Orienting Veterans to SST Groups

VA Psychosocial Rehabilitation Training Program
June 16, 2014
Two Key Components of SST

1. Initial individualized goal setting session

2. Group Social Skills sessions
Individual Goal Setting Session

• Benefits
  – Helps with engagement, building rapport
  – Prepares Veterans for what to expect in a skills training group
  – Links SST to recovery
  – Uses Veteran’s goals to select curriculum, set up meaningful role plays, develop home assignments
  – Helps Veterans track their progress towards goals
Guideline for Individual Sessions

• Obtain informed consent for audio taping

• Overview
  – Introduction of group leaders
  – Discuss purpose of group; how different from other groups

• Discuss the format of the group (homework review, skill introduction, role plays, feedback, homework)

• Discuss group expectations
Guideline for Individual Sessions (cont’d)

• Review components of recovery

• Review 4 quality of life domains and select most important

• Together, identify a long-term goal and a SST goal

• If group leader is in VA-PRT program have Veteran complete the outcomes questionnaire
Audio Consents

• MUST use if audio recordings will be done with Veterans as part of VA-PRT Program

• Must complete BEFORE recording the individual session
Overview and Group Format

• Purpose of the group
  – SST will help Veterans achieve recovery goals
  – What SST *is*; what SST *is not*

• Format of the group
  – Emphasis on role plays
  – Discuss the role of positive feedback
  – Importance of at home practice
Group Expectations

- Please stay on the group topic
- Only one person may speak at a time
- No name-calling or cursing
- No criticizing or making fun of each other
- No eating or drinking in group
- No cell phones on during the class
- Others?
Components of Recovery

• Review recovery components using the Recovery Wheel
  – Hope
  – Self-Respect
  – Empowerment
  – Holistic
  – Non-Linear
  – Strengths

• SST can help Veterans reach recovery goals
Individual Goal Setting

• Sources: Veteran, providers, treatment plans, others

• Help the Veteran to set SMART goals
  – Specific
  – Measurable
  – Achievable
  – Relevant
  – Time-Bound

• See the Initial Individual Session Guide for more details
Individual Goal Setting

• Points to remember
  – Collaborative
  – Use questions
    • Open-ended vs. yes/no
    • Previous experience
    • Use curriculum
  – Goals related to social skills
  – No goals -- try again later
Example of a Social Goal

Long-term (Meaningful) Goal: I will obtain a full-time paying job.

Goal for end of the SST group: I will find a part-time volunteer job.
Example of a Social Goal

Steps for achieving goal:

• Attend SST group biweekly and practice skills taught in group, including interviewing for a job.

• Research and prepare a list of possible volunteer locations. Decide which volunteer locations seem most promising.

• Prepare a list of questions for a volunteer coordinator.

• Contact volunteer coordinator and ask questions from list about opportunities.

• Prepare for volunteer interviews (if required) by practicing mock interviews with case manager and then attend the interviews.

See the Initial Individual Session Guide for more examples
Monitoring Goals

- Measures progress
- Veteran choice in altering/removing goals
- Helps clarify when Veterans complete group
- Veteran will complete a SST Goal Tracking Sheet during their post-treatment follow-up meeting with you
Selecting a Curriculum

Goal—Getting a Part-Time Volunteer Job

• Skills emphasized
  – Listening to Others (Basic skills)
  – Expressing Positive Feelings (Basic skills)
  – Making Requests (Basic skills)
  – Expressing Unpleasant Feelings (Basic skills)
  – Asking for Information (Assertiveness)
  – Asking for Help (Assertiveness)
  – Interviewing for a Job (Job skills)
Resources

• SST Initial Individual Session Guide

• Social Skills Orientation for Clients Handout

• SST website:
  http://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn5/training/social_skills.asp