

# **Practitioner Guidelines for Handout #11: *Healthy Lifestyles***

## Introduction

Taking care of yourself and living a healthy lifestyle can affect how you feel, how you look, and have a positive impact on your health. Making lifestyle changes is often a difficult thing to do and it is usually helpful to get support in making these changes. Support can come from case managers, family, friends, therapist or hospital staff. Doing this module in a group will allow you to discuss the different areas you might want to make changes with others trying to make similar changes. The strategies you pick and the plan you make to implement them will be specific to you and the group leader can help you individualize information. If you're in the hospital or a residential setting, the staff can help you break down changes into small steps, help you practice them, and give you encouragement as you work on the steps. If you live in the community, your case manager or family members can check in with you on your progress as you work on lifestyle changes and support and encourage you as you go. It is helpful to work on lifestyle changes that help you accomplish the goals that are important to you. If you want to do more things with your children, losing weight might help you be able to be more active and play with them. If you want to get a job, improving your grooming might help you look and feel more confident.

This module provides information about:

- Diet
- Exercise
- Personal Hygiene
- Sleep Habits

## Goals

- Explore with clients, how having a healthy lifestyle can help them achieve personal goals.
- To provide information about how people can live a healthy lifestyle.
- Develop strategies for ways to improve health and lifestyle changes.
- Work with additional supports (such as staff members or family members) to help people develop skills and change habits.

## Number and Pacing of Sessions

Healthy lifestyles can usually be covered in 2 to 4 sessions.

## Structure of Sessions

- Informal socializing and identification of any major issues while reviewing the previous session.
- Discuss the home assignment from the previous session.
- Praise all efforts and problem-solve obstacles to completing homework.
- Follow-up goals.
- Set the agenda for the current session.
- Teach new material (or review materials from a previous session if necessary).
- Summarize progress made in the current session.
- Agree on home assignment to be completed before the next session.

## Strategies to be used in each session

- Motivational strategies
- Educational strategies
- Cognitive-behavioral strategies

## Motivational Strategies

Motivational strategies in this module help people identify healthy lifestyle changes they want to make. Practitioners can help people understand how living a healthy life can benefit them and help them achieve their goals. The overriding questions are, "How might the person use the information in this module to improve his or her health in some way?", "How can changing their lifestyle help people achieve other important goals?".

The following suggestions may be helpful:

For each major topic covered in the handout, help the person to identify at least one way that information about that topic might be helpful to him or her. Keep in mind the goals that the person identified in the first module ("Recovery Strategies").

Continue to help the person identify goals. Also help the person identify information in the handout that could help him or her achieve a personal goal.

### Specific Motivational Strategies for each topic area:

#### Express empathy – Diet:

A client says that she thinks all the junk food she eats slows her down and she has no energy to play with her children. The practitioner tells her “It sounds like your relationship with your children is important to you and you think your diet might be having an effect on the quality of the time you spend with them”. She agrees and the practitioner helps her plan some changes in her diet.

#### Develop discrepancy – Exercise:

A client tells the practitioner they would like to begin to exercise to lose some weight. The practitioner helps the client make a plan to walk 5 days a week. After 2 weeks the client has only walked once. The practitioner and the client make a pros and cons list for exercise. This helps the client see that the benefits of exercise outweigh the reasons not to. The plan is revised to walking 3 times a week and after 2 weeks the client has been successful. The practitioner and client begin talking about other types of exercise the client wants to try.

#### Roll with resistance – Personal Hygiene:

A client has a goal of finding a girlfriend. The practitioner does a pros and cons list with the client around showering regularly. The client tells the practitioner that bathing regularly is not important to them and they feel like they are being pressured. The practitioner asks the client if they would be willing to talk to some other members of the group about things that are important if you want to find a boyfriend/girlfriend. The client agrees and several group members say that “looking good” is helpful. The client begins showering twice a week.,

#### Support self-efficacy – Sleep Habits:

A client decides to stop drinking coffee after 5 PM to see if it improves their sleep. After a week of cutting down on caffeine they report to the practitioner that they are sleeping a little better. The practitioner praises their efforts and success and helps the client review other strategies they might try. Because of the success the client has had they are interested in trying other things.

### Educational Strategies

Educational strategies for this module focus on ensuring that people understand the basic information about their health. The best learning will take place when people

can relate this information to their own personal life choices. For example, learning more about how grooming can help them with meeting new people.

The following strategies can be used:

- Review the contents of the handout by summarizing or taking turns reading.
- Pause at the end of each topic to check for understanding and to learn more about the person's point of view.
- Allow plenty of time for questions and interaction.
- Pause to allow the person to complete the checklists and questionnaires.
- Break down the content into manageable "pieces."
- Find a pace that is comfortable for the person.

### Cognitive-behavioral Strategies

Cognitive-behavioral strategies focus on helping people learn how to use information in the module to think differently and make positive choices about their lifestyle. It is especially helpful for people to think of how learning healthy habits can improve something in their own life or help them achieve personal goals.

Practitioners can help clients learn and practice lifestyle changes by breaking the skill down into small steps, modeling the skill, working on a few steps at a time, setting up home assignments to practice the steps, and using positive reinforcement as the client progresses. The practitioner can help the person develop self-monitoring skills such as daily or weekly checklists for things such as following one's diet, exercising, bathing, or brushing one's teeth, or going to bed at the same time. The practitioner can also enlist members of the client's support system to help with practice and reinforcement.

### Specific CBT Strategies for topic areas:

#### Diet

Model planning a meal using the guidelines and food list in the diet section. Next, do a role-play with the client. In an inpatient setting, the client could practice filling out their menu for the day or going to the cafeteria and choosing their meal. People living in the community might go on a field trip to a restaurant and make choices from the menu. Role-plays before the field trip could help the client feel ready to try this. Clients should be encouraged to have family help them practice making healthy food choices. Role-plays with the practitioner can help clients strategize around what

they want to say to family about how they want support in this area. Do they want family to notice and comment on healthy food choices? Do they want family to remind them of their desire to eat healthier if they see them making poor food choices? What should they say?

#### Exercise

If there are common interests in a group regarding the type of exercise (walking, yoga, aerobics using a DVD) this could be done in the session with a follow-up home assignment. If there is a local gym available for clients, a field trip to the facility to learn more about it could take place. Practitioners should do role-plays with the client asking someone to join them in an activity and helping clients identify who to ask (family or friends).

#### Personal Hygiene

Practitioners should take into account the setting (inpatient, outpatient, individual or group), what area of grooming the client wants to improve, and the client's skill level when developing CBT strategies in this area.

**Showering or bathing:** In an inpatient setting a client may feel uncomfortable about privacy. The practitioner could role-play, talking with a staff member about this. An outpatient may want to problem-solve around which grooming products to buy and where and how to get them.

**Using personal hygiene products:** A practitioner might bring in small samples of shampoo and deodorant so clients can smell them or perhaps even take them home to try them.

**Combing or brushing hair:** The practitioner could mess up their hair and then comb it out. Ask clients what was different between the two. Have combs for clients so they can mess up their own hair and comb it out.

**Wearing neat and clean clothes:** Doing laundry can be broken down into steps and then practiced. Inpatients might go to the laundry room or outpatients to a Laundromat.

**Washing hands regularly:** Behavioral tailoring can be used to help clients remember to wash their hands before a meal or after they use the bathroom. Problem-solving around lack of access to a bathroom or sink (waterless hand sanitizers) may also be needed.

Tooth brushing and flossing: Practitioners can model brushing and flossing and then allow clients to practice these in session. A dentist or dental hygienist could be invited as a guest speaker to demonstrate.

### Home Assignments

As described above under “Cognitive-behavioral Strategies,” help the person identify situations outside the sessions where newly learned information about life choices could be applied. Developing home assignments involves helping the person identify changes they want to make, breaking them down into small steps and then practicing the steps outside the sessions. Enlisting family to practice and support these changes with the client will be important.

For home assignments you could help the person select a specific area from one of the checklists that they want to make a change in. Then make a plan to implement and practice any new skills they will need.

Following are suggestions for home assignments in each topic area:

#### Diet:

- Plan a menu for this week’s meals.
- Make a grocery list that would include ingredients for this week’s meals.
- Cook a meal with a family member.
- Keep a food diary for a week.
- Limit desserts to once a day.
- Drink 4 glasses of water per day.
- Eat at least 2 servings of vegetables per day.
- Eat at least 2 servings of fruit per day.
- Have 1 bag of chips at lunch instead of 2.
- Have 2 sodas per day instead of 4.
- Have 1 helping of the entrée at dinner instead of 2.

#### Exercise:

- Take a 15 minute walk 3 times per week.
- Do an aerobics tape 3 times per week.
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator 5 days per week.
- Visit the local gym to see what is offered.
- Sign up for exercise class.
- Identify someone who wants to lift weights together.

- Go on a bike ride with a friend.
- Try out the exercise bike in the gym 3 times this week.

#### Personal Hygiene:

- Take a bath or shower twice a week.
- Use deodorant daily.
- Wash hair weekly.
- Comb hair daily.
- Brush teeth at least once a day.
- Floss teeth 2 times per week.
- Do laundry on Saturday.
- Wash hands before meals.

#### Sleep Habits:

- Keep a sleep log for a week.
- Go to bed and get up at the same time everyday for a week.
- When you have a bad nights sleep avoid taking a nap the next day and keep track of how well you sleep that night.
- Listen to music for 10 minutes before going to bed for a week.
- Read for 10 minutes before going to bed for a week.

Follow up on the home assignment by asking how it went. For example you could ask, "Were you able to talk to someone on your treatment team about the positive changes you want to make in your life? "Were you able to practice these choices?"

If people do not complete the home assignment, you can gently ask what got in the way. You can role-play ways to overcoming obstacles to completing the home assignment.

#### Tips for Common Problems

People may be reluctant to acknowledge that they have issues that require a change in their lifestyle. Encourage people to set realistic goals and not get discouraged if they are not met quickly. Help people see how their lifestyle change relates to their other goals.

When clients have difficulty following through with lifestyle changes related to improving health, practitioners can help break down the skill into small steps,

explore opportunities for practice, prompting and cuing clients to use the skill, providing reinforcement, enlisting people in the client's support system to help prompt, cue, and practice skill.

Tips for each topic area:

Diet:

Often clients will state a goal of weight loss. This is very global and it would help to break this down into smaller steps. You might start with a weekly food log as a starting point and then help the person begin to make changes in their diet.

Exercise:

Clients tend to be overzealous in their exercise goals. A person may want to start doing yoga and plan to do it everyday. You can help them start small and build on it. Try doing yoga twice a week in the beginning.

Personal Hygiene:

This is an area where it is often helpful to try to link a behavior change in this area to other goals. Helping clients see that showering regularly might help them in their goal to make new friends.

Sleep:

Clients with chronic sleep problems may be resistant to try sleep strategies. You might start with a sleep log and then get the client to try one strategy while continuing their sleep log. Some people may already know a great deal about a healthy lifestyle and feel they don't want to make any changes.

It is still desirable to go over the handout to check the person's understanding and to explore how their lifestyles affects their other goals. Sometimes people have received information in a piecemeal fashion; going through this handout may help people synthesize what they have previously learned. It may be possible to review the module in a short period of time if people are already familiar with the contents.

### Review Questions

At the end of this module, you can use either open-ended questions or multiple choice questions to assess knowledge of the main points.

### Open-ended questions

1. Diet: What are two reasons for having a healthy diet?

2. Exercise: What are 3 reasons to exercise?
3. Personal Hygiene: How often should you brush your teeth each day?
4. Sleep: Name 3 things that can help you sleep better?

Multiple Choice and True/False Questions

1. Diet: Which of the following is a tip for making healthy eating affordable?
  - a) Shop on an empty stomach
  - b) Make a grocery shopping list
  - c) Shop for food in a convenience store
2. Exercise: The following are reasons to exercise except –
  - a) To help you look and feel better
  - b) To have less energy
  - c) Reduce the risk of medical problems
3. Personal Hygiene: Which of the following is a reason to brush your teeth?
  - a) To decrease the risk of heart disease
  - b) To prevent tooth decay
  - c) Prevents dental disease
  - d) All of the above
4. Sleep: Which of the following is NOT a strategy to get a good nights sleep?
  - a) Do something relaxing before bedtime
  - b) Drink a large amount of caffeine
  - c) Have a bedtime routine
5. True or False: By eating a balanced diet you will gain weight.
6. True or False: 5 minutes of exercise a day is enough to stay healthy.
7. True or False: The recommended time for hand washing is 5 seconds.
8. True or False: Going to bed and getting up at the same time everyday will help you sleep better.