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**Workbook Goals**

**Content Objectives:**
After completing this workbook, participants will be familiar with:
1. The role medication plays in treatment.
2. How medications work.
3. What to do if side effects occur.

**Treatment Plan Objectives:**
1. Participants will gain knowledge during each session as evidenced by improving at least 25% from pre- to post-knowledge assessment.
2. Participants will choose and use knowledge as evidenced by selecting and attaining one personal practice goal per session.
3. Participants will demonstrate skill acquisition as evidenced by correctly completing a monitoring form and/or by role-playing at least one coping skill after completing the workbook.
Introduction: Treatment Can Help

Facilitator Notes

Main Learning Points:
This is the first session. Every session except this one will begin with a review of the Main Learning Points from the last session.

Tips for this Session
1. Give each participant his or her own personal set of handouts for this session, with a folder or notebook for saving all Understanding Your Treatment workbook materials.
2. When you pass out the handouts let participants know that the session will be interactive, with reading aloud. Inform them you will all take turns and that it is okay to say “I pass” if they don’t want to read aloud. However, let them know everyone values their participation and input and you hope they will participate.
3. Stop and discuss the handouts frequently, especially where indicated. You’ll greatly increase participants’ chances of making behavioral changes if you can focus the discussion, and allow the participants to process the information, say it in their own words, link it to personal experiences, and clarify any unclear information.
4. When you get to a main learning point in the reading, stop and discuss it. Call on participants to say in their own words what it means. Have participants give an example based on personal experience.
“Let’s answer the first six questions on the Topic Assessment before we start, just to see how familiar we are with this topic.”

**Topic Assessment Answer Key**


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**Suggestion for Topic Introduction and Relevance to Participants**

“Just as we’ve introduced ourselves to each other, the first class is an introduction too. The handouts for this first session introduce us to the topic of our workbook, ‘Understanding Your Treatment.’ It’s important to me that your goals for studying this workbook are met. Please tell me what you hope to get out of this workbook.”

(Write on the board: What do I hope to get out of studying Understanding Your Treatment?)

(Give everyone a chance to respond but do not pressure them—allow participants to say)

“I pass.”

(Acknowledge all responses.)

“Thank you. This is your group, and we’re here to help you find the answers to your questions about this topic and meet your needs.”
**Topic Assessment**

Mark one: □ Pre  □ Post  

Your Score: + __ out of 4

**Directions:**
1. Read each question carefully.
2. Read every answer before marking one.
3. Mark only one answer to each question.

**Name:** ______________________________________________________

**Date:** ______________________________________________________

1. Symptoms of mental illness will clear up with time even if there’s no treatment.
   A. True  B. False

2. Some mental disorders, including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, do not usually appear until people reach their 30’s or 40’s.
   A. True  B. False

3. New treatment choices are now available because:
   A. There are new discoveries in medicine.
   B. I have better treatment team members to help me with my symptoms.
   C. I have more money to pay for medications that help.
   D. I’m not as ill as I was in the past.

4. Without treatment, symptoms are likely to stay the same or worsen over time.
   A. True  B. False

5. I am confident I understand my treatment.
   □ Strongly Disagree  □ Disagree  □ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  □ Agree  □ Strongly Agree  □ Unsure

---

**Session 1 – Introduction: Treatment Can Help**
Topic Assessment

6. This information is important for me to know.

☐ Strongly Disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly Agree

At the end of the session, answer these questions before turning in this paper:

7. This session helped me.

☐ Strongly Disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly Agree

8. What I liked about this session: __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

9. How this session could have been better for me: __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Introduction: Treatment Can Help

Objectives for this Session

1. State 1 way brain research and new medications have improved treatment.

2. Give 1 reason why someone might seek treatment for bipolar disorder or schizophrenia.

3. State 3 ways medicine can help you reach your goals for your life.

Newer Treatments Are Helping People Get Better

For many years, treatment for mental illness didn’t change much. But at the end of the 20th century, doctors discovered many new facts about these illnesses—and a lot more information is now available on how to treat them. Brain research has found comfortable new ways, such as scans, to look at a living brain as it functions. Because of this, we now know a great deal about what happens with these disorders. New medicines have been discovered, giving people more treatment choices to help them get better.

Main Learning Point #1

Because of recent discoveries in medicine, people have more treatment choices and are getting better.

Can you name some ways treatment for mental illness has improved in the past century?

_____________________________________________________________________

In your own experience, have you seen improvements in treatments for mental illness?

_____________________________________________________________________
At First, Most People Don’t Know Why They’re Not Feeling Right

Some mental disorders, including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, do not usually appear until people reach their teens or twenties. At first, many people don’t understand why they’re not feeling right. They don’t know their symptoms are being caused by a medical illness.

Without treatment, symptoms are likely to get worse over time. It might be hard to remember when a person started having symptoms, such as having trouble concentrating or feeling sad. Over several months or years, the person may have felt worse but couldn’t understand why.

Most people are not diagnosed with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder until something serious happens. They may have a crisis situation, such as becoming a threat to themselves or to others. Or they may not be able to care for themselves. When they are put in the hospital, they find out they have an illness. They learn that treatment can help them feel better. Some people have a harder time than others accepting their diagnosis. They may go into the hospital several times before they realize they have an illness, and that they can help themselves feel better with treatment.

How old were you when your symptoms started?

What diagnosis have you and your prescriber talked about?

Did a crisis cause you to seek treatment?

Main Learning Point #2
Symptoms get worse without treatment. Treatment can help.
How Treatment Can Help

Medicine may help relieve symptoms such as anxiety, fear, suspicion, and sleeplessness. As treatment continues, it may be easier to focus on activities. You may feel less distracted by things going on around you. You may feel more relaxed and more willing to make plans for recovery with your treatment team.

Most people have goals. They may want to be able to live on their own or to go back to school or work. If these are things you want to do, medicine is one part of treatment that can help you reach your goals.

Medicine can:

1. Relieve or lessen your symptoms.
2. Help you feel more relaxed.
3. Help you concentrate better.

Main Learning Point #3

Medicine is one tool that can help you reach your life goals.

If you’ve ever been treated with medicine for a mental illness, can you explain what it was like?

________________________________________________________________________

Which medication helped you the most? How did it help you?

________________________________________________________________________

Were there any problems with your last medication?

________________________________________________________________________
Review & Moving Forward

The main learning points of this session are:

1. _______________________________________________________________________
2. _______________________________________________________________________
3. _______________________________________________________________________

Move Forward – Choose a Personal Practice Option

It’s important to practice new knowledge and skills. What will you do between now and the next session? Please choose one option from the list below:

☐ 1. STUDY. I am going to reread my handout at least once.

☐ 2. SHARE. I will share my handout with someone in my support network. I will ask __________________________ to read it and talk with me about my treatment.

☐ 3. ORGANIZE. I will find out my diagnosis and the names of my medicines before the next session. I will write down my medicines to keep in my wallet.

☐ 4. OTHER: _______________________________________________________________________

If there is time left before the end of the session, you might talk about your personal practice goals. How will you remember and complete your goal by the next session?
Main Learning Points from last session:

**Treatment Can Help**

1. Because of recent discoveries in medicine, people have more treatment choices and are getting better.
2. Symptoms may get worse without treatment. Treatment can help.
3. Medicine is one tool that may help you reach your life goals.

Review Personal Practice Options from last session.

**Remember**

It’s important to acknowledge and discuss participants’ successes, progress and challenges.

**Materials Needed to Accompany Participant Handout:** About Evidence-Based Practices: Shaping Mental Health Services Toward Recovery.

**Tips for this Session**

1. This is the second session. You are still bonding with participants, so focus on their needs. Keep the session supportive and encouraging.
2. Take time to process the information, pausing frequently to discuss it with the participants, and let them give examples from their experiences. Facilitate discussion if they want to process if and how they may apply the principles to their lives.

**General Tip**

While the information participants learn from this session is important, the emotional tone they get from it is just as vital. People may not always care about the scientific or technical language used to explain symptoms, treatment, or complex health information. Use everyday language that describes their real experiences. Alter your language selection to match their needs, but respect the fact you are working with adults. Always maintain a respectful, adult-to-adult tone.
Suggestion for Topic Introduction and Relevance to Participants

“Have any of you traveled to a place you’d never been before? Have you ever been the driver when you went to a new place?”

“How helpful is it to have a map when you drive to an unfamiliar place?”

(React to their responses.)

“Yes, I want a map!”

“When you get an unexpected illness, it’s a bit like traveling to that unfamiliar place. You don’t know what to expect. Wouldn’t a map be good to have?”

“Today we’ll talk about having a road map for your recovery journey—the treatment plan and all the options that may be available if you need them.”

“Let’s review the main points from our last session and answer the first six questions on the Topic Assessment before we start, just to see how familiar we are with this topic.”

Topic Assessment Answer Key
Review of Session 1:
Treatment Can Help

Main Learning Points of Session 1
What were the main learning points of Session 1? If you did not attend the last session, you may guess, and also write the answers as people say them:

1. Because of recent discoveries in medicine, people have more t___________t choices and are getting better.
2. S___________s get worse without treatment. Treatment can help.
3. M____________e is one tool that can help you reach your life goals.

Personal Practice Option Review:
What personal practice option(s) did you choose?
Did you complete your personal practice yet?

☐ 1. Yes. How did it go? _____________________________

☐ 2. No. What got in the way of completing your practice?

If you still plan to complete your practice, when will you do it?

☐ 3. I didn’t choose a personal practice option.
Topic Assessment

Mark one: □ Pre  □ Post

Directions:
1. Read each question carefully.
2. Read every answer before marking one.
3. Mark only one answer to each question.

Name: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

1. I need to discuss my symptoms with my prescriber every time I see him or her.
   A. True  B. False

2. My symptoms will likely return if I stop taking my prescribed medicine.
   A. True  B. False

3. Once I start to notice that my medicine is working, I:
   A. Can decide if I want to keep taking it or not.
   B. Will be more anxious and nervous than before.
   C. May benefit from other forms of treatment, along with medicine.
   D. Will not need to have as much sleep as before.

4. Every medicine works for every patient.
   A. True  B. False

5. I am confident I understand the different types of treatment.

   □ Strongly Disagree  □ Disagree  □ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  □ Agree  □ Strongly Agree  □ Unsure

6. This information is important for me to know.

   □ Strongly Disagree  □ Disagree  □ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  □ Agree  □ Strongly Agree

Your Score: + _____ out of 4
Topic Assessment

At the end of the session, answer these questions before turning in this paper:

7. This session helped me.

☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly Agree

8. What I liked about this session: ________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

9. How this session could have been better for me: __________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________
Ranges of Treatment

Objectives for this Session

1. Recognize 2 types of treatment that are available, based on your needs, to help you get better.
2. Identify 1 role of medicine in treatment.
3. Provide 2 reasons why it’s important to continue treatment.

What Overall Treatment May Include

Depending on a person’s own needs, overall treatment may include some of the following:

1. One or more medicines—to improve concentration and relieve symptoms such as insomnia, nervousness, depression, fear, hearing voices, feelings of suspicion, racing thoughts, irritation, and confused thinking.

2. Counseling sessions—for regular emotional support. Counseling can help you learn how to cope with problems caused by your illness, how to solve problems you are concerned about, and how to structure your time and activities.

3. Therapeutic recreation—to help you learn how to keep from getting too stressed, communicate better, improve your skills in forming friendships, and find activities to enjoy in your free time.

4. Rehabilitation—to help you learn skills to be successful at home, work or school.

5. Support groups—to talk with, learn from, and enjoy social activities with others who have similar challenges. Being in groups lets you give support to others and get support from them.

6. Evidence-based treatment programs—These programs combine to give you knowledge of several types of treatment that are proven to work well together. They focus on your needs, helping you get the information and skills necessary to reach your goals. (See handout of evidence-based programs from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, called SAMHSA.)

Main Learning Point #1

Many types of treatment are available to help you get better.
Planning My Treatment

The first goal of treatment is safety. If a person is not thinking clearly or not making wise decisions, he or she may put himself, herself, or someone else in harm’s way. Treatment can help keep the person safe.

Another major goal of treatment is to make symptoms better or clear them up. As part of your treatment, you will talk about your symptoms with your prescriber. Together you will choose one or more medicines that can help meet your needs. You and your prescriber will keep talking about symptoms and medicines as time goes on and keep making changes in your treatment if needed.

Medicines play several important roles in your treatment. They can help relieve your symptoms, help you feel better, and help you avoid getting sick again.

As you improve and your symptoms begin to clear up, your prescriber may suggest other types of treatment that may help you. The ones that meet your needs may be added to your treatment plan. Some examples of other types of treatment include counseling, rehabilitation, support groups, evidenced-based programs such as Assertive Community Treatment, and supported employment.

Many people want to know more about their medicine and what results they can expect. They also want to know if they’ll have any side effects from their medicine. The rest of this workbook will focus on medicines—how they can help improve symptoms, how they work, possible side effects, and how to manage them. However, this workbook can’t tell you everything you may want to know. If you have questions about your medications or any side effects, talk to your prescriber.

Main Learning Point #2

You and your prescriber are partners in choosing the best treatment for you.
What to Expect From Your Medicine

Medicine is meant to help manage your symptoms and help you feel better. For example, you may have been bothered by anxiety, fear, insomnia, depression, or frightening sights, voices, sounds, thoughts, or beliefs. With medicine, these symptoms may happen less often or bother you less. They may go away for some people. You may be able to think and focus more clearly. You may find you have more energy. Relating to others may be easier.

But all of this won’t happen overnight! Treating symptoms such as these takes time. Symptoms usually improve gradually. It may take several weeks before you notice a difference in the way you feel. Remember, every person’s body is different, and the time it takes medicine to work will be different, too. It’s important to be patient and give your medicine time to work.

Once you start to feel better, it’s important to keep taking your medicine. Staying on treatment is the most important thing you can do to keep your symptoms from coming back.

Sometimes when people start to get better, they think they don’t need the medicine any more and it’s okay to stop taking it. Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, your brain disorder, like many other medical illnesses, needs regular treatment to keep symptoms under control and help you avoid a medical crisis. You don’t want illness to keep you from reaching your goals.
Review & Moving Forward

The *main learning points* of this session are:

1. ____________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________

**Move Forward – Choose a Personal Practice Option**

It’s important to practice new knowledge and skills. What will you do between now and the next session? Please choose one option from the list below:

- **1. STUDY.** I am going to reread my handout at least once.
- **2. SHARE.** I will share my handout with someone in my support network. I will ask ______________________ to read it and talk with me about it.
- **3. WRITE.** I will write down my experiences with treatment. I will discuss what has worked best for me and explain why, so I can help others.
- **4. OTHER: ________________________________**

**Take an “Extra Step Forward” (optional)**

- **5. ASSESS.** I will study the SAMHSA handout and choose a program I think will help me. I’ll discuss it with my treatment team.
About Evidence-Based Practices:  
Shaping Mental Health Services Toward Recovery

**Illness Management and Recovery**
The Illness Management and Recovery program strongly emphasizes helping people to set and pursue personal goals and to implement action strategies in their everyday lives. The information and skills taught in the program include:

- Recovery strategies
- Practical facts about mental illness
- The Stress-Vulnerability Model and strategies for treatment
- Building social support
- Using medication effectively
- Reducing relapses and coping with stress
- Coping with problems and symptoms
- Getting needs met in the mental health system

**Assertive Community Treatment**
The goal of Assertive Community Treatment is to help people stay out of the hospital and to develop skills for living in the community, so that their mental illness is not the driving force in their lives. Assertive Community Treatment offers services that are customized to the individual needs of the consumer, delivered by a team of practitioners, and available 24 hours a day. The program addresses needs related to:

- Symptom management
- Housing
- Finances
- Employment
- Medical care
- Substance abuse
- Family life
- Activities of daily life

**Family Psychoeducation**
Family Psychoeducation involves a partnership among consumers, families and supporters, and practitioners. Through relationship building, education, collaboration, problem solving, and an atmosphere of hope and cooperation, family psychoeducation helps consumers and their families and supporters to:

- Learn about mental illness
- Master new ways of managing their mental illness
- Reduce tension and stress within the family
- Provide social support and encouragement to each other
- Focus on the future
- Find ways for families and supporters to help consumers in their recovery
About Evidence-Based Practices:
Shaping Mental Health Services Toward Recovery

Supported Employment
Supported Employment is a well-defined approach to helping people with mental illness find and keep competitive employment within their communities. Supported employment programs are staffed by employment specialists who have frequent meetings with treatment providers to integrate supported employment with mental health services. The core principles of this program include:

• Eligibility based on consumer choices and preferences
• Supported employment as an integrated treatment
• Continuous follow-along supports
• Help with moving beyond the patient role and developing new employment-related roles as part of the recovery process

Co-occurring Disorders: Integrated Dual Diagnosis Treatment
Integrated Dual Diagnosis Treatment is for people who have co-occurring disorders: mental illness and a substance abuse addiction. This treatment approach helps people recover by offering both mental health and substance abuse services at the same time and in one setting. This approach includes:

• Individualized treatment, based on a person’s current stage of recovery
• Education about the illness
• Case management
• Help with housing
• Money management
• Relationships and social support
• Counseling designed especially for people with co-occurring disorders

Source: United States Department of Health and Human Services—Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Remember
You can refer to the “Facilitator’s Delivery Checklist” when using Team Solutions materials as a reminder of important facilitator tips.

Tips for this Session
Multi-sensory demonstration: You may want to make this session more concrete and fun by bringing in “Neuron Cookies.” (You can experiment to find your favorite low-sugar cookie recipe on the Internet). Chocolate chips can represent receptors, white raisins can represent synaptic vesicles, and dark raisins can be neurotransmitters.

First, give the participants a quick hand sanitation lesson, with everyone using a liquid hand sanitizer. When you reach page 3 in the lesson, pass out the “Neuron Cookies,” cautioning participants to not eat them yet. Then draw the equivalent neuron on the board and name the parts as you read page 3 together. When you get to the explanatory diagrams on pages 4 and 5, read them aloud and then do the demonstration. Line the participants up in rows of three, putting the “Neuron Cookies” near each other to form a pathway. Demonstrate how the message is delivered and received: Dark raisin “neurotransmitters” come out of the white raisin “synaptic vesicle” (little chemical factory) and across the space (synapse) into the chocolate chip “receptor” of a neighbor’s cookie. After every group of three performs a correct demonstration, celebrate their new knowledge by eating the cookies.

Making it fun and interactive makes this session more memorable. Laughing together helps everyone feel more hopeful. Challenge yourself to have creative presentations!

Potential Problem
After all your extra work, the “Neuron Cookies” arrive at the session in broken pieces.

Possible Responses
1. Buy a portable hard plastic storage container to transport the cookies—it’s a good investment.
2. Pass out the cookie pieces brought for today’s session. Laugh about it together. Reconstruct how they looked using the diagram on the board.
3. Enjoy eating the cookie pieces.
“Does anyone here really enjoy detective stories or mysteries? I sure do! Is it fascinating to you to see mysteries solved? All the folks who enjoy seeing a good mystery solved, raise your hands.”

“Today we’re going to begin talking about the mystery of brain chemistry—how it works, how it gets out of balance and how medicine may correct the imbalance. Very fascinating stuff! Today’s session is about how messages are sent in the brain.”

“Who in the group thinks they understand how medicine works in our brains?”

(Acknowledge responses.)

“Is this something you’d like to understand better?”

“Let’s review the main points from our last session and answer the first six questions on the Topic Assessment before we start, just to see how familiar we are with this topic.”

Topic Assessment Answer Key
Review of Session 2: Range of Treatments

Main Learning Points of Session 2
What were the main learning points of Session 2? If you did not attend the last session, you may guess, and also write the answers as people say them:

1. Many types of treatment are available to help you get b________r.
2. You and your prescriber are p________________s in choosing the best treatment for you.
3. Medicine helps symptoms improve g____________y.
4. Taking your medicine as p__________d can help you reach your goals.

Personal Practice Option Review:
What personal practice option(s) did you choose?
Did you complete your personal practice yet?

☐ 1. Yes. How did it go? _____________________________________________

☐ 2. No. What got in the way of completing your practice?

If you still plan to complete your practice, when will you do it?

☐ 3. I didn’t choose a personal practice option.
### Topic Assessment

Mark one: □ Pre  □ Post

**Directions:**
1. Read each question carefully.
2. Read every answer before marking one.
3. Mark only one answer to each question.

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________________

1. If a person’s brain chemistry is out of balance, his or her brain might not process messages from the five senses correctly.
   - A. True  B. False

2. If a person’s brain chemistry is out of balance, messages might not match up correctly with memories.
   - A. True  B. False

3. Neurotransmitters are:
   - A. Chemicals that help carry messages between brain cells.
   - B. Brain nerve cells that form communication pathways in the brain.
   - C. Receptors in the brain.
   - D. Connective tissue in the brain.

4. Medicines work by making new chemicals in the brain.
   - A. True  B. False

5. I am confident I understand how messages are transmitted in the brain.
   - □ Strongly Disagree  □ Disagree  □ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  □ Agree  □ Strongly Agree  □ Unsure

Your Score: + ____ out of 4
Topic Assessment

6. This information is important for me to know.

☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly Agree

At the end of the session, answer these questions before turning in this paper:

7. This session helped me.

☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly Agree

8. What I liked about this session: __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________

9. How this session could have been better for me: __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________
How Messages Are Sent in the Brain

Objectives for this Session

1. Identify the 3 steps of how information is processed in the healthy brain.
2. Understand what a “neurotransmitter” is and its role in the brain.
3. Identify 1 thing that can happen when neurotransmitters get out of balance.
4. Recognize 1 way imbalanced brain chemistry is put back into balance.

How Do Medicines Work to Relieve Symptoms?
Medicines may work by changing the imbalance of chemicals in the brain. Brain chemicals are needed to carry messages from one brain nerve cell to the next so you can:

1. **Receive** information from your senses (what you see, hear, taste, touch, and smell).
2. **Recognize** the information, be able to process it, make sense of it, and compare it to your memory banks.
3. **React** and make decisions based on the information you receive and process.
How Messages Are Sent in the Brain
(continued)

When brain chemicals get out of balance, messages from the world may not be the same messages received by the brain. Depending on which chemical is out of balance, a person’s brain may receive only bits and pieces of information, like pieces of a puzzle. The person may have to struggle to fit those pieces together so the message makes sense. Sometimes the brain may process information too fast or too slow, which can cause important parts of the message to be lost.

Messages Travel on Nerve Pathways
There are billions of nerve pathways in the brain. Information and messages travel on these nerve pathways to get to different areas of the brain. Each nerve pathway is made up of small brain nerve cells.

Brain Chemicals Carry Messages from One Nerve Cell to the Next
Nerve cells on a nerve pathway are lined up so that they can pass the message from one nerve cell to the next. Nerve cells don’t touch each other, so they can’t pass the message directly. Brain chemicals are needed to help carry the message across the spaces between nerve cells. These brain chemicals are called neurotransmitters. They are stored in the vesicles (little chemical factories) of the nerve endings. When the brain chemicals are released from one nerve cell, the neurotransmitters carry the message to the next nerve cell.

What Does It Mean?
Brain chemicals, known as neurotransmitters, are responsible for carrying information from one nerve cell to another nerve cell. “Neuro-” means nerve, and “-transmitters” refers to carrying messages.

Main Learning Point #1
When brain chemicals get out of balance, it is harder to receive and process information.

Main Learning Point #2
Brain chemicals called “neurotransmitters” carry messages between brain nerve cells.
How Messages Are Sent in the Brain
(continued)

Messages Are Carried Along Pathways of Brain Nerve Cells
A pathway of brain nerve cells

1. Brain chemicals are stored in the vesicles at the brain nerve cell endings, ready to carry a message.
2. Brain chemicals.
3. This brain nerve cell is ready to receive the message.
4. “Receptors” are ready to receive the brain chemicals.
How Messages Are Sent in the Brain (continued)

How Messages Are Carried From One Brain Nerve Cell to Another

Brain chemicals leave their brain nerve cell ending to carry a message to the next brain nerve cell.

The message is sent when brain chemicals connect with their receptors.

Main Learning Point #3

Brain chemicals have to connect with their receptors to send the right message at the right time.
Review & Moving Forward

The main learning points of this session are:

1. 
2. 
3. 

Move Forward – Choose a Personal Practice Option

It’s important to practice new knowledge and skills. What will you do between now and the next session? Please choose one option from the list below:

☐ 1. STUDY. I am going to reread my handout at least once.

☐ 2. SHARE. I will share my handout with someone in my support system. I will ask ___________________________ to read it and talk with me about it.

☐ 3. DISCUSS. I will talk to ___________________________ about whether my decisions seem to have been affected by my illness at times. I’ll hear what he or she remembers.

☐ 4. OTHER: ___________________________

Take an “Extra Step Forward” (optional)

☐ 5. WRITE. I will write down the answers to one or more of these questions:

1. What helps my wellness?
2. What makes things worse for me?
3. What do I need to make my life better?
4. What are my plans to get my needs met?

Motivation to Practice.
How will practicing help you?
Main Learning Points from last session:
*How Messages Are Sent in the Brain*

1. When brain chemicals get out of balance, it is harder to receive and process correct information.
2. Brain chemicals called neurotransmitters carry messages between brain nerve cells.
3. Brain chemicals have to connect with their receptors to send the right message at the right time.

Review Personal Practice Options from last session.

**Remember**

You can refer to the "Facilitator’s Delivery Checklist" when using Team Solutions materials as a reminder of important facilitator tips.

**Tip for this Session**

*Learning aids that can be manipulated.* Have each participant (and facilitator) cut out a neuron and label each part. Put your neurons together in a chain and use paper circles from a hole puncher as neurotransmitter messenger chemicals. Together you can figure out how to demonstrate too many neurotransmitter molecules, too few neurotransmitter molecules, storage problems, and leaky membrane problems.
“At the last session, we talked about being detectives to understand the “three R’s” of how messages are delivered and processed in our brain—the information is Received, Recognized (matched up with our memories) and Reacted to. Today we have the thrill of again being detectives to figure out what goes wrong—how those message-delivering brain chemicals get out of balance. Why is that important? Why is it important to understand how something is broken?”

(Take ideas from participants. You are hoping that someone will say, figuring out how it’s broken is the first step in figuring out how to fix it—how to put it back right. Guide the participants toward this if possible. Reinforce all participation by acknowledging it positively. When you hear something close to the desired answer)

“That’s right! Figuring out how something is broken is the first step in figuring out how to fix it—how to put it back right.”

“The brain is very complex. Our discussions will be a ‘ballpark explanation’—just enough information to give us the general idea without overwhelming us. My hope is that one day these illnesses, including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, will have cures. The only way to reach that is by figuring out what went wrong and how to fix it.”

“Our session today explores how brain chemicals get out of balance. What would you hope to get out of attending a session about this?”

“Let’s review the main points from our last session and answer the first six questions on the Topic Assessment before we start, just to see how familiar we are with this topic.”

Topic Assessment Answer Key

T – topic introduction  
R – relevance to participant  
I – identify objectives  
M – materials for session  
M – motivate to use
Main Learning Points of Session 3
What were the main learning points of Session 3? If you did not attend the last session, you may guess, and also write the answers as people say them:

1. When brain c________________s get out of balance, it is harder to receive and process correct information.

2. Brain chemicals called neurotransmitters carry m____________s between brain nerve cells.

3. Brain chemicals have to c___________t with their receptors to send the right message at the right time.

Personal Practice Option Review:
What personal practice option(s) did you choose?
Did you complete your personal practice yet?

☐ 1. Yes. How did it go? ________________________________

☐ 2. No. What got in the way of completing your practice?

If you still plan to complete your practice, when will you do it?

☐ 3. I didn’t choose a personal practice option.
Topic Assessment

Mark one: □ Pre  □ Post  
Your Score: + ____ out of 4

Directions:
1. Read each question carefully.
2. Read every answer before marking one.
3. Mark only one answer to each question.

Name: ________________________________________________

Date: ________________________________________________

1. Brain chemical imbalance is limited to too high or too low levels of neurotransmitters.
   A. True   B. False

2. Having leaky membranes in the brain’s nerve pathways can affect moods.
   A. True   B. False

3. Hyperactivity in the front part of the brain might result in unstable moods.
   A. True   B. False

4. If brain chemicals get out of balance, you might have the following symptoms:
   A. Sound sleep and waking up rested.
   B. Nervousness and/or anxiety.
   C. Clear thoughts and understanding of communication.
   D. Energy.

5. I am confident I understand how brain chemicals work.

   □ Strongly Disagree   □ Disagree   □ Neither Agree Nor Disagree   □ Agree   □ Strongly Agree   □ Unsure
Topic Assessment

6. This information is important for me to know.

☐ Strongly Disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly Agree

At the end of the session, answer these questions before turning in this paper:

7. This session helped me.

☐ Strongly Disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly Agree

8. What I liked about this session: ________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

9. How this session could have been better for me: _____________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
Brain Chemical Imbalance

Objectives for this Session

1. Identify 2 ways that brain chemicals may get out of balance.
2. Describe 2 responses (symptoms) to certain kinds of brain chemistry imbalance.
3. Recognize how neurotransmitter imbalance affects mental health.

When Brain Chemicals Get Out of Balance

Nobody knows for sure, but it is thought that symptoms of mental disorder may happen when brain chemicals get out of balance. There are many ideas as to what may cause this imbalance in the brain. Here’s a look of four of these ideas:

1. **Too many brain chemicals may be released.**
   
   Only a certain number of brain chemicals may be needed to carry the message to the next brain nerve cell. If too many brain chemicals are released, they may flood the nerve cell. This flood of chemicals might confuse the message that was already sent.

![Diagram of brain chemicals flooding the nerve cell with the message.](image-url)
2. **Brain chemicals may stay too long at the next nerve cell and keep sending the message over and over again.**

Usually, brain chemicals carry a message to the next nerve cell, where they send their message. Afterwards, they may go back to their own brain nerve cell for storage, or they may get broken down and flushed into the blood stream and out of the body. If they don't go back to storage, or get broken down, they may stay in the space between the brain nerve cells and keep sending the message.
3. **The brain may not be making enough of one or more of the brain chemicals.**
   
   There are not enough chemical messengers, so the message cannot be delivered correctly. In other words, the message gets changed. This chemical balance is especially important to help your moods match the events going on around you.

4. **Conditions in the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) affect how many brain chemicals are made, causing an imbalance.**
   
   A. There may be “leaky membranes” that result in brain chemicals getting out of balance.
   
   B. There may be too much activity (hyperactivity) in the central nervous system, especially in the front area of the brain known as the frontal cortex. This hyperactivity results in brain chemistry imbalance.

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**Main Learning Point #1**

**Brain chemistry may get out of balance when too many or too few neurotransmitters are released.**

---

**Main Learning Point #2**

**Brain chemistry may get out of balance when brain chemicals stay too long at the next nerve cell and send the message over and over again.**
Brain Chemical Imbalance
(continued)

It is very important for neurotransmitters, the brain chemicals that carry messages, to be in balance so that a person can think clearly and have normal emotional reactions.

If brain chemicals get out of balance, the person may have unusual sensations, such as hearing or seeing things that aren’t really there. These sensations can confuse the message that’s supposed to get through. The real message may get broken up—and the person may not receive the entire message.

The message may not make sense, so the person may be confused and nervous. He or she may also be exhausted from struggling to block out the other sensations so he or she can understand the real message. Or the person’s thoughts may seem like they’re “racing.” Thoughts may be misleading, and he or she may be too overwhelmed to get out of bed some mornings.

Likewise, brain chemicals can get out of balance and cause the person to slow down and get depressed. The person may only pay attention to negative things, and not be able to notice positive things. It’s almost as if the person with this imbalance puts on sunglasses that screen out the sunshine which could brighten his or her life and lift his or her attitude and hope. Getting the brain chemicals back into normal balance takes off those “sunglasses.”

Main Learning Point #3

Brain chemistry may get out of balance because of “leaky membranes” or hyperactivity in the central nervous system.

Main Learning Point #4

Symptoms happen when neurotransmitters, the brain chemicals that carry messages, get out of balance.
Review & Moving Forward

The main learning points of this session are:

1. ______________________________________
2. ______________________________________
3. ______________________________________
4. ______________________________________

Move Forward – Choose a Personal Practice Option

It’s important to practice new knowledge and skills. What will you do between now and the next session? Please choose one option from the list below:

☐ 1. STUDY. I am going to reread my handout at least once.

☐ 2. SHARE. I will share my handout with someone in my support system. I will ask _____________________________ to read it and talk with me about brain chemical imbalance.

☐ 3. REVIEW. I will talk to _____________________________ about my past relapses and hear what he or she remembers about my symptoms.

☐ 4. OTHER: ______________________________________

Take an “Extra Step Forward” (optional)

☐ 5. CREATE. I will build a model of a brain nerve cell, also called a neuron (for example, using dough or modeling clay). I’ll label its parts, and make a poster explaining its importance.
How Medicine for Mental Illness May Work
Facilitator Notes

Main Learning Points from last session:
**Brain Chemical Imbalance**

1. Brain chemistry may get out of balance when too many or too few neurotransmitters are released.
2. Brain chemistry may get out of balance when brain chemicals stay too long at the next nerve cell and send the message over and over again.
3. Brain chemistry may get out of balance because of “leaky membranes” or hyperactivity in the central nervous system.
4. Symptoms happen when neurotransmitters, the brain chemicals that carry messages, get out of balance.

Review Personal Practice Options from last session.

Tips for this Session
The participants have saved their labeled cut-out neurons from the last session. You can get them out and again form chains of three-person “neuron pathways.” You can use more paper circles from a hole puncher as neurotransmitter messenger chemicals. Together, you can figure out how to demonstrate the five ways medicines can correct imbalanced brain chemicals. (Hint: it’s easy to do—use the illustrations.) If possible, reward each participant with a small well-chosen treat at the end of the session (for example, a deck of cards, bag of healthy microwave popcorn to pop at break, or a coupon to use at the canteen) to acknowledge their participation and extra effort.

General Tip
Consumers may not always care about the scientific or technical language used to explain symptoms, treatment, or to relay complex health information. Use everyday language that describes their real experiences. Alter your language selection to match their needs, but respect the fact you are working with adults. Always maintain a respectful, adult-to-adult tone.

When a more complex term is used in the material, give participants an opportunity to explain it. This can empower individuals who are familiar with more complex terminology or concepts.
“We have used good detective work to solve:
1. How brain chemicals deliver messages in the healthy brain.
2. Ways the brain chemistry can get out of balance.”

“Today we will talk about how medicines may work to restore balance in brain chemicals. What would you hope to get out of attending a session about this?”

“Let’s review the main points from our last session and answer the first six questions on the Topic Assessment before we start, just to see how familiar we are with this topic.”

Topic Assessment Answer Key

T – topic introduction
R – relevance to participant
I – identify objectives
M – materials for session
M – motivate to use
Main Learning Points of Session 4
What were the main learning points of Session 4? If you did not attend the last session, you may guess, and also write the answers as people say them:

1. Brain c__________y may get out of balance when too many or too few neurotransmitters are released.
2. Brain chemistry may get out of balance when brain chemicals stay too long at the next nerve cell and send the m________e over and over again.
3. Brain chemistry may get out of balance because of “leaky m_________s” or hyperactivity in the Central Nervous System
4. Symptoms happen when n__________s, the brain chemicals that carry messages, get out of balance.

Personal Practice Option Review:
What personal practice option(s) did you choose?
Did you complete your personal practice yet?

☐ 1. Yes. How did it go? ________________________________

☐ 2. No. What got in the way of completing your practice?

If you still plan to complete your practice, when will you do it?

☐ 3. I didn’t choose a personal practice option.
Topic Assessment

Mark one: ☐ Pre  ☐ Post

Your Score: + ____ out of 4

Directions:
1. Read each question carefully.
2. Read every answer before marking one.
3. Mark only one answer to each question.

Name: ____________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________

1. Laboratory tests are available to help you decide which medication(s) will work best for you.
   A. True   B. False

2. It’s common to have to try more than one type of medicine to get best symptom relief.
   A. True   B. False

3. Medicine for mental disorders will always work very quickly.
   A. True   B. False

4. As long as you have medicine in your system:
   A. You will not experience any symptoms.
   B. You can test the neurotransmitter levels in your blood.
   C. You shouldn't complain to your prescriber.
   D. It can keep working to bring brain chemicals back into balance.

5. I am confident I understand how medicine works in my brain.

   □ Strongly Disagree   □ Disagree   □ Neither Agree Nor Disagree   □ Agree   □ Strongly Agree   □ Unsure
Topic Assessment

6. This information is important for me to know.

☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly Agree

At the end of the session, answer these questions before turning in this paper:

7. This session helped me.

☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly Agree

8. What I liked about this session: ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________

9. How this session could have been better for me: ________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
How Medicine for Mental Illness May Work

Objectives for this Session

1. State 1 reason it is good to have so many choices in medicines for mental illness.

2. Explain 2 reasons it is important to work as a partner with your prescriber.

3. Identify 2 ways that medicine may bring brain chemicals back into balance.

There are many medicines available to treat symptoms of psychiatric illness. Why do we need so many to choose from? Because different medicines work in different ways to adjust the brain chemicals and relieve symptoms. That’s why if one medicine doesn’t work for a person, another medicine might work better. It’s important for the person and the prescriber to work together to find the best medicine and dosage to treat symptoms.

There are no laboratory tests or measures of neurotransmitter levels in the blood that can tell which medicine is best for you. It’s important for your prescriber to know as much as possible about your symptoms so he or she can help you make the best choice.

It’s very common for a person to have to try more than one type of medicine to get the best possible relief from symptoms. Give your medicine enough time to see how well it works for you. Work with your treatment team to carefully decide if a medicine is working well for you, or if it would be better to try a different medicine or a combination of medicines.

Main Learning Point #1

It’s good to have so many choices of medicine, so that you and your prescriber can find the best medicine for you.

Main Learning Point #2

It’s very common to have to try more than one type of medicine to get the best possible relief. It is common to take two or more medicines together.
Why is it so important for me to work as a partner with my prescriber?
Why is it good that there are so many different choices in medicines for mental illness?

There are several ways medicines may work to help relieve symptoms. One way may be to block too many brain chemicals from connecting with the next brain nerve cell. When the brain chemicals are blocked, they can't send confusing messages.

Too many brain chemicals flood the nerve cell with the message.

One way medicines may work is by attaching to the receptors and blocking brain chemicals from reaching them.
Another way medicines may help is by sending the brain chemicals back to their own brain nerve cells once they’ve completed delivering their messages.

In general, medicines may help by adjusting the balance of brain chemicals. This is thought to improve your symptoms. However, when you start a new medicine or new dosage, it takes time for the balance of brain chemicals to change. It may take several weeks before you notice a difference in your symptoms. You will often get better results from your medicine by being patient and giving it time to work.

Everyone responds to medicines a little differently. Some people notice positive changes right away, while others may need a little more time.

Your prescriber is your partner in treatment. You will get the best results from your medicine if you work with him or her to decide whether your medicine is working as well as it should.

One type of medicine may help correct the brain chemistry imbalance caused by “leaky membranes.” This medicine tightens the membranes so they won’t be so leaky. This helps to bring neurotransmitters back to a normal balance.

Other medicines may help stabilize moods by reducing over-activity (hyperactivity) in the central nervous system. These medicines are also used to treat epilepsy and migraine headaches.

Another way medicine may help relieve symptoms is by making more of a neurotransmitter available when the person is ill from not having enough of it. Some medicines may be able to block certain unused neurotransmitters from going back into storage in the synaptic vesicles (called “reuptake”). This makes these neurotransmitters available longer to attach to receptors. It restores the balance of chemical activity to a normal level.
How Medicine for Mental Illness May Work
(continued)

What Happens When Someone Stops Taking Medicine?
With every dose, medicine may work to improve symptoms and help keep symptoms from returning. So, if a person stops taking the medicine as prescribed, symptoms will probably return. The person may have a relapse and might have to go to the hospital.

Currently, medicines can’t cure the problem that’s causing the imbalance. They can only help to bring the brain chemicals back into balance.

It’s important to continue taking medicine exactly as prescribed every day, for as long as your prescriber recommends. Remember: If you have any questions about your medication or side effects, always talk about them with your prescriber.

Main Learning Point #4

As long as your medicine is in your system, it may keep working to bring brain chemicals back into balance.

Complete this sentence:
Taking medicine helps with symptoms by __________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
Review & Moving Forward

The main learning points of this session are:

1. ________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________
3. ________________________________________________
4. ________________________________________________

Move Forward – Choose a Personal Practice Option

It’s important to practice new knowledge and skills. What will you do between now and the next session? Please choose one option from the list below:

☐ 1. STUDY. I am going to reread my handout at least once.

☐ 2. SHARE. I will share my handout with someone in my support system. I will ask ___________________________ to read it and talk with me about it.

☐ 3. EXPLORE. I will talk to ___________________________ about my response to my prescribed medicines and hear what he or she thinks about this.

☐ 4. OTHER: __________________________________________

Take an “Extra Step Forward” (optional)

☐ 5. JOURNAL. I’m going to write down my memories, thoughts, and feelings about taking medicine and what I hope will happen.

If there is time left before the end of the session, you might talk about your personal practice goal. How will you remember and reach your goal by the next session?
How Medicine Can Work Best for You

Facilitator Notes

Main Learning Points from last session:
*How Medicine for Mental Illness May Work*

1. It’s good to have so many choices of medicines, so that you and your prescriber can find the best medicine for you.
2. It’s very common to have to try more than one type of medicine to get the best possible relief. It’s common to take two or more medicines together.
3. Medicines may work quickly or take several weeks to work.
4. As long as your medicine is in your system, it can keep working to bring brain chemicals back into balance.

Review Personal Practice Options from last session.

**Tips for this Session**

The class covers five tips. Assign one tip to each of five people, or consider having two people work together on one tip. The participants can read the tip and lead the group to restate the tip in their own words. You may want to ask them to give an example of the tip.
“Have you ever cooked something or worked on a computer or car when someone was giving you tips based on their knowledge? For instance, if you were baking a pie, would you want someone sharing their knowledge of all the things that could go wrong?”

“Do you like tips about medicine based on other people’s knowledge about medications? Might they help you avoid problems if you know ahead of time what types of things to expect?”

“I want to be given more than just a list of tips to read. I think the tips are more useful if they’re explained to me. I like to be told why. I want to be told how. The better I understand the medication, the more useful that information is for me, and the better I will remember it. But that’s me. How do you like to get information?”

“Today we’ll talk about ‘How Medicine Can Work Best for You.’ We’re going to get some good tips based on a lot of experience. And we’ll get the ‘why’ and ‘how’ explanations, too.”

“What would you hope to get out of attending a session about this?”

“Let’s review the main points from our last session and answer the first six questions on the Topic Assessment before we start, just to see how familiar we are with this topic.”

**Topic Assessment Answer Key**

1. B  
2. A  
3. B  
4. B

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<th>T</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>topic introduction</td>
<td>relevance to participant</td>
<td>identify objectives</td>
<td>materials for session</td>
<td>motivate to use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Main Learning Points of Session 5
What were the main learning points of Session 5? If you did not attend the last session, you may guess, and also write the answers as people say them:

1. It’s good to have so many c__________s of medicine, so that you and your prescriber can find the best medicine for you.

2. It’s very common to have to try more than one type of medicine to get the best possible r__________. It’s common to take two or more medicines together.

3. Medicines may work quickly or take s__________l weeks to work.

4. As long as your medicine is in your system, it can keep working to bring brain chemicals back into b__________.

Personal Practice Option Review:
What personal practice option(s) did you choose?
Did you complete your personal practice yet?

☐ 1. Yes. How did it go? ____________________________________________

☐ 2. No. What got in the way of completing your practice?

If you still plan to complete your practice, when will you do it?

☐ 3. I didn’t choose a personal practice option.
Topic Assessment

Mark one:  □ Pre   □ Post   Your Score: + ____ out of 4

Directions:
1. Read each question carefully.
2. Read every answer before marking one.
3. Mark only one answer to each question.

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________________

1. I should adjust my medicines on my own.
   A. True   B. False

2. It’s important to take medicine exactly as prescribed.
   A. True   B. False

3. Herbal medicines are natural, so they can be added on without concern.
   A. True   B. False

4. An important way to be responsible for my treatment and medication is to:
   A. Ask advice from my friends about my medicines and theirs.
   B. Carry a list of my current medicines and doses in my wallet.
   C. Make the decision when it’s best to take my medicine.
   D. Change the dose myself if symptoms are getting worse.

5. I am confident I know how to get the best effect from my medicine.

□ Strongly Disagree □ Disagree □ Neither Agree Nor Disagree □ Agree □ Strongly Agree □ Unsure
Topic Assessment

6. This information is important for me to know.

- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Strongly Agree

At the end of the session, answer these questions before turning in this paper:

7. This session helped me.

- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Strongly Agree

8. What I liked about this session: ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

9. How this session could have been better for me: ______________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
About Your Medicine

Objectives for this Session

1. Recognize 2 reasons to take medicine “as directed.”

2. Talk about 1 reason why you should be careful about mixing over-the-counter and herbal medicines with prescription medication.

3. Explain 1 good thing about being a partner with your prescriber.

4. Write out a medicine card for your wallet.

Your prescriber may tell you to take your medicine a certain way, such as at bedtime. It’s important to follow your prescriber’s instructions exactly to get the best results from your treatment. Here’s why:

1. For your medicine to work the right way, there must be enough of it in your body. If the dosage is too low, or if you miss doses, there may not be enough medicine to keep the brain chemicals balanced. Your symptoms may not get better. If they’ve gotten better and you stop taking your medicine the right way, your symptoms could come back again or get worse.

2. Your prescriber might be coordinating medicine times (for example, “take with meals” or “take on an empty stomach”) to keep you from having uncomfortable side effects, such as upset stomach or nausea. Taking your medicine at the right times helps you have the best chance of getting positive results, with nothing else getting in the way to make it less strong or less effective.
3. It might be very helpful to make a routine to help you remember to take your medicine as prescribed. For instance, if the doctor says “take this with food,” you may want to take it every day at mealtime. If you are to take a medicine at bedtime or every morning, you may want to take it when you wash your face or brush your teeth. Having a routine can help you stay on track!

4. If your dosage is too high, you may get unwanted side effects from your medicine. (Some side effects can happen even at the right dosage.)

5. It’s a mistake to think, “If one is good, two may be even better!” That idea could cause you to accidentally overdose, which can be a problem. Medicine should be taken exactly as directed by your prescriber.
6. Some medicines that you can get without a prescription, including over-the-counter and herbal remedies, may keep the other medicine you are taking from working right. Some can make your illness and symptoms worse. If you need to take a medicine for another health problem, such as a cold, your prescriber or pharmacist can help you find one that won’t interfere with your other medicines.

Many people don’t want to depend on medicine. They want to take it only as long as they have symptoms. It’s understandable that a person may not like taking medicine regularly over a long time.

Your prescriber is your partner in your efforts to stay well. If you are concerned about your medicines or about any side effects from them, talk with your prescriber about them.

Together, you can make sure the positive reasons to stay on your medicine outweigh the negative. Your prescriber will help you understand the pros (advantages) and cons (disadvantages) so that you can make healthy decisions.
# Medicines You Are Taking at This Time

It’s smart to keep a list of the medicines you are taking in your pocket. In the spaces below, write the names of your medicine(s), the dosage(s), and when you take each one. Remember to redo this list whenever any changes are made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of medicine:</th>
<th>Dosage:</th>
<th>When I take it:</th>
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</table>

Why is it a good idea to carry a list of your medications with you? Come up with a list of reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason 1:</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reason 2:</td>
</tr>
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<td>-----------</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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Main Learning Point #4

Carrying a list of current medicines and dosages in your wallet with your ID is a good idea.
Review & Moving Forward

The main learning points of this session are:

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 

Move Forward – Choose a Personal Practice Option

It’s important to practice new knowledge and skills. What will you do between now and the next session? Please choose one option from the list below:

☐ 1. STUDY. I am going to reread my handout at least once.

☐ 2. SHARE. I will share my handout with someone in my support system. I will ask ____________________________ to read it and talk with me about it.

☐ 3. EXPLORE. I will look up my medicine on the Internet or ask my prescriber or pharmacist for information about it.

☐ 4. OTHER: ____________________________

Take an “Extra Step Forward” (optional)

☐ 5. HELP OTHERS. I’ll write down what I will say to a friend in a support group, so what I’ve learned from my experiences can help others who are taking medicine for mental illness.
Main Learning Points from last session:
How Medicine Can Work Best for You

1. Take medicine exactly as prescribed to keep the right amount in your system so that brain chemicals stay balanced.
2. The right dosage of medicine may help avoid unwanted side effects.
3. Alert: Over-the-counter or herbal medicines can interact with medicines for mental illness.
4. Carrying a list of your current medicines and dosages in your wallet with your ID is a good idea.

Review Personal Practice Options from last session.

Tips for this Session
1. Product package inserts, which provide specific information about medications, including side effects, can be found on Dailymed.com. In addition, many medications have websites that will likely include full prescribing information, including medication guides, as well as other information.
2. One of the tenets of recovery is for each participant to become an informed partner in his or her own treatment—one who can weigh the pros and cons of treatments. This session will help participants learn to recognize and manage medication side effects should they occur.
3. To be effective in this session, be willing to confront fear—yours and theirs.

General Tips
Make a conscious effort to acknowledge all relevant input from participants—both verbal and non-verbal. Use words, such as “Great observation” or “Very useful” and thank participants for contributions such as reading aloud, passing out handouts, assisting other participants, sharing their thoughts and feelings, and attending the session. Use non-verbal gestures including making eye contact, smiling, and nodding your head to make sure that participants know that you hear their opinions and thoughts.
“Have you ever had anyone tell you, ‘I have some good news and some bad news— which do you want to hear first?’”

(Wait to hear their accounts of this. Reinforce responses.)

“We’ve been talking together about medications. You’ve heard the good news that there are some good choices of medicines that give relief from symptoms. Good news: They can benefit you. But then there’s the bad news: They can annoy and bother you sometimes with unwanted side effects. Medicines wouldn’t be allowed to be used if they weren’t considered to be generally safe, but some more serious effects can happen. So, there’s good news and bad news. What do you think about that?”

(Encourage discussion. When closure is needed, summarize.)

“Of course it’s reasonable to have concerns and to be cautious, but we want to be informed. Today, we’re going to learn what to watch for and what to do if side effects do happen. As informed partners in treatment, you’re going to be able to weigh the pros and the cons—the benefits and the disadvantages—and make decisions about your wellness.”

“Today we will talk about medicine’s side effects.”

“Let’s review the main points from our last session and answer the first six questions on the Topic Assessment before we start, just to see how familiar we are with this topic.”
Main Learning Points of Session 6
What were the main learning points of Session 6? If you did not attend the last session, you may guess, and also write the answers as people say them:

1. Take medicine exactly as prescribed to keep the right amount in your body so that b________n chemicals stay balanced.
2. The right dosage of medicine can help avoid u________d side effects.
3. Alert: Over-the-counter or h________l medicines can interact with medicine for mental illness.
4. Carrying a list of your current m________s and dosages in your wallet with your ID is a good idea.

Personal Practice Option Review:
What personal practice option(s) did you choose?
Did you complete your personal practice yet?

☐ 1. **Yes.** How did it go? ____________________________________________

☐ 2. **No.** What got in the way of completing your practice?

If you still plan to complete your practice, when will you do it?

☐ 3. *I didn’t choose a personal practice option.*
**Topic Assessment**

Mark one: □ Pre  □ Post

**Directions:**
1. Read each question carefully.
2. Read every answer before marking one.
3. Mark only one answer to each question.

Name: __________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________

1. **Side effects are a part of taking medicine, so there's nothing I can do about them.**
   
   A. True  B. False

2. **The way my body reacts to medicine can be affected by:**
   
   A. My hair color.
   B. Caffeine and nicotine.
   C. Where I sleep.
   D. My prescriber.

3. **There are lab tests to screen for some side effects that I might not be aware of.**
   
   A. True  B. False

4. **If I have a side effect, I should discuss it with my prescriber.**
   
   A. True  B. False

5. **I am confident I know how to recognize and manage side effects.**
6. This information is important for me to know.

- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Strongly Agree

At the end of the session, answer these questions before turning in this paper:

7. This session helped me.

- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Strongly Agree

8. What I liked about this session: __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

9. How this session could have been better for me: ____________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
Knowledge of a Medicine’s Side Effects

Objectives for this Session

1. Understand what is reasonable to expect about side effects with your medicine.
2. Identify 3 or more things that affect the way a person reacts to a medicine.
3. Develop a plan to cope with side effects.

Every medicine, even aspirin, may have side effects. We decide with our prescriber’s advice to take certain medicines because we want that medicine to help us feel better. We also need to know about the medicine’s possible side effects.

Many side effects can be annoying but are not necessarily serious. There may be ways you can work with your prescriber to manage these side effects so they either clear up or don’t bother you too much.

Some side effects can be more serious. Most of these are rare, but your treatment team can help you recognize the more serious side effects that are possible with your medicine. It’s important to get medical help right away if any of these serious side effects happen.

Sometimes it may seem like the problems, or side effects, outweigh the benefits of the medication. It’s very important to discuss this with your prescriber. Together, your prescriber and you can work to make a change. This might mean changing the dose, adding a new medicine, making some healthy lifestyle changes, or changing to a different medicine.

Main Learning Point #1

All medicines can have side effects.

Sometimes people think they should stop their medicine if they get a side effect. Most of the time, stopping the medication is not the best solution. Stopping a medicine can sometimes cause other effects. Individuals who think they are having a medication side effect should talk to their prescriber as soon as possible.
Is Your Medicine Likely to Cause Side Effects?

People often wonder if they’ll have side effects from their medicine. Some people may have only a few side effects from their medicine. Some people may have a side effect that goes away over time, or they learn how to manage it so it doesn’t bother them. Others may not notice any side effects, even if they are taking the same medicine in the same dosage. That’s because medicines may affect people in different ways.

The way you react to your medicine depends on many things. It may be affected by your age, weight, gender (male or female), ethnic background, or the way your body breaks the medicine down. Also, the amount of medicine you are taking (dosage) and any other medicines or drugs (including tobacco and caffeine) you’re taking can affect the way you react. Having side effects doesn’t necessarily mean you are taking too much medicine. There are many possible reasons.

There are some possible side effects that you may not notice. Your prescriber may be able to take certain measurements (such as your weight and the size of your waist) or order lab tests (such as blood tests, an EKG, etc.) to screen for these. Some of these side effects include changes in blood sugar, blood platelets, cholesterol level, and the way your liver, kidney, and thyroid are working.

If you ever think you may be having a side effect from your medicine, tell your prescriber. It can also help to talk with a nurse or pharmacist on your treatment team. In some cases, a change in dosage can reduce side effects. Sometimes your prescriber can give you an extra medicine to reduce certain side effects. Sometimes he or she will advise you to change your medicine. But trying to make any of these changes on your own could cause you to get worse. You are a partner with your prescriber in your treatment. You can use his or her medical training and skills to find the treatment that’s right for you.

Main Learning Point #2

Many things can affect the way you react to medicine.

Main Learning Point #3

Working with your treatment team is the best way to solve problems with your medicine.
The Five Steps to Coping with Side Effects

1. **Contact the Treatment Team:** I will talk with my prescriber, nurse, or a member of my treatment team I can reach quickly and easily. To solve the problem, I will probably need to talk to my prescriber. However, I may need to talk to someone else on my treatment team first. It’s best to be prepared and keep a list of treatment team members’ names and contact numbers.

2. **Describe the Problem:** I will tell my team member about the trouble I’m having and how much it bothers me.
   - **A. What Bothers Me:** I will explain the problem I’m having.
   - **B. How Much It Bothers Me:** I will explain whether this is a problem that bothers me just a little or one that bothers me so much that I don’t want to keep taking the medicine.
     
     *Example (1):* “This problem is annoying, but I’ll put up with it if the medicine does a good job of controlling my symptoms.”
     
     *Example (2):* “This problem really bothers me a lot. I’m not sure I want to keep taking the medicine if we can’t fix this problem.”

3. **Ask Questions:** I will find out what I need to know to understand this problem better.
   - **A. Side Effects?** Is this problem a medication side effect or is it caused by something else?
   - **B. Serious?** Is this a serious problem, or is it just bothersome or annoying?
   - **C. Temporary?** Will this problem go away with time, or is it likely to keep happening if nothing is done about it?”
The Five Steps to Coping with Side Effects
(continued)

4. Ask for Solutions: I will find out what can be done to fix this problem. Depending on what my prescriber thinks might be best, I can decide if I might be able to:

   A. Cope. Is there something I can do to deal with the problem?
   B. Decrease. Would it help to lower the dosage of medicine without making my symptoms worse?
   C. Add. Is there another medicine that could be added that will keep the problem from happening?
   D. Switch. Is there a different medicine I could take instead, that is less likely to cause this problem?

5. Come to an Agreement: I will work with my treatment team to agree about what can be done, and keep my part of the agreement.

Main Learning Point #4
Using the Five Steps to Coping with Side Effects can help fix problems you may have with your medicine.
Review & Moving Forward

The main learning points of this session are:

1. ____________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________________________

Move Forward – Choose a Personal Practice Option

It’s important to practice new knowledge and skills. What will you do between now and the next session? Please choose one option from the list below:

☐ 1. STUDY. I am going to reread my handout at least once.

☐ 2. SHARE. I will share my handout with someone in my support system. I will ask _________________________ to read it and talk with me about it.

☐ 3. ASK. I will talk to _________________________ about side effects from my medicine and hear what he or she has to say about it.

☐ 4. OTHER: _______________________________________________________

Take an “Extra Step Forward” (optional)

☐ 5. WRITE. I’m going to write down my memories, thoughts, feelings, and/or plans about medicine side effects.
Drug Interactions Notes

Main Learning Points from last session:

**Side Effects**

1. All medicines can have side effects.
2. Many things can affect the way you react to medicine.
3. Working with your treatment team is the best way to solve problems with your medicine.
4. Using the Five Steps to Coping with Side Effects can help fix problems you may have with your medicine.

Review Personal Practice Options from last session.

**Tips for this Session**

1. This would be a good session for a pharmacist to be present as co-facilitator.
2. If you are unable to arrange for a pharmacist to co-facilitate, break this session into five assignments:
   - Two prescription medicines interacting.
   - Over-the-counter drugs interacting with a medicine for mental illness.
   - The effects of caffeine, alcohol and street drugs on medicine.
   - Pregnancy and medicines for psychiatric disorder (for teams of two to present).
   - Have participants read the materials, clarify any unclear information, summarize in their own words, and give an example from personal experience if possible. Be encouraging. Give small rewards for a job well done.

**General Tip**

**Trash Can Quality Indicator.** Check the “quality indicators” for your program to see how it’s received. Some obvious examples are pre- to post-session Topic Assessment score changes, number of referrals, participant feedback, etc. Don’t forget the trash can—it’s an excellent quality indicator. If participant handouts are thrown away as participants leave the room, it’s an indication they weren’t engaged. It should also tell you something if diplomas and/or reinforcers are also thrown away. Watch for signs of disengagement and modify your sessions accordingly. Accepting and using feedback helps you grow professionally.

**Note**

For more information on drug interactions, you may want to refer to *Team Solutions, Workbook 7: Making Choices: Substances and You.*
There is a science experiment that uses raisins and a clear, bubbly soft drink. If you drop raisins into the bottom of a glass of soda, the bubbles from the drink will attach to the raisins. After a while, they will rise to the top of the glass. This science project is sometimes called dancing raisins, and it shows how two things can interact with each other to cause a reaction.

“Sometimes, different things may cause interactions with medications. Today we’re going to look at some of the things that could interact with medicines.”

“Do you think this information is something that may be helpful to you?”

“Let’s review the main points from our last session and answer the first six questions on the Topic Assessment before we start, just to see how familiar we are with this topic.”

**Topic Assessment Answer Key**

Review of Session 7:
Side Effects

Main Learning Points of Session 7
What were the main learning points of Session 7? If you did not attend the last session, you may guess, and also write the answers as people say them:

1. All m__________s can have side effects.
2. Many things can affect the way you r_______t to medicine.
3. Working with your t__________t team is the best way to solve problems with your medicine.
4. Using the Five Steps to Coping with Side Effects can help f___x problems you may have with your medicine.

Personal Practice Option Review:
What personal practice option(s) did you choose?
Did you complete your personal practice yet?

☐ 1. Yes. How did it go? ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

☐ 2. No. What got in the way of completing your practice?
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   If you still plan to complete your practice, when will you do it?
   ____________________________________________

☐ 3. I didn’t choose a personal practice option.
Topic Assessment

Mark one: □ Pre  □ Post

Your Score: + ____ out of 4

Directions:
1. Read each question carefully.
2. Read every answer before marking one.
3. Mark only one answer to each question.

Name: ____________________________________________

Date: __________________________

1. Over-the-counter medicines are mild and can be taken without concern.
   A. True    B. False

2. An example of a drug interaction when using alcohol and medicine is:
   A. Lethargy.
   B. Improved symptom control.
   C. Clearer thinking.
   D. Increased blood pressure.

3. Women of child-bearing age should talk to their prescribers about risks associated with medicines for mental disabilities.
   A. True    B. False

4. When someone gets medicines from more than one prescriber, each one needs to know all the medicines, and dosages, that the person is taking.
   A. True    B. False

5. I am confident I understand drug interactions and how to avoid them.

   □ Strongly Disagree  □ Disagree  □ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  □ Agree  □ Strongly Agree  □ Unsure
Topic Assessment

6. This information is important for me to know.

☐ Strongly Disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly Agree

At the end of the session, answer these questions before turning in this paper:

7. This session helped me.

☐ Strongly Disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly Agree

8. What I liked about this session: _________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

9. How this session could have been better for me: ________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________________
Drug Interactions

Objectives for this Session

1. Explain 2 ways to avoid serious drug interactions between prescription medicines.

2. Identify 1 way to avoid drug interactions between your medicine and over-the-counter medicines and herbal remedies.

3. Recognize 1 effect of alcohol or illegal drugs on medicines for mental illness.

One of the problems that can happen with medicine is when someone takes two or more drugs at the same time and has a bad reaction. There is usually no need to worry about this if you are taking the medicines the way your prescriber has told you to take them. But problems can happen when people start taking medicines their prescriber didn’t tell them to take. If you are getting medicine from more than one prescriber (such as your psychiatrist and your family doctor), be sure to tell each one about all of the medicines you’re taking.

Making a medicine card, like the one talked about in Session 6, can help you keep your medicine list up to date.

Main Learning Point #1

Show each prescriber an up-to-date list of all your medicines and their dosages.
Did you already know that prescription medicines can interact with each other?

If this was new to you, what will you do differently now that you know it?

Over-the-counter medicine and herbs can be bought without a prescription and may interact with your prescribed medicine. They can affect the way your medicine works. This can happen even with mild over-the-counter medicines or herbs—those sold in the supermarket, such as decongestants, memory aids, “male performance” aids and diet aids. Be sure to talk to your prescriber, nurse, or pharmacist before taking any over-the-counter medicine or herbs along with your medicine.

Did you already know that over-the-counter medicine or herbs can interact with prescription medicines?

If this was new to you, what will you do differently now that you know it?

A person taking medicine for mental illness also needs to know that caffeine can interact harmfully with their medicine. Caffeine can even trigger relapse. Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, soft drinks, chocolate, and many cold medicines (read the labels!). Choosing to avoid caffeine is a very good idea.

Main Learning Point #2

Check with your prescriber before taking any over-the-counter medicine or herbs.
Drug Interactions
(continued)

Drug Interactions with Alcohol and Illegal Drugs
Alcohol and illegal drugs are especially harmful when combined with medicines for psychiatric condition. They may not only increase symptoms directly, but they also block the way the medicine works, and they can also cause bad side effects, such as:

- Extreme drowsiness, no energy, and not alert (lethargy).
- Tremors (shaking), spasms, and involuntary muscle movements (moving of the body muscles when you are not trying to move them).
- Very low blood pressure, leading to dizziness and fainting.
- Symptoms that come back or get worse (because alcohol and illegal drugs can stop medicine from working).

**Did you already know that alcohol and illegal drugs can cause harmful interactions with your medicine?**

*If this was new to you, what will you do differently now that you know it?*

About Pregnancy and Medicine
Some of the medicines used to treat mental illness can cause birth defects in a developing baby. It's important for sexually active women of childbearing age to talk about possible pregnancy risks with their prescriber.

**Did you already know that medicines a pregnant woman takes can affect her baby?**

*If this was new to you, what will you do differently now that you know it?*
Review & Moving Forward

The main learning points of this session are:

1. ____________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________________________

Move Forward—Choose a Personal Practice Option

It's important to practice new knowledge and skills. What will you do between now and the next session? Please choose one option from the list below:

☐ 1. STUDY. I am going to reread my handout at least once.

☐ 2. SHARE. I will share my handout with someone in my support system. I will ask _____________________________ to read it and talk with me about it.

☐ 3. WRITE. I am going to write my personal story about avoiding or dealing with side effects.

☐ 4. OTHER: ________________________________________________________

Take an “Extra Step Forward” (optional)

☐ 5. PLAN AHEAD. I will make a card for my wallet that lists all of my prescribed medicines and over-the-counter medicines, including herbs and vitamins. I’ll include dosages for each. I’ll be very careful to keep it up-to-date and to show it to each prescriber when I have an appointment.
Test Your Knowledge Regarding Medicines for Mental Illness

Facilitator Notes

**Main Learning Points from last session:**

*Drug Interactions*

1. Show each prescriber an up-to-date list of all your medicines and their dosages.
2. Check with your prescriber before taking any over-the-counter medicines or herbs.
3. Avoid serious interactions with your medicine—avoid using alcohol or illegal drugs.
4. A woman of childbearing age who’s taking medicine for mental illness needs to talk about possible pregnancy risks with her prescriber.

**Review Personal Practice Options from last session.**

**Tips for this Session**

1. This is the last session of this workbook. Extend your best effort to make this a special event. If possible, invite a former participant who has moved his or her life forward and is a role model of successful recovery to make a brief speech and award certificates of completion. You may want to have the participants arrange for refreshments. If you have a way to give each participant a small gift, you may want to do so.

2. Involve the participants who are completing the workbook in the process of how they want to celebrate the achievement. Would they like to discuss what they found helpful in these materials or what was most meaningful to them? Maybe they would like to each make a short speech when they accept certificates of completion.

3. For the content in this session, you may want to make the “Test Yourself” into a “Family Feud”-like competition between two teams. Since graduation deserves extra time, you may want to have a small “contest” (no teams), with small prizes and applause going to the person getting the most correct answers.
Facilitator Notes (continued)

General Tip
If you are interested in an outcomes measurement for this workbook, you may want to consider using the Short-Form-12 Health Survey (John E. Ware, Jr., 1994, revised 1998) or the COOP Chart for Primary Care Practices (Eugene C. Nelson, 1987).

The Short-Form-12 Health Survey (John E. Ware, Jr., 1994, revised 1998) is an abbreviated version of the Short-Form-36 Health Survey. This survey has 7 questions (using Likert scales from 1-5) regarding the person’s views about their own health in the last four weeks. It addresses general health and how health affects the person’s physical activities and daily activities. It also addresses emotional issues and feelings and whether either physical or emotional health has interfered with social activities. The Short-Form correlates extremely well with the longer, 36-item health survey and offers a good way to gauge physical and emotional health. Cultural differences can create potential challenges in regards to the interpretation of questions and, ultimately, answers.

A heightened awareness by clinicians can increase the reliability of results.

The COOP scales (The Dartmouth/Northern New England Primary Care Cooperative Information Project) was developed to create a system to measure health status in physicians’ offices. One of the basic tenets of the charts is that the functioning of the person as a whole is more important than that of separate organ systems. You may have seen some of the graphic charts (e.g., the “face” charts to measure feelings). Other graphic charts measure daily activity levels, social activities, physical fitness, change in health, overall health, social support, and quality of life. These charts are widely used in studies and are found to have good reliability and high validity. They are rated as useful by high numbers of office staff and clients.

The editors believe these scales fit the content of this workbook well. These and other health measures can be found in McDowell, (2006).

Suggestion for Topic Introduction and Relevance to Participants

“Have you ever been misled by wrong information that you believed? Raise your hands if you have.”

“Unfortunately, people can make unwise choices by following folklore that seem to be common knowledge but are wrong. Just to give you one example [use your own or the following].”

“I know of a young woman who was told she should put her baby’s bottle under her pillow at night to have it easily available and at the right temperature for the middle-of-the-night feeding. The baby became very sick because the formula had grown bacteria. The baby got better, and that young mother learned from her doctor it was wrong information. This is an example that shows us that it is much better and safer to know the facts, not believe the myths.”

“Are there any myths about mental disorders? I see some heads nodding. There sure are! Today we’ll talk about some truths and some myths about mental illnesses. We’re going to do it an interesting way by taking a challenge to see if we can figure out what’s truth and what’s myth.”

“Let’s review the main points from our last session and answer the first six questions on the Topic Assessment before we start, just to see how familiar we are with this topic.”

Topic Assessment Answer Key


T – topic introduction
R – relevance to participant
I – identify objectives
M – materials for session
M – motivate to use
Main Learning Points of Session 8
What were the main learning points of Session 8? If you did not attend the last session, you may guess, and also write the answers as people say them:

1. Show each prescriber an up-to-date list of all your medicines and their d____________.
2. Check with your prescriber before taking any over-the-c____________r medicines or herbs.
3. Avoid serious interactions with your medicine—avoid using a_________l or illegal drugs.
4. A woman of childbearing age who’s taking medicine for a mental disorder needs to talk about possible p___________y risks with her prescriber.

Personal Practice Option Review:
What personal practice option(s) did you choose?
Did you complete your personal practice yet?

☐ 1. Yes. How did it go? ____________________________________________

☐ 2. No. What got in the way of completing your practice?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

If you still plan to complete your practice, when will you do it?

____________________________________________________________________

☐ 3. I didn’t choose a personal practice option.
# Topic Assessment

Mark one: □ Pre  □ Post

Your Score: + _____ out of 4

**Directions:**
1. Read each question carefully.
2. Read every answer before marking one.
3. Mark only one answer to each question.

Name: ____________________________________________

Date: ________________________________

1. Medicine can usually relieve or make symptoms better if a person is willing to keep trying different kinds of medicines until he or she finds the right one.
   A. True  B. False

2. For the best chance of getting better, I need to be a partner with my prescriber, reporting my symptoms and side effects.
   A. True  B. False

3. If I take my medicine as prescribed, there is no chance I will ever have a relapse.
   A. True  B. False

4. I can have psychotherapy (talk therapy) instead of taking medicine.
   A. True  B. False

5. I am confident I am able to recognize myths about mental illness that are not really true.

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree</th>
<th>Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
6. This information is important for me to know.

☐ Strongly Disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly Agree

At the end of the session, answer these questions before turning in this paper:

7. This session helped me.

☐ Strongly Disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly Agree

8. What I liked about this session: __________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

9. How this session could have been better for me: ____________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Test Your Knowledge About Medicines

Objectives for this Session

1. Identify 2 myths about mental illness.
2. Explain 2 or more important truths about mental illness.

Instructions:
Circle the best answer, either True or False. Be prepared to discuss your answer.

1. If you were taking a medicine in the past, and it didn’t help your symptoms, nothing else can be done.
   A. True   B. False

2. People who stop their medicine often end up back in the hospital.
   A. True   B. False

3. You shouldn’t need to take medicine if you are taking vitamins or seeing a therapist for psychotherapy, such as “talk therapy.”
   A. True   B. False

4. Even if you take your medicine every day, you might still have symptoms.
   A. True   B. False
Test Your Knowledge About Medicines
(continued)

Q1. If you were taking a medicine in the past, and it didn’t help your symptoms, nothing else can be done.

1. Answer: False. Even if one medicine has not worked for you, there is still hope. Many medicines are available, and research is being done all the time, offering more answers and hope. People respond differently to different medicines. Your prescriber may be able to suggest another medicine that may help you.

Main Learning Point #1
Consider trying as many different medicines (under your prescriber’s supervision) as it takes for you to feel your best.

Q2. People who stop their medicine often end up back in the hospital.

2. Answer: True. Unfortunately, this happens quite often. People who recover and even go back to work or school may think they’ve recovered completely, and they stop taking their medicine. Slowly, their symptoms return, but they don’t notice their symptoms in time. They become very sick and must go back to the hospital. You’re much less likely to relapse when you take your medicine every day as prescribed.

Main Learning Point #2
It’s best to keep taking your medicine as directed by your prescriber to keep from getting sick again.
Q3. You shouldn’t need to take medicine if you are taking vitamins or seeing a therapist for psychotherapy, such as “talk therapy.”

3. **Answer: False.** Even if you’re taking vitamins or seeing a therapist, you may still need to take your medicine every day as prescribed. Without your medicine, the brain chemicals may get out of balance. And your symptoms will probably come back within a few weeks.

Q4. Even if you take your medicine every day, you might still have symptoms.

4. **Answer: True.** You may have some symptoms that just won’t disappear (called “residual symptoms”) even when you take your medicine the right way. Sometimes you may need to go to the hospital even though you’ve taken your medicine correctly. Although this is disappointing, know that your symptoms might have been worse if you hadn’t taken your medicine. If this has happened to you, talk to your prescriber about whether you should consider using a different medicine. If you are having symptoms that don’t go away, be sure to tell your prescriber about them. There may be other ways to manage these symptoms—ways you and your prescriber may not have talked about yet.
Test Your Knowledge About Medicines
(continued)

Finding the Medicine and Dosage That’s Best for You
Many medicines used to treat mental illness are similar to each other. They work in similar ways. However, each person may react differently to medicines. One medicine may work better for your symptoms than another. One medicine may cause fewer side effects for you compared to other medicines you’ve tried in the past.

Keep working with your prescriber. Let him or her know if you’re feeling better, or if you’re having problems with your medicine. Together, you and your prescriber can make the best possible decisions for your treatment—so you can feel your best.

Best wishes to you as you continue your recovery journey!
Review & Moving Forward

The **main learning points** of this session are:

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 

**Move Forward—Choose a Personal Practice Option**

It’s important to practice new knowledge and skills. Although this is the last session in this workbook, you may still want to practice this important subject. Please choose one option from the list below:

- **1. STUDY.** I am going to reread my handout at least once.
- **2. SHARE.** I will share my handout with someone in my support system. I will ask ________________ to read it and talk with me about my medicines.
- **3. DISCUSS.** I have decided to talk with my prescriber about my residual symptoms.
- **4. OTHER:** ________________

**Take an “Extra Step Forward” (optional)**

- **5. WRITE.** I am going to write down how I plan to stay in recovery.

*Celebrate the completion of this workbook.*
Certificate of Achievement

is presented to

for completion of

Understanding Your Treatment

Facilitator

Date
**References**


