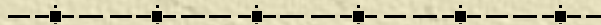




*PEOPLE WITH MENTAL  
ILLNESS CAN WORK!*

Meeting and Learning from People  
with Serious Mental Illness

UMDNJ - CSPNJ



## *Mental Illness and Work*

Do you think mental illness affects a person's ability to work?

## *Ability to Work*

- ✦ Symptoms of mental illness do not necessarily affect the ability to find work and perform skills needed on the job
- ✦ With the necessary supports, many people with mental illness can work

## *Types of Positions*

✦ What kinds of jobs do you think people with mental illness can hold?

## *Various Positions*

- ✦ People with mental illness are qualified for many employment positions at various levels
- ✦ Many of these people have different levels of academic degrees and personal experience
- ✦ They may have the ability to work either part-time or full-time

## *Specific Jobs*

- ✦ Managers/Leaders of Self-Help Centers
- ✦ Facilitators of Support Groups
- ✦ Case Managers
- ✦ Residential Counselors/Supported Housing
- ✦ Employment Counselors/Supported Employment
- ✦ Outreach Workers
- ✦ Reviewers of Services for State-Licensed Programs



## *Efficacy of Consumer Provided Treatment*

Research shows that consumer providers are ideal workers in many job titles and are a much-needed asset to a variety of services from those in natural settings in the community to those at mental health centers and programs

# *Benefits of Work*

- ✦ Eventual reduction in symptoms
- ✦ Structure and focus
- ✦ Improved quality of life
- ✦ Increase in self-esteem
- ✦ Economic independence
- ✦ Contributing to society
- ✦ Involvement in the community

## *Relevance to Recovery*

- ✦ The values of Recovery are dependant on people with mental illness returning to work
- ✦ People with mental illness can and do work
- ✦ It is necessary to their Recovery

# FAMOUS PEOPLE

**Abraham Lincoln**

Lionel Aldridge

Eugene O'Neill

Beethoven

Vincent Van Gogh

Isaac Newton

**Vivien Leigh**

Mike Tyson

*Peter Gabriel*

**President**

Football player

Writer

Composer

*Artist*

Physicist

**Actress**

Prizefighter

*Musician*

## *Barriers to Employment*

- ✦ Stigma from the community, including employers
- ✦ Stigma from professionals can reduce services provided that could help with transition from treatment to employment
- ✦ Limited opportunities and therefore limited work history

## *More Barriers*

- ✦ Anxiety about disclosure
- ✦ Fear about losing disability/medical benefits
- ✦ Medication problems or side effects
- ✦ Stage of Recovery/Readiness

The ability to work is individualized!

## *Support Services*

- ✦ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- ✦ Reasonable accommodations
- ✦ Similar to physical disabilities

The workforce recognizes other groups who require accommodations, even if not through the ADA, such as single parents

## *Specific Services*

- ✦ Support groups
- ✦ Supported Employment
- ✦ Training/Certification
- ✦ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

People without mental illness often need similar services (e.g. career development)

## *Mental Health Positions*

Do you think people with mental illness are qualified to provide services to others with illnesses like their own?

# *Specialized Positions*

- ✦ Specific positions within the field of mental health are ideal for employees who have a mental illness themselves
- ✦ These positions require a unique set of skills

Personal Experience

Knowledge of the system

Understanding

Role modeling

Flexibility

Empathy

Patience

Trustworthy

## *People with Mental Illness Can and DO Work*

- ✦ Many positions
- ✦ Various responsibilities
- ✦ Specialized, mental health providers

People with mental illness may be your co-worker, your customer, your salesman, your neighbor, your fellow tax-payer, your counselor!

*If you know someone with  
mental illness  
(or if you suspect you have a problem)*

- There is hope and resources to help.

Please reach out and find a local resource:

<http://www.njgroups.org/>

*or*

*Your community mental health center*