

## IMR AS AN EMPOWERMENT TOOL

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## Overview of Topics

- ✓ A brief history of IMR
- ✓ What has been learned about IMR by its use throughout the world?
- ✓ IMR as a client-centered approach
  - ✓ Goal setting and follow-through
  - ✓ The role of the clinician in goal-setting and fostering empowerment
- ✓ Who can benefit from IMR and why

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF IMR

## The *Illness Management and Recovery (IMR)* Program

is a step-by-step program that helps people set meaningful goals for themselves, acquire information and skills to develop more sense of mastery over their psychiatric illness, and make progress towards their own personal recovery.

## History of the *Illness Management and Recovery (IMR)* Program

Developed as part of SAMHSA's Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) project, along with 4 other psychosocial "toolkits" (started in 2001)

1. Assertiveness Community Treatment (ACT)
2. Supported Employment
3. Family Psychoeducation
4. Integrated Treatment for Dual Disorders
5. Illness Management and Recovery

## History of the *IMR* Program, cont'd

- Aimed at incorporating empirically supported methods for improving psychiatric illness outcomes (e.g., symptoms, relapses) into cohesive, integrated treatment program
- Program development overseen by multi-stakeholder committee (clients, family, clinicians, managers, policy experts, researchers), led by Susan Gingerich and Kim Mueser
- Informed by review of 40 randomized controlled studies of illness management programs (Mueser et al., 2002)
- Review identified and incorporated 5 components of effective programs:
  - *Psychoeducation about mental illness and treatment*
  - *Behavioral tailoring for medication adherence*
  - *Coping skills training*
  - *Relapse prevention training*
  - *Social skills training to improve social support*
- 1<sup>st</sup> edition of IMR published in 2003 (SAMHSA); 2<sup>nd</sup> edition published in 2010 (SAMHSA); 3<sup>rd</sup> edition published in 2011 (Hazelden)

## Purposes and Goals of the IMR Program

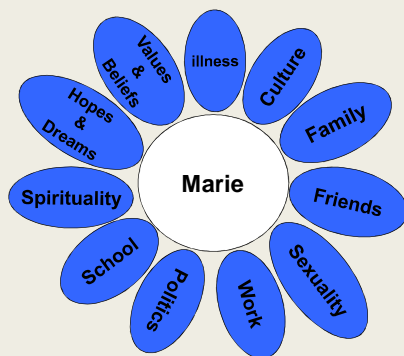
- To inspire persons with severe mental illness about the vision of recovery
- To help people make progress towards their personal goals
- To empower people to become active partners in their own treatment
- To provide information and skills to improve individual's ability to manage their psychiatric illness more effectively in collaboration with others
- To reduce illness-related barriers to living a quality life in the community

## The Short Description

- Practitioners meet with clients
- Help them set personally meaningful recovery goals
- Work on helping them achieve those goals over the course of time, while teaching them how to manage their illness
- Use standardized curriculum (handouts for clients, practitioners' guides for clinicians)
- Use combination of teaching strategies

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## Recovery: Putting myself back in the center of my life (illustration based on P. Deegan)



## Contents of IMR Modules

1. Recovery Strategies
2. Practical Facts about Mental Illness
3. The Stress-Vulnerability Model
4. Building Social Support
5. Using Medication Effectively
6. Drug and Alcohol Use

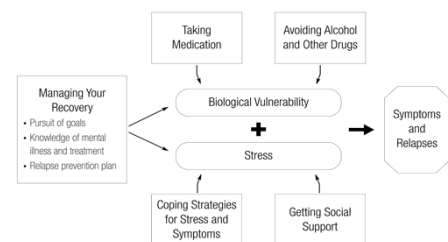
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## IMR Modules, cont'd

7. Reducing Relapses
8. Coping with Stress
9. Coping with Problems and Persistent Symptoms
10. Getting Your Needs Met in the Mental Health System
11. Healthy Lifestyles

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## Principles of Mental Illness Management Based on the Stress-Vulnerability Model

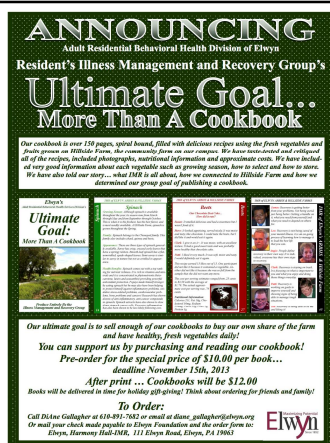


## IMR Logistics

- Takes 40 to 50 sessions (11-12 months of weekly meetings) to complete the full IMR curriculum
- Format: Individual, group, or combination
- Location of sessions: home, mental health center, community location (such as a library), group residence, inpatient
- Session length
  - Individual 45 to 60 minutes (although some individuals may be require shorter, more frequent sessions)
  - Group: 45-90 minutes

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## IMR AND THE WORLD



## Translations of IMR

- Arabic
- Chinese (2 versions)
- Danish
- Dutch
- French
- Hebrew
- Hmong
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Laotian
- Malay
- Spanish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Somalian
- Swedish
- Thai

## International Research on IMR

- Effectiveness of IMR supported by 3 early randomized controlled trials (RCTs) conducted in different countries:
  - Israel
  - US
  - Sweden
- All RCTs compared group IMR with usual services (N = 354)
- Careful attention in all studies to training of IMR clinicians, fidelity to model
- All studies had good rates of participation in IMR and conducted intent-to-treat analyses
- Greater improvements in illness self-management skills, symptoms, and psychosocial functioning for IMR participants than usual care
- Mixed findings on social support: some benefit in use of support to facilitate coping
- No differences in hospitalization rates between IMR and usual care, but study samples were stable and had low hospitalization rates at baseline

## Recent RCTs of IMR

- Salyers et al. (2014), US: No differences between IMR and weekly problem solving group at post-treatment (9 months) or 18 month follow-up, but low rates of participation in both groups (N = 118)
- Tan et al. (2016), Singapore: Compared to clients who received usual services, those in IMR had fewer hospitalizations, shorter stays in the hospital, lower symptoms, better illness self-management, and better functioning at 12 months (N = 50)
  - First study of full IMR program in Asian country

## IMR Throughout the World

- Multiple RCTs of IMR currently underway in other countries
- Large scale implementation efforts underway in some U.S. states (e.g., Minnesota, New Hampshire) and countries (e.g., Israel, Sweden)
- Local/regional adaptations to the IMR program to fit the culture and context of treatment setting common
- Term “illness management and recovery” often used to refer to integrated approach to engaging clients in their own treatment, empowering them by shared decision-making, optimistic outlook through recovery vision

## What Have We Learned?

- If you create accessible, free content about mental illness and its management, people will access it, teach it, and learn it
- Permitting local control and adaptation has spurred rapid adoption, but can also lead to problems in implementation and uptake
- Embedding the recovery vision and goal setting into teaching illness self-management is effective at engaging clients in participating and learning about their own treatment
- The language of recovery and process of goal setting, in the context of teaching structured curriculum and skills, has been a powerful vehicle for enlightening clinicians

## IMR: A CLIENT-CENTERED APPROACH

## The Anchor of IMR: Goal Setting and Tracking

- Where IMR comes alive
- Not just about participating in a group or following a curriculum
- Participants focus on something meaningful to them that they want to accomplish
- Some modules will directly address the goal
- Other modules will support goals because they help manage symptoms/build skills in the service of accomplishing the goal

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## Process of Identifying Personal Recovery Goals

- Person defines what recovery means to him or her
- Person explores satisfaction with areas of life
- Person picks an area of life that he or she is not satisfied with and would like to change
- Person defines a goal that represents the positive change he or she would like to achieve

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## Role of Clinicians in Setting and Following up on Recovery Goals

- Clinicians do not sit on their hands during goal-setting process
- Clients often need help in figuring out a personally meaningful goal
- Probe questions are helpful
- May need to explore with clients what they said in the past to identify possible areas for goals
- Clinician can share observations about what he or she thinks might be potential goal areas to work on together, based on knowledge or impressions of what changes the client might value

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## Role of Clinician, cont'd

- May be helpful to be the "scribe" and write down what the client is saying
- Clients often need help in figuring out the details, and benefit from suggestions ("What do you think about \_\_\_\_\_?")
- Clinicians can serve as sounding boards as clients narrow down what they want to work on and how
- When clients have difficulty articulating a goal, the clinician can outright suggest potentially motivating goals, and actively help person break them down into smaller goals and steps
- The important thing is not that the client technically states the goal or comes up with it on his/her own, but rather that the client has a personally meaningful goal to work towards during IMR, however that goal was determined

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## Using the Satisfaction with Areas of My Life Worksheet

| Friendships          | Work                  | Creative expression      |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Family relationships | Education             | Fun activities/hobbies   |
| Close relationships  | Spirituality/Religion | Belonging to a community |
| Living situation     | Physical health       | Other                    |
| Finances             | Mental health         | Other                    |

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## Using the Goal Tracking Sheet

- **Long-term goals:** Best to focus on improving functioning in different areas (e.g., employment, taking classes, making more friends, independent living) rather than feelings (e.g., depression), thoughts (self-esteem), or symptoms (e.g., hallucinations)
- **Short-term goals:** Break down long-term goal into 3 smaller goals
  - Developing strategies to cope more effectively with negative feelings, thoughts, etc. can be a shorter term goal related to achieving the long-term goal
  - Short-term goals targeting feelings, thoughts, or symptoms should focus on coping ability rather than severity of symptom
- **Manageable steps:** Break short-term goals down into smaller steps
- **Keep in mind question:** "How will we know when this goal or step have been achieved?"

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**IMR Goal-Tracking Sheet**

Use this sheet to record progress toward goals, including steps taken, new steps, new short-term goals, and new recovery goals.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date that personal recovery goal was set: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal recovery goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal recovery goal achieved (date): \_\_\_\_\_ Modified (date): \_\_\_\_\_

| Short term goal related to personal recovery goal   | Short term goal related to personal recovery goal   | Short term goal related to personal recovery goal   |
|---|---|---|
| Steps:  | Steps:  | Steps:  |
| 1. _____  | 1. _____  | 1. _____  |
| 2. _____  | 2. _____  | 2. _____  |
| 3. _____  | 3. _____  | 3. _____  |
| 4. _____  | 4. _____  | 4. _____  |
| Start date: _____   | Start date: _____   | Start date: _____   |
| Date reviewed: _____  | Date reviewed: _____  | Date reviewed: _____  |
| Achieved? <input type="checkbox"/> Fully <input type="checkbox"/> Partially <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all | Achieved? <input type="checkbox"/> Fully <input type="checkbox"/> Partially <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all | Achieved? <input type="checkbox"/> Fully <input type="checkbox"/> Partially <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all |
| Method/next steps: _____  | Method/next steps: _____  | Method/next steps: _____  |

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## How long to aim for achieving each goal or step?

### "The Rule of Six's"

| Goal/Step                    | Could be achieved in... |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Long-term Goal               | 6 months                |
| Short-term Goal              | 6 weeks                 |
| Steps Toward Short-term Goal | 6 days                  |

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## Setting Meaningful Goals

- Take your time, don't rush just to get something down
- May want to shift language from "goal" to "what you want"
- Don't impose your own beliefs
- Explore how he or she would like his or her life to be different
- Don't discourage ambitious goals
- Make sure you both know the meaning of achieving the goal:
  - What would you be doing if this goal were achieved?
  - How would your life be better?

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## Examples of Long-term Goals Set in IMR

- Get a job
- Learn games to play with my children
- Get my own apartment
- Make a friend to play the guitar with
- Get my driver's license
- Enroll in school or training program
- Sign up for an art class
- Attend a religious service or spiritual meeting

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## Following up on Goals

- Check on progress towards goals regularly
  - *Individual: weekly*
  - *Group: at least monthly - rotate review among members*
  - *Reinforce steps that were taken*
- Help individuals problem-solve obstacles
- Help individuals learn additional skills that will help them achieve goals

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## Goals are. . . .

- The glue that holds IMR together
- One of the major motivations for most people to participate in IMR
- What makes IMR truly person-centered

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## Additional Ways Clinicians Foster Empowerment

- Inspire hope through belief in the person
- Validate the client's hopes and dreams
- Express confidence in client and optimism that client's can make progress towards personal goal
- Provide useful information
- Teach helpful strategies
- Plan with client how to use information and skills outside of sessions
- Increase client's participation in life and in their community
- Facilitate client's active engagement and involvement with all members of the treatment team

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## WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM IMR AND WHY?

## Who is IMR for?

- IMR was developed for people with severe mental illness, regardless of the severity of their symptoms, cognitive challenges, or where they are receiving treatment
- Specific educational materials in IMR focuses on:
  - *Schizophrenia-spectrum disorders*
  - *Bipolar disorder*
  - *Major depression*
- However, IMR can also be adapted for other mental health conditions as well, such as PTSD, OCD, and borderline personality disorder

## Primary Focus of IMR on Broadly Applicable Life Skills

- Stress-vulnerability model can be applied to broad range of disorders and life challenges
- Building social support
- Understanding and making decisions about medication
- Understanding and making decisions about substance use
- Stress reduction methods
- Coping with upsetting thoughts and feelings; managing cognitive challenges
- Getting one's need met in the health care system and community

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## Where can IMR be Provided?

- Community mental health centers
- Outpatient programs
- Clubhouses
- Peer-run recovery centers
- Residential programs
- ACT teams
- Short-term and long-term inpatient settings
- Transitional living center
- Homeless shelters
- Forensic programs

## IMR for Challenging Clients

- Clients can benefit from IMR regardless the treatment setting, illness severity, or level cognitive functioning
- IMR designed to help clients make progress towards recovery, regardless of the stage of illness
- Some clients can benefit from exposure to IMR curriculum more than once, at different stages of the recovery process, as their needs change over time
- Clinician's level of involvement in helping clients set goals and make plans to achieve them titrated based on client need
- For example: working with low motivation clients

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## Engaging and Working with Low Motivation Clients

- IMR can be very helpful when an individual has an urgent problem or need
- Go straight to the skills (and modules) that will help individual the most
- Avoid heavy use of handouts and rely more on conversation, modeling and role playing
- Involve supporters in helping person practice skills
- Often provides an opening to explore further involvement in IMR work

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## Engaging Clients with Low Motivation in IMR

- Focus on the positive: emphasize recovery, and the goal of the program in helping people achieve personal goals
- Explain that IMR is aimed at helping people take control over their lives, and becoming active members of their own treatment teams
- Show clients the SAMHSA film, "Introduction to IMR"
  - *Watch it together*
  - *Then, get client's impressions of the film*
  - *Explore potential interest in program*

## Examples of useful phrases and concepts for engaging clients

"I'd like to tell you a little about a program I think you might be interested in. This program, called IMR, focuses on helping people make changes in their lives they want to make, and achieving their personal recovery goals. The program is also aimed at helping people learn how to manage their illness more effectively, to prevent it from interfering with their goals."

"You may have heard about the idea of recovery before. In the IMR program, people explore what recovery means to them, and how they would like their lives to be different if they were recovered:

- What does recovery mean to you?
- How would you like your life to be different?"

For clients who are ambivalent or reluctant to commit to participate in IMR, take it slow, and see if the person is willing to try a few sessions of IMR (e.g., 3-4); then stop, evaluate, and potentially agree on more sessions

## **Other Strategies for Working with Low Motivation Clients**

- Take time to get to know the person, find out what they are really interested in
- Explore past interests, ambitions, past times, friends to take pressure of the present
- Don't be afraid to suggest possible areas for goals if client has difficulty identifying them
- Don't be afraid to re-explore the importance of goals that have been set but which client has made minimal progress, despite attention to specificity, resources, etc.
- Identify, point out, and reinforce all efforts to work on goals, including steps
- Ask questions to get clients to reflect on their own progress
- Involve significant others and staff to facilitate work on goals and IMR skills