a little conversation about recovery

once upon a time...

used to be, we didn’t think people with mental illness could get better

they were just that odd relative or they lived in an institution

now we know better

people with mental illness can recover…
recovery is...

a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

SAMHSA, 2011

can you break that down a little for me?

sure....

recovery is a process of change...

so people change and grow as they recover

what else?

in recovery, they improve their health and wellness

this is about the whole person, which is called holistic...

that includes mind, body, spirit and community
and…

in recovery, people live a self-directed life.

That means people must accept responsibility and be in charge of their lives and their recovery as much as they are able.

is there more?

in recovery, people strive to reach their full potential.

This means doing all the things that bring back meaning, quality and joy to their life.

this is pretty interesting…

SAMHSA gave us something else to think about – 4 dimensions of recovery.
what are they?

1) health
2) home
3) purpose
4) community

let’s look at each of these...

health – overcoming or managing one’s illness as well as living in a physically and emotionally healthy way

this includes healthy choices like exercise, diet, not smoking, and not using alcohol or drugs

second...

home – a safe and stable place to live

without a safe place to live, recovery is almost unthinkable
third…

**purpose** – meaningful daily activities and the independence, income and resources to participate in society

these can include job, school, volunteering, hobbies, and creative expression

fourth…

**community** – relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, and hope

one important kind of support is **peer support**, or learning from others who are also in recovery

I like that part about hope…

yes, because recovery emerges from hope

the opposite of hopeful is hopeless

can you have a great recovery if you are hopeless?
is that all?
couple of more things from SAMHSA…
recovery addresses trauma
that includes abuse, exposure to
disasters, combat, violence, etc.

and…
recovery is influenced by the person’s
culture
each person has values, traditions and
beliefs that are important to
understand

what else is important?
this may be one of the MOST important
things...
recovery is about finding each person’s
strengths and building on them
what do you mean by strengths?

things like housing, income, social support, access to health care, transportation, ability to communicate, literacy, motivation, talents, and many more!

there's one more thing...

recovery is based on respect

remember the Golden Rule?

(treat others as you would want to be treated)

so recovery looks different to each person?

absolutely

each person will travel a different path on their journey of recovery

there will be bumps, detours, even a landslide or two
this is all great but...

how can I help someone with their recovery?

remember the power of you

you help someone in their recovery...

when you provide support

when you smile and encourage them

when you reassure them things will get better

so I’m like a superhero?

yes, your powers to help others are amazing

but you must always use them for good

for just as we can heal, we can also hurt if we aren’t careful
did you say hurt?
if we label someone with their illness, it can cause hurt and slow down their recovery
this can also increase stigma, a negative mindset about having a mental illness

so what to say?
use person-first language
instead of “Jim is a schizophrenic,” say “Jim has schizophrenia”
say “Carla has bipolar disorder,” not “Carla’s bipolar”

more examples
say “intellectual disability,” not “MR”
say “borderline personality disorder,” not “borderline”
say “has a mental illness,” not “mentally ill” or “crazy”
what other examples can you think of?

“Words are important. If you want to care for something, you call it a “flower.” If you want to kill something, you call it a “weed.”

- Don Coyhis

what else can I do?

EXPECT recovery

EXPECT people to do more than they believe they can do

EXPECT people to get involved in their recovery plan