Recovery Inspired Assault Prevention
Decreasing Aggression through the Active Application of Recovery Principles

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Overview of the Presentation
This Presentation will present an approach to assault prevention that is built around the application of various principles and concepts related to recovery.

Any elements of this approach can be incorporated into existing programs.

Learning Objectives:

- Explain the relationship between aggression and interpersonal dynamics particularly power and apply this to specific case examples.
- Identify three approaches to decreasing assault through the application of Recovery Principles and how to apply these approaches in a variety of practice settings.
- Practice having a conversation with an individual related to crisis prevention and work in a group to complete an actual crisis prevention plan.

Decreasing or Eliminating Assault by Creating a “Culture of Recovery” in our Behavioral Health Programs

The philosophy of this approach is a core belief that assault can be prevented through the active application of recovery principles.

Disclosure
I would like to disclose the following:
- I am a consultant with RST Recovery Consulting.
- Services within this company include providing training related to the model entitled: Recovery-Inspired Assault Prevention.
- Some of the information contained in this presentation reflects this model.
- Information included in this presentation can be cited as: Sabrina Cito, 2011.

What Is Recovery Inspired Assault Prevention?
A series of ideas that can be applied to assault prevention that is built on the assumption that by changing the environments in which we provide treatment we can eliminate or significantly decrease assaulitive behavior.
Numerous definitions of recovery have been presented in the literature. One such definition comes from the work of William Anthony. Anthony (1993) identifies recovery as “a deeply personal, unique process of changing one’s attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills and/or roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful, and contributing life even with limitations caused by the illness. Recovery involves the development of new meaning and purpose in one’s life as one grows beyond the catastrophic effects of mental illness.”

- Recovery is person-driven
- Recovery occurs via many pathways
- Recovery is holistic
- Recovery is supported by peers and allies
- Recovery is supported through relationships and social networks

SAMSHA: Guiding Principles of Recovery

- Listening with a genuine desire to hear and understand.
- Recognition of the impact of our current treatment culture that takes power away from individuals.
- Recognizing our own role in creating a recovery focus and shifting the lens through which we view mental health treatment and individuals with mental health challenges.

SAMSHA: Guiding Principles of Recovery Continued....

- Recovery is culturally-based and influenced
- Recovery is supported by addressing trauma
- Recovery involves individual, family and community strength and responsibility
- Recovery is based on respect
- Recovery emerges from hope

Recovery Sets An Expectation for an Environment Without Assault and Aggression

One of the most common myths in mental health is that individuals with psychiatric and mental health challenges are violent and that assault is “just part of the job.”

This creates a culture where aggression and assault are expected and part of the “norm”
Multiple Programs Currently Exist that Teach Principles of Assault Management and Prevention

Some of these include Pro-ACT, CPI, Mandt, Safety Cares, and Handle with Care.

Common Features of Existing Programs for Violence Prevention and Management

In a review of 28 programs, Farrell and Cubit (2005) found that the common features of these programs include use of restraints and seclusion and pharmacologic management of aggression.

In Workplace Violence APNA 2008 Position Statement

Awareness of Power Dynamics

- Relationship between Feelings of Powerlessness and Aggression
- Recognition of Power Struggles
- Cultures of Coercion and Control
- Attitudes towards individuals with mental health challenges

Group Exercise

Talk with one other person about your experience of power in your treatment setting.

Do all individuals feel as if they are empowered in the current system? What are some power struggles that you have observed in your current setting?

Key Areas related to Assault Prevention built on Recovery Principles

Dynamics of Recovery–Inspired Assault Prevention

Values

Attitudes

Behavior and Actions
Our Attitudes are Shaped by our Values

Examples of Values:
- Recovery
- Wellness
- Compliance or Adherence
- Respect and Dignity
- Self-Determination
- Control

Dignity and Respect are Values that Influence Attitudes and are Reflected in Behavior and Actions

What are some examples of situations in our programs or interactions that suggest the absence of dignity and respect?

Attitudes Impact Interactions

Our attitudes influence how we behave with individuals and thereby how we interact with them.

How do you reflect your attitudes in your behavior and your actions?

Recovery Inspired Assault Prevention is about Changing Program Values

Values that permeate a recovery culture reflect principles of choice-making, self-responsibility and self-determination.

When we incorporate these values into our practice, we change the interactional dynamics that occur between staff and the individual served.

So... How does this relate to Violence and Aggression?

Our attitudes impact our choices and how we interpret situations and respond.

Our response to individuals’ behavior may result in violence or aggression.

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When we incorporate these values into our practice, we change the interactional dynamics that occur between staff and the individual served.

Recovery Inspired Assault Prevention

Engaging
Empowering
Encouraging
Educating
Engaging: Value, Attitude and Action

Engaging is about putting the "human component" into our interactions. It is about listening with a true desire to understand and valuing the person's unique experience.

- Engaging occurs when we value the individual as a human being.
- Working with people with an "attitude of engagement".
- Engaging is an action, a way of being with people.

Actions and Behaviors that Take Power Away from Individuals

- "Get up and take your medication"
- "You need to take a shower"
- "Time to get up and go to group"
- "The treatment team will make that decision and decide when you are ready for discharge"
- "That is part of your treatment plan"
- "Do you want me to call more staff"

The "Value" of Empowering

What does it mean to "Empower" an individual?
How does this fit into a Recovery Culture?
Do our attitudes and actions reflect an understanding of empowerment?

Encouraging Individuals to Reach Their Full Potential and Live the Life of Their Hopes and Dreams

- When we encourage individuals, we reflect a value system related to recovery.
- This value creates an attitude of hopefulness.
- Our behavior and actions reflect the value and attitude of hopefulness and we behave in ways that awaken hope in individuals.

Power Struggles

Power Struggles result from our values and our attitudes.

Our attitudes and values are manifest in our behavior and our actions.

Examples of Power Struggles: Individuals refusing groups, use of the phone, not following program rules

Encouraging and Empowering: Relationship to Violence and Aggression

Violence is a way to regain power for individuals.

When we share power and partner with individuals on their recovery journeys, we change the interactional dynamics that result in power struggles.
Educating Individuals to Promote a Recovery Culture and Prevent/Eliminate Assault and Violence

Educating is an Action and Behavior that evolves from seeing the value of each individual and an attitude of hopefulness.

Crisis Prevention Plans

When we work with individuals to develop Crisis Prevention Plans, we communicate the value of prevention and partnering.

Our attitude reflects this value and communicates to the individual "I am here to work with you and support and you have the power to make choices."

Teaching Choice-Making Skills: Translating Recovery Values and Attitudes into Action

Educating individuals about the recovery process and a model for effective choice-making is central to this model of assault prevention.

Violence and Aggression are choices. Staff behaviors and actions that precipitate violence are choices.

Crisis Prevention Planning Utilizes all of the Components of the Model of Recovery Inspired Assault Prevention

- Engaging occurs in the development of the plan with the individual
- Empowering occurs when we acknowledge the role of individual choices in preventing aggression
- Encouraging occurs when we work with the individual to recognize that he or she can get needs met without violence.
- Educating occurs when we teach choice-making skills to the individual.

A Crisis Prevention Plan is a Concrete Representation of the Values, Attitudes and Dynamics of Recovery Inspired Assault Prevention

Crisis Prevention Plans Empower All Individuals in the Program including the Staff

Staff have choices as well ... We choose how we respond to situations, what our attitude is towards the individuals that we work with, what choices we offer to individuals, and our willingness to be flexible with people.
Part of Recovery is allowing individuals the opportunity to learn to make choices based upon the available information.

Staff and individuals being treated in the program have an opportunity for choice-making in deciding whether or not to use a Crisis Prevention Plan.

Identification of Triggers
Early Warning Signs
Coping Skills and Preferences
Description of What Does Not Work and What Makes the Situation Worse
Support the Individual Wants at Times of Crisis

Choose one person to work with on this activity.
One person assumes the role of the staff and the other is the individual who has just been admitted to the program.
Following the format on the handout provided, begin a dialogue to complete a crisis prevention plan.
Be aware of your use of language and note opportunities to teach choice-making skills.

What did you notice in this exercise?
Where did you see opportunities for choice-making?
As a staff member, how did it feel to engage in this conversation?
For the individual who assumed the role of the person in the program, what did the experience feel like?

Recovery above all else is about the human interaction that occurs between program staff and the individual experiencing mental health challenges.
Keys to Creating and Sustaining a Recovery Culture

- An attitude of hopefulness
- Valuing power awareness
- Behaviors and actions that encourage the individual to find meaning in his or her life and identify who they are separate from the "illness."

Next Steps: Implementation

As providers, we need to learn to value relationships, have an attitude of partnership and act in a way that promotes a culture of engagement where relationships are built upon dignity and respect with a recognition of power awareness.

References

