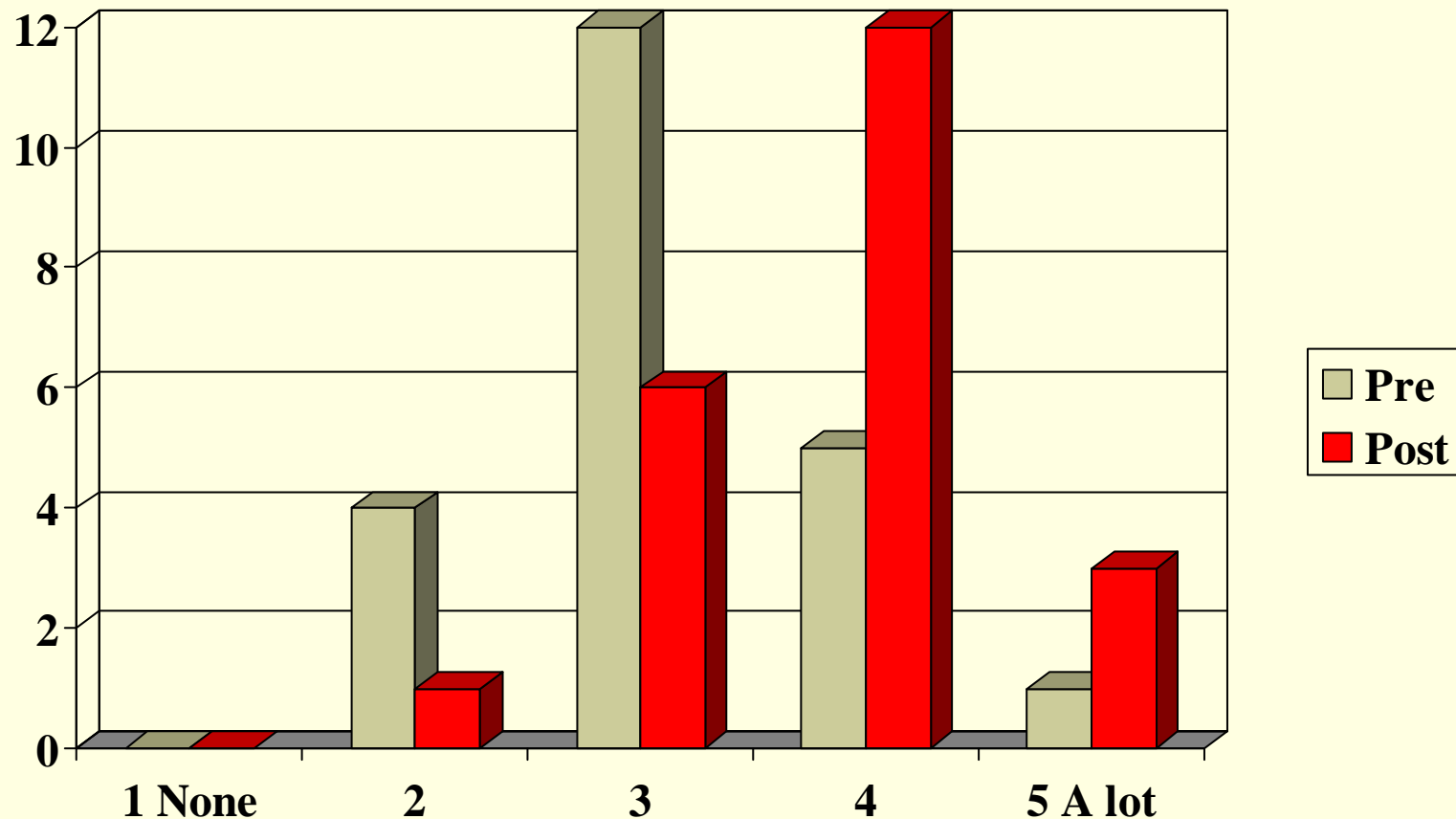
# Session Feedback: Comfort Level Shelter Workers [N=34]



# Session Feedback: Comfort Level Nursing Students [N=48]



# Session Feedback: Comfort Level Church Clergy [N=22]



# Session Feedback: Stigma Reduction [Shelter Workers]

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## ■ 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]

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## ■ 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]

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## ■ Feelings About Mental Illness (*Pre* Workshop)

- Uneasy
- Afraid
- Incapable
- Anxious
- Stressful

## ■ Feelings About Mental Illness (*Post* Workshop)

- Calm
- Comfortable
- Equipped with strategies

# Summary

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- 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

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