



Your Personal
Recovery Journey

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

Hope and Optimism



Welcome back.

Review of today's topic:



Hope and Optimism

- What is Hope?
- How can I nurture hope?
- What is optimism and how can I build and maintain it?

Review: What should I do if something triggers me during this module?

We encourage everyone to honor their own needs as they participate in this program. If at any point you feel triggered, overwhelmed, or just in need of a moment to care for yourself, please feel free to step out, take a breath, or use any self-care methods that work for you. Returning to the group is always welcome and there is no pressure to explain. Our priority is creating a safe and supportive space for each of us. Please also let the facilitator know if you need any additional support.

So, let's get started!



What is hope?

We have all hoped for things in our life. For example, some of us may have hoped to pass an exam in school; some of us may hope that we can have coffee with a friend on the weekend; or someone may hope their broken foot heals soon.

Hope has been described as an “elevating feeling we experience when we see...a path to a better future”.¹ Hope also has been described as “having an actual, reasonable vision of what things could look like if they were to improve”.²

Feeling hopeful can
change everything!

1. Jerome Groopman. The anatomy of hope: How people prevail in the face of illness. 2004. Random House: New York, New York, USA

2. A Road to Recovery, Mark Ragins, M.D. 2002.

EXERCISE

What does hope feel like?

Let's reflect on this art work and write down some of our thoughts on the next page.



Artwork Title: Hope
Artist: Nigel Bart

EXERCISE

What does hope feel like?

Let's talk about this piece of art... What do you see in this artwork that could awaken a feeling of hope in you/in someone? What does hope **feel** like to you, or if you can't feel hopeful right now, what do you **imagine** or **remember** hope feels like?

What is hope?

(continued)



Feeling the first sparks of hope can create “a source of energy that helps us move forward and see the possibilities ahead”.³ Hope can energize us to reclaim our identity, connect with others, empower ourselves, and find meaning.

Hope is not just a feeling, it’s an action and it’s a choice! It has also been described as a skill that we can develop by setting goals and moving toward them. Being hopeful doesn’t mean thinking that everything will always be just great. It doesn’t ignore the difficulties that we may experience but it is a belief that something good is possible—and that we have some control over our future.

It can be difficult to hope for something better ahead when today feels bad. Sometimes, others around us – family, friends, service providers – can hold hope for us, especially when we are not able to feel hopeful ourselves. When we feel hopeless, we tend to isolate ourselves, yet nurturing hope asks us to do the opposite...to reach out, to connect, to build relationships for healing.⁴

For some of us, hope may be connected to our spiritual beliefs and practices. Historically, hopefulness has had a strong spiritual dimension to it. Our spiritual beliefs, whatever they are, can sometimes help us to develop a more hopeful outlook.

3. J. Holder 2007

4. Nikki Rollo, PhD LMFT, Center for Change, Cultivating Hope in Recovery (www.centerforchange.com/cultivating-hope-in-recovery/)

There are many studies that have considered the impact of hope on recovery. For example, "research has demonstrated that individuals with higher levels of hope tend to recover faster from chronic mental illnesses and experience fewer relapses. Other studies have highlighted the role of hope in enhancing resilience and promoting positive behavioral changes..."⁵

In the context of recovery

- Hope is often the beginning of recovery.
- You can nurture hope by seeing how you can have more active control over your life and by seeing how others have found a path forward.⁶
- Hope is empowering!
- With hope, we start seeing and feeling possibilities!

5. Indiana Centre for Recovery (www.treatmentindiana.com/resources/mental-health/hope-and-healing-in-mental-health-recovery/)

6. The Recovery College (Greenwich)/Bridge 86 Ltd 2020. CHIME Workbooks, Hope and Optimism Workbook (www.therecoveryplace.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/2.-Hope-Optimism-Workbook.pdf)

Let's watch a video on how to feel more hopeful.



Video to be played by your facilitator during the module.



VIDEO

Created by: Jeremy Goodwin, Let's Talk About Mental Health
Video link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQdxThCZbn4

EXERCISE

Reflecting on hope.⁷

Think about this, write it down, and share with others if you wish.

What does hope mean to you? How do you define hopefulness?

What makes you feel hopeful?

If you cannot or do not feel hopeful right now, what kinds of things do others around you (e.g. family, friends) hope for?

7. Borrowed and adapted from The Recovery College (Greenwich)/Bridge 86 Ltd 2020. CHIME Workbooks, Hope and Optimism Workbook (www.therecoveryplace.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/2.-Hope-Optimism-Workbook.pdf)

EXERCISE

Reflecting on hope.⁷

Think about this, write it down, and share with others if you wish.

Who in your life holds hope for you and how do they express that hope?

If your experiences were one of your friend's, what would you be hopeful for, for them?

What is your spiritual experience of hope, if any?

7. Borrowed and adapted from The Recovery College (Greenwich)/Bridge 86 Ltd 2020. CHIME Workbooks, Hope and Optimism Workbook (www.therecoveryplace.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/2.-Hope-Optimism-Workbook.pdf)

How can I nurture hopefulness?



It is easy for people to say, “be hopeful” or “don’t give up hope”, but what if we find it hard to be hopeful?

First, it is okay to acknowledge if it is difficult to be hopeful right now. Sometimes it is, and that is okay.

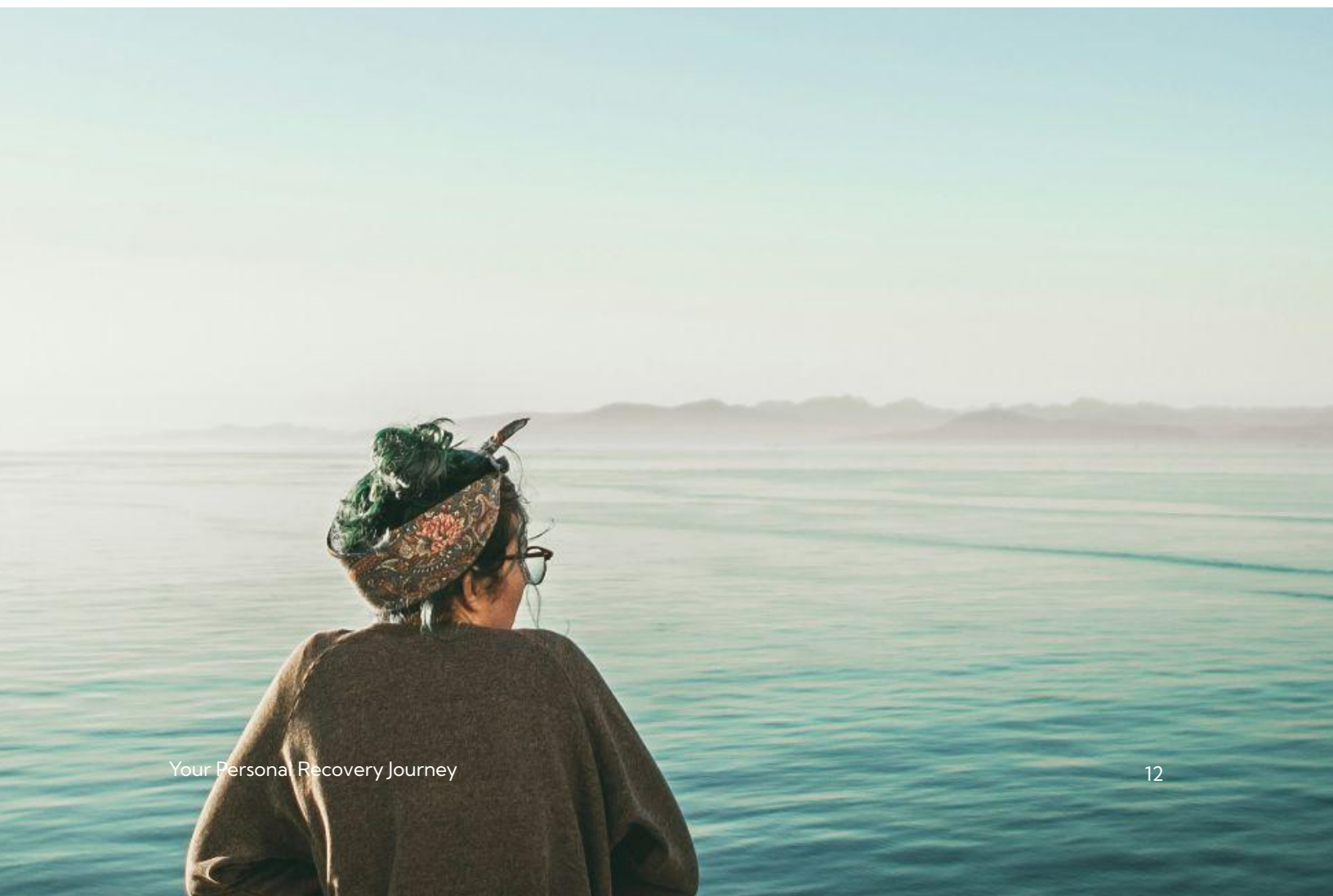
Are there things that we can do to nurture hopefulness?⁸

- You can start by giving yourself permission to feel hopeful. Sometimes feeling hopeless about the future can become our comfort zone; it can be a comfortable feeling so even thinking about being “hopeful” can seem unfamiliar or discomfoting. If we can challenge ourselves to allow hopeful feelings, it can be the spark that illuminates our path.
- Set one attainable goal. It is okay to start with just one. Having a shower or phoning a friend... any goal that you develop is a good place to begin!
- Call on your supporters. They are your team. Most people find it helpful to have people supporting them toward their goals. In trust, share your goal with people that you know will be cheering you on – family, friends, service providers – if you feel comfortable.
- Seek out relatable success stories. Hearing others in your situation talk about how they nurtured hope in their lives throughout their recovery journeys can stir hopeful feelings in us.⁹ It can remind us of our own personal power. Find those people, those stories, and listen to them.

8. Some points taken from and/or adapted from “How to Cultivate Hope When You Don’t Have Any” Angela Haupt, October 30, 2023, TIME Magazine.

9. Holder J. 2007.

- Bounce back from setbacks. This sounds easier said than done. This is sometimes referred to as resilience and it is something that we can practice. Managing our stress, self-care, and learning acceptance are some ways that we can bounce back from difficult or even traumatic experiences. (See resources at the end of this module.)
- We all have strengths, but it is so easy to focus on our weaknesses. Take the time to think about your own unique strengths. (Examples: Can I bake? Can I advocate for myself? Am I honest? Can I do crossword puzzles well?)
- Focus on gratitude. Gratitude, or feeling grateful for even small things, like having a good support system, or seeing the sun shining, can help us feel positive – it helps us to focus on the positive things in our life. Make a list of things you are grateful for each day!



Let's watch a personal recovery story video about hope.



Video to be played by your facilitator during the module.



VIDEO

Created by: Schizophrenia Society of Canada, ColCon Productions

Video link: player.vimeo.com/video/1063685077

Discussion: Share thoughts about the video if you wish. For example, how did hearing Don's story about hope make you feel? What inspired you about Don's story? How does this video fit with your experience of hope or struggling with hope?

EXERCISE

Nurturing hope.

When you are practicing hope, what does that look like?

Did you know that this is what nurturing hope is?

Can you think of an experience that made you feel hopeful?

What is it like hearing yourself talk about hope?

A few notes on optimism.



Optimism is having a positive thought pattern. It is believing that things are going to be okay. Sometimes optimism is described as seeing the glass half full instead of half empty. It is seeing the bright side of things.

Sometimes it is difficult to see the bright side of things and to stop negative thoughts. Reframing what we are thinking can help us to screen out thoughts that are unhelpful and find a different way of looking at things. Challenging negative thoughts and replacing them with positive ones can help us reframe our perspective.

For example, a negative thought might be "My friend didn't answer my text. They don't like me." Reframing that thought might sound like: "My friend hasn't answered my text yet. I guess they must be busy at the moment. I'll wait a bit longer to hear from them." Reframing involves identifying the negative thought, questioning it, and replacing it with a more helpful thought. Practicing this can help us to become more optimistic in our day to day lives.

There are some resources at the end of this module that can be used to help teach our brains how to think more positively. We can also get help from peer support workers and other mental health providers for guidance with this technique.

EXERCISE

Reframing negative thoughts.

Let's take some time here today to think about a negative thought that we may have or have had recently. Now through questioning or challenging your thought pattern about it, reframe that thought into something that is more helpful and optimistic.

Write this down and reflect on how you can continue this practice to inspire and cultivate optimism in your life.

Wrap up and “what did I get from this module?”



Closing reflections and outstanding questions.

Reminder to take some time to review the ways that you can nurture hope in your life that we learned in today’s module: set one attainable goal for yourself that you want to work toward; make a list of your strengths; seek out relatable success stories on the internet or in your community.

What are some ways that you can visually remind yourself of hope and optimism and use it for your day-to-day inspiration?

Additional reflections you can do at home.

If you have access to photos on your phone or elsewhere (e.g. in a magazine, etc.), find a photo that reflects hope to you. Hang it somewhere, along with your personal recovery statement. Draw/paint a picture of what hope feels like to you and put it on your wall...etc.



See below for additional resources and support:



The Healing Power of Hope (Psychology Today)

Being hopeful can improve mental health treatment outcomes.

VISIT WEBSITE →



Self-care Simplified

Why it's essential and how to make it happen.

VISIT WEBSITE →



Stress Management

What happens when you are stressed?

VISIT WEBSITE →



BounceBack Reclaim Your Health (Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario)

10 things you can do right now to reduce anxiety, stress, and worry related to world events or other stressors

VIEW PDF →



Learning about Reframing (Alberta Health)

Thought reframing is a skill taught in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

VISIT WEBSITE →



These resources can be accessed electronically through the online participant workbooks available at your yourpersonalrecoveryjourney.ca

See below for additional resources and support:



The Power of Positive: Reframing a Negative Outlook (Brown Health University)

Studies have shown that positive thinking patterns can have an impact on your mental and physical health.

VISIT WEBSITE



Reframing Negative Thoughts (Calm)

Learn how to stop your negative thoughts through challenging and reframing the unhelpful chatter.

VISIT WEBSITE



Hope

A video about Hope developed by Greg Hodge.

WATCH VIDEO



These resources can be accessed electronically through the online participant workbooks available at your yourpersonalrecoveryjourney.ca

Thank you for participating in this module.

Please **fill in an evaluation** at the end of each module!

Your facilitator will provide you with an evaluation form at the end of each module, or send one to you electronically following each module.

The Schizophrenia Society of Canada would like to acknowledge and thank the Your Personal Recovery Journey Advisory Committee for their meaningful and thoughtful co-creation of the ideas and information contained in these workbooks. An abundance of gratitude to committee members Greg Hodge, Katrina Tinman-Dubois, Allison Dunning, Cam Webster, Maria Alvarez, Joe Veres, Leif Harris, and Ernie Bart for the time, effort, and heart that they put into this important project. Special thanks to Greg and Katrina for their additional direction as a sub-committee as well. And many, many thanks to Fran Schellenberg, who has been a leader of leaders in the mental health movement in Manitoba for over 25 years, for her visionary leadership on this project, under the always capable and caring guidance of Dr. Chris Summerville, CEO of the Schizophrenia Society of Canada and who has been involved in the schizophrenia recovery movement for over 30 years.

The Schizophrenia Society of Canada would also like to acknowledge the important work of the Recovery Research Team in developing the CHIME Framework, on which this program is based. Special thanks to Dr. Mike Slade for his expertise and passion which has guided us all in the vision of recovery in significant and meaningful ways. (<https://www.researchintorecovery.com>), first published in: Leamy M, Bird V, Le Boutillier C, Williams J, Slade M (2011) Conceptual framework for personal recovery in mental health: systematic review and narrative synthesis, British Journal of Psychiatry, 199, 445–452.