

Fall 2011 PRRC Course Catalog

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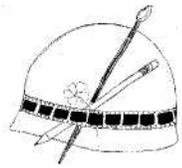
The purpose of this group is to provide a meeting place for veterans who served during the First Gulf War through OEF/OIF/Afghanistan. We will address themes and needs specific to this age group. Class will focus on recovery goals, peer support, self-advocacy and identifying barriers to recovery. An important topic will be community integration, both outside the VA in the larger community and inside the VA culture. Veterans will receive support on how to best navigate the large VA Hospital system. The group will offer a safe place to explore thoughts, emotions, strengths, and social resources available to young veterans as they transition back into society.

Anger Management.



Learn ways to avoid letting anger take control of your interactions. Avoid becoming angry in the first place and learn to recognize warning signs early and take measures to defuse tense encounters. The hope is that the veterans will decrease their overall arousal, feel they have more control over the challenging events in their lives, and be less likely to act in ways that either take them further from their goals or lead them to feel worse about themselves.

Veterans' Art Guild.



Veterans work on their self-determined art projects in this art productivity class: 1) To take action steps toward full citizenship and community integration through the creative arts; 2) To visualize and actualize recovery goals through individual veterans' chosen means of artistic expression; 3) To improve physical stamina, manual dexterity and task-focused cognitive/affective processing; 4) To improve social skills by discussing and planning community integration around shared interests of class members; 5) To reduce stigma and isolation that may lead to relapse. Creative Arts Therapy staff and volunteers support mindfulness and problem-solving skills while encouraging Veterans in creating their art for exhibits in the community and the VA.

Art of Life.



Art therapy has a long history of helping people get better through the action of art-making. Art is a powerful tool to identify and process unresolved emotions that there may be no words for in talk therapy, but that get in the way of recovery. Class exercises help students refocus attention away from fears, pain and rumination into healthier engagement in expressive painting, line drawing, pastels, storyboards and collage. Students bring non-verbal thought and feeling patterns to awareness, improving their emotional expression, creating visual "maps" to their recovery goals.

Back in Shape.



This class will use a variety of techniques to encourage people to integrate into the community and further their journey of recovery. We will be talking together about aspects of recovery that can help one achieve meaningful roles. Part of the class will involve walking various trails to increase exercise and awareness of our healthy living and how we can better interact with the environment.



Brainstorm.

This class will introduce you to some basics about your brain and some strategies to boost your brain power. We will also explore the impact of a variety of mental illnesses on your cognition.



Community Integration.

Community integration refers to the right and opportunity to live, study, work, and recreate in the community, alongside and in the same manner as people without disabilities. This class uses a person-centered approach to make plans for community integration built upon each student's dreams, fears, interests, and needs.



Coping Through the Senses.

Success oriented experiences that will help students develop skills that will enable them to tolerate distress. This class will help students learn to create a refuge from the stimulation of daily life.



Coping with Voices.

This class teaches a number of different and helpful behavioral strategies to cope with hearing voices (or other auditory hallucinations or intrusive negative thoughts). Participants will get a chance to practice each strategy in class and will be encouraged to “put it to the test” in their daily lives. Veterans will also get a chance to discuss their experiences managing auditory hallucinations or intrusive negative thoughts in a supportive environment with peers who share similar experiences.



Dual Recovery.

This class focuses on alcohol and substance abuse recovery as it relates to mental health recovery. Class will discuss veterans' recovery process, and get feedback from one another. Facilitator of this class is in recovery and has a dual diagnosis himself. The basis of the class is that recovery is possible.



Eating Right.

Empower yourself to make new and healthy changes to your diet! Learn about the super star foods and ways to incorporate them into easy, low cost meals. Find out the best food sources for vitamins and minerals. You will learn your body fat percentage and find out what this number means to your overall health. In addition we will discuss, 'Nutrition' in the news and how it relates to you.



Ending Self Stigma.

The goal of this class is to help individuals who are living with serious mental illness overcome internalized stigma, and move towards goals that important to them. The class is based on cognitive-behavioral therapy and recovery approaches, with an emphasis on the cultivation of the self “outside mental illness.” Key topics include: stigma and stereotypes, internalization and automatic thoughts, strengthening the self, dealing with discriminatory behavior, and increasing connection with others.



Family Support.

Open to caregivers, family members, and significant others of consumers of mental health services. The class will provide a forum for education and discussion of various aspects of living with a person with severe mental illness: medications, side effects, symptomatology, and pathology.



Get a Move On!

Did you know physical activity lowers stress, decreases blood pressure, and increases flexibility? Your body does not only need food and sleep to function properly but physical exercise as well! Come engage in a variety of weekly movement activities, multiple movement techniques will be implemented. Physical exercise greatly benefits mental health.



Goal Setting.

Utilizing handouts, personal calendars, and PDA's, this group focuses on setting personal short-term and long-term goals while participating in PRRC programs.



Health and Wellness.

In our society, health information and wellness recommendations change so quickly that it is difficult to keep up with the most current information. This class is designed to address a variety of health issues common to our veteran population and discuss the health outcomes from some of our life style choices. The focus will be on learning strategies to improve health status without putting excessive time and effort into it.



Healthy, Hopeful, and Wise.

Introducing a new PRRC class to help educate veterans on the dangers of obesity and some simple lifestyle changes to reduce their risk injury from associated health problems. This will be a series of classes that address separate health issues, teach some ways to change favorite recipes to be more health conscious, teach skills to plan healthy and tasty meals. We will also be collecting recipes for a veteran cookbook.



Heart of Recovery.

Are you ready to recover? This class will explore your readiness to recover while helping to prepare you for the development of meaningful recovery plans that will allow you to design and build a life of your choosing.



Hope, Transcendence, and Recovery.

Hope is seen as integral to recovery in all contexts, and is not the same as optimism. It is more related to faith and concepts of spirituality. Transcendence is also seen as key, and allows for the idea that recovery can occur. This entirely non-denominational class covers such contexts and attempts to foster hope, along with the use of such concepts and spirituality for coping in everyday life and helps to set the stage for recovery.



Insomnia Management.

Having trouble sleeping? This class will help you improve your sleep. This is a structured class that includes homework such as keeping track of how much you sleep. You are expected to attend regularly so that you can learn new skills and practice them. To enroll in this class, you must have a brief screening appointment with one of the facilitators.



Leisure Planning.

Under the guidance of a Recreation Therapist, a group for developing, planning, and incorporating leisure activities into your recovery plan.



Mindful Photography.

Make the most of your mind, body, spirit... and digital camera. Learn how mindful photography can help you change focus away from nagging symptoms and toward expanding self expression and meaning in daily life. This class combines ancient mindfulness methods with the latest digital media technology to build mental and physical focus, emotional regulation, coping skills and motivation to live in the present moment.



Mind over Mood.

Learn how to identify your own individual symptoms and manage warning signs of a relapse as well as cope with persistent symptoms and how to avoid alcohol and street drugs. Gain a deeper understanding of medication side effects and mood changes and how your thoughts can shape your moods.



Music over Mood.

Learn how to identify and manage your emotional distress and improve coping by use of music in the context of support from peers and staff facilitators. This will include increased awareness of your own strengths, how thoughts and self talk affect mood, how to address warning signs of increased distress, and how improved coping can be part of an overall plan for recovery.



Psychosis Support Group.

This is a support group for people who hear or see things that are not there, or have fears about things that are not true. The group shares tips on coping with these experiences, and discusses other topics of mutual interest such as relationships with loved ones. **This group is for members only (no drop-ins)**; Contact Dr. Jennifer Boyd (415-221-4810, ext. 3421) to enroll as a member.



Reducing Isolation.

Learn how to decrease isolation by increasing social connections with others within the class and the community at large. Students will discuss and identify individual motivation for decreasing isolation. Students will also identify their own individual barriers to increased socialization, increase coping and manage warning signs of mental health problems. Students will discuss their own experience of mental health recovery and compare effective steps that help them develop meaningful life roles.



Relationship Skills.

Connection is the essential characteristic of relationships. People in relationships exist in some connection with one another, be it marriage, kinship, friendship, or acquaintance. Human relationship skills are the skills involved in human connection. The goal of this class is to gain some knowledge and insight into what are relationships, communication skills, starting relationships, managing relationship problems, and ending relationships.



Rise Above Depression.

Everybody experiences sadness from time to time. We all have been “down” or “blue” at one time or another, but if you feel that you are living in a deep dark pit that you just can’t seem to get out of, you may be suffering from depression. This is an opportunity to meet with fellow veterans who may be experiencing similar feelings. It will be a chance to talk about the effects of depression on life and discuss coping skills. Join us; we can take this journey together.



Seeking Sanctuary.

This class focuses on (non-denominational) spiritual issues. Class is led by the VA chaplaincy.



Self Care.

Self-care is defined as activities that people undertake with the goal of enhancing health, preventing disease, limiting illness, and restoring health. This class aims to educate clients about how to make decisions and engage in activities to keep themselves physically and mentally fit.



Sensory Kits.

Discover creative ways to heal. This workshop will allow the opportunity to develop a “sensory diet” and create a physical container to hold your personally identified sensory supply kit. Bring your creativity and a desire to learn everyday strategies to promote healing.



Social Skills.

This class is based on a well-researched model of social skills training. The class provides an easy and fun way to learn about and practice expressive, receptive, and conversational skills involved in human relationships. The group focuses on training skills in the following areas: Conversation, Assertiveness, Conflict Management, Communal Living, Friendship and Dating, Health Maintenance, Work, and Coping Skills for Drug and Alcohol Use.



Sounds of Recovery.

Music as a medium of expression can be an effective tool for processing unresolved and conflicted emotions through its effect on mood and coping. This class will explore creative ways to move recovery forward by developing and integrating the aural language of emotion and memory.



Speaking of Smoking.

A class designed to assist vets reduce or quit smoking cigarettes.



Stress Management.

In this day and age, stress is an outdated way to deal with our ancient flight or fight response. We in the Bay Area have not needed to run away from a dinosaur for years. This class is designed to teach vets some easy ways to identify and relieve stress to lead a more enjoyable peaceful life.



Techniques and Role Recovery.

This course provides foundational material related to role recovery rather than simply symptom reduction. There is an emphasis on ideas related to recovery of roles based on self-chosen goals, techniques learned across classes are related to the WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan), and discussion of DVDs presenting consumers who have achieved role recovery is fundamental. Also, various techniques (such as coping strategies to managing auditory hallucinations) are included.



There is a Solution! (Peer Support).

This is a support group for people who hear or see things that are not there, or have fears about things that are not true. Veterans can share experience, strength & hope. Veterans can encourage each other on their path towards meaningful lives.



Vet 2 Vet.

Vet to Vet is a consumer partnership program that utilizes veterans in recovery in a peer-counseling capacity to help other veterans. Vet to Vet is administered by veterans who themselves have been consumers of VA mental-health services.



Veterans Community Council.

The PRRC's Student Council exists to allow Veterans the opportunity to become "active participants" in the development and day-to-day operations of the program. This is an excellent opportunity to interact with other PRRC students and staff, aid in the development of new initiatives, and advocate for Veteran-centered care.



Veterans Story Corps. Mondays 12:30 – 2:00 pm

Write, Edit, Produce! The flow of this class will start with writing, storyboarding and editing skills. Veterans will be offered an opportunity to learn the process and tools of digital storytelling and media production to share their experiences and find a voice in the local community. In the process, veterans will learn media technology skills essential to active participation in their community and in our democracy, including ethical storytelling and journalistic practice, video production and postproduction, Internet and cable television distribution methods, and live television production.



Wellness Management.

This class will provide knowledge on recovery strategies including practical facts about mental illness, how to build social supports, use medications effectively, cope with stress, problems and symptoms and get your needs met in the mental health system. Each class will build on the previous one, giving you the opportunity to enhance your knowledge each week while working on organizational and time management skills.



WIZMO: Wisdom in Motion.

Inaction, rumination on problems, and limited roles can increase symptoms and stigma. Alternatively, healthy *flow* exists when one is immersed in activity with energized focus, fully present, and feeling successful in the process. Dynamic creative arts exercises effectively help students engage in *flow state* and uncover wiser choices for daily life behaviors. This class builds interpersonal skills, mindfulness and physical focus to reduce the effects of problems as students move toward Recovery in the community.



WRAP Group.

This class is designed to guide you through the development of a Wellness Recovery Action Plan, or WRAP. This is a plan to help you in your mental health recovery, help you get well, stay well, and help you to create the life you want. This plan can also be useful when you are confronted with other stressful situations as well. You may not complete the entire plan in these sessions and that is OK. You will be encouraged to work on them at home or with other staff whom you feel comfortable with.



Zumba.

Zumba Fitness is a Latin-inspired dance-fitness program that blends red-hot international music and contagious steps to form a "fitness-party" that is downright addictive. You'll almost forget that you're working out and moving yourself into a better state of fitness. Smile, let yourself feel the music, and you'll dance and move with no worries.