



MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY MODEL

Recovery is often called a process, an outlook, a vision, a conceptual framework, a guiding principle. There is no single agreed upon definition of recovery. However, the main message is that hope and restoration of a meaningful life are possible, despite serious mental illness (Deegan, 1988, Anthony, 1993). Recovery is ..."both a conceptual framework for understanding mental illness and a system of care to provide supports and opportunities for personal development. Recovery emphasizes that while individuals may not be able to have full control over their symptoms, they can have full control over their lives. Recovery asserts that persons with psychiatric disabilities can achieve not only affective stability and social rehabilitation, but transcend limits imposed by both mental illness and social barriers to achieve their highest goals and aspirations." (The Recovery Model, Contra Costa County, California).

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE RECOVERY MODEL

The following are the fundamental assertions of the Recovery Model of mental illness cited in the Contra Costa County Recovery Model concept paper cited above.

- *a holistic view of mental illness that focuses on the person, not just the symptoms;*
- *recovery is not a function of one's theory about the causes of mental illness;*
- *recovery from severe psychiatric disabilities is achievable;*
- *recovery can occur even though symptoms may reoccur;*

- *individuals are responsible for the solution, not the problem;*
- *recovery requires a well-organized support system;*
- *consumer rights, advocacy, and social change;*
- *applications and adaptations to issues of human diversity.*

More information about recovery can be found at:

<http://www.mhrecovery.com>

References

Anthony, W. (1993). Recovery from mental illness: The guiding vision of the mental health service system in the 1990's. Psychosocial Rehabilitation Journal, 16(4), 11-24.

Deegan, P.E. (1988). Recovery: The lived experience of rehabilitation. Psychosocial Rehabilitation Journal, 11(4), 11-19.

Mahler, Tavano, Gerard, Baber (2001). The recovery model: A conceptual framework and implementation plan, Contra Costa County Mental Health Recovery Task Force, October 2001, 1-8.