Client Culture 101: Laying the Foundation

Santa Clara County Department of Mental Health Learning Partnership Division

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Welcome & Introductions
Objective:

By the end of this training, participants will:

1. Increase their level of awareness and understanding of client culture.
2. Gain knowledge of the multilayered complex challenges that clients experience, through their shared lived experiences.
3. Increase their understanding that people with mental health concerns can and do recover and live fulfilling and meaningful productive lives.
4. Encourage the individuals they provide support and service to, to always have hope that, they’ll be in a better situation when they continually work on their wellness and recovery.
What is client culture?
Definition of Client Culture

“Mental health clients bring a set of values, beliefs, and lifestyles that are molded, in part, by their personal experiences with a mental illness, the mental health system and their own ethnic culture.

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~ DMH Info Notice 02-03
Definition of Client Culture

Continued….

When these personal experiences are shared, mental health clients can be better understood and be empowered to effect positive system change.”

~ DMH Info Notice 02-03
Service Provider Training

The definition of the term “Client Culture” incorporates how a client’s experience of a psychiatric distress and of interacting with the mental health system will be used to develop a competent service provider system that is sensitive to the “client culture”.
Impacts on the Quality of Life

- Diagnosis/Labeling
- Medication
- Hospitalization
- Stigma
- Economic Impact

- Housing
- Feeling Different
- Culturally & Linguistically Incompetent Services
- Forced Treatment
CIT—Crisis Intervention Team

- CIT is a collaborative effort between law enforcement and the mental health community to help law enforcement officers handle incidents involving mentally ill people.
- Identify major types of psychiatric disorders.
- Identify symptoms, medications, and the most common behaviors associated with each disorder.
- Learn to intervene more effectively.
- Manage mentally ill people more efficiently.
- Improve “street diagnosis” skills.
- Provide in-depth coverage of the types, severity signs and symptoms of chronic mental illnesses.
- Develop more options when dealing with mentally ill people in crisis.
How Does It Work

- CIT is specially designed for first responders:
  - Patrol officers/CHP
  - Dispatchers
  - Firefighters

- Officers may be selected from a list of volunteers from the patrol division and selection is organized to train enough officers to cover each shift.

- Candidates should be chosen based on their police skills, compassion, patience, and the ability to think creatively.

Sgt. Jim Cardenas, SCCSO
What is Stigma?
Stigma

“A mark of disgrace or infamy; a stain or reproach, as on one’s reputation.”

“An attribute, behavior, or reputation which is socially discrediting in a particular way: it causes an individual to be mentally classified by others in an undesirable, rejected stereotype rather than in an accepted ‘normal’ one.”
Stigma

- Self-Stigma
- Negative Impacts
- Confronting Stigma
Fundamental Values in the Mental Health Services Act:

5813.5 (d) Planning for services shall be consistent with the philosophy, principles and practices of the Recovery Vision for mental health consumers.

(1) To promote concepts key to the recovery for individuals who have mental illness: hope, personal empowerment, respect, social connections, self-responsibility, and self-determination.

(2) To promote consumer-operated services as a way to support recovery.

(3) To reflect the cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of mental health consumers.

(4) To plan for each consumer’s individual needs.
Mental health recovery is a journey of healing and transformation enabling a person with a mental health problem to live a meaningful life in a community of his or her choice while striving to achieve his or her full potential.
The 10 Fundamental Components of Recovery

- Self-Direction
- Individualized and Person-Centered
- Empowerment
- Holistic
- Non-Linear
- Strengths-Based
- Peer Support
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Hope
The Pieces of Wellness

Holistic

Voluntary

Empowerment

Self-Help

Choice

Diversity

Employment

Client-driven

Recovery

Centered

Peer Support

Peer Advocacy

Community Based
The Pieces of Wellness

- Holistic
- Self-Help
- Employment
- Peer Support
- Voluntary
- Choices
- Client-Driven
- Peer Advocacy
- Empowerment
- Diversity
- Recovery Centered
- Community Based
Alternative Mental Health Services

- Self-Advocacy
- Self-Help
- Peer Advocacy and Support
- Education
- Political Activism
- Empowerment
- Spirituality
Advocacy

- Political activism
  - Local, state and federal legislatures
    - Smaller scale attend local mental health board meetings

- Helping other peers
Self-Advocacy

- That wonderful feeling that “I know what’s right for me” and not being afraid to say so....
Peer Advocacy and Support

- Acceptance
- Caring
- Sharing Knowledge
- Helping Each Other
- Building Skills
- Understanding
Self-help And Peer Support

- Hearing others have been through what I have been through
- Helping someone navigate the system and avoid heartache
- Learning that I am not alone
Advantages of having Peers within the Mental Health System:

✓ They have experience, exposure and understanding of the MH system
✓ It’s a way for them to give back
✓ They can be role models
✓ It builds their skills
✓ It increases their standard of living since they earn incomes
✓ It decreases stigma through the relationships they build
✓ It decreases the “us versus them” mentality
Advantages of having Peers within the Mental Health System:

- Increases personal experience of the process of recovery
- Reduces discrimination and stigma
- Increases success in engaging some hard-to-reach clients
- It somehow encourage providers to focus more on:
  - wellness instead of the illness
  - Success versus failure
  - Abilities versus disabilities
“Who then can so softly bind up the wound of another as he who has felt the same wound himself?”

Thomas Jefferson
A Belief in Wellness and Recovery

“Recovery from a mental illness is not only possible, it is to be expected.”

President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health-2006
“YOU MUST BE THE CHANGE YOU WISH TO SEE IN THE WORLD.”

~Mahatma Gandhi
Wrap-up Transition

- We went over key concepts of client culture.

- Now we want you to hear from clients and family members about their life experiences.
Client Culture Panel