

**Practitioner Guidelines for
Handout #11: Healthy Lifestyles
8/26/08**

Introduction

Many people participating in Illness Management and Recovery identify leading a healthier lifestyle as an important recovery goal. This module does not cover all the possible topics related to a healthy lifestyle, but it does provide a foundation in four of the basic areas that help people lead a healthy life:

- Diet
- Exercise
- Personal Hygiene
- Sleep Habits

Some clients may need more resources, either to address additional specific health problems (such as diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol) or to locate more intensive programs (such as for weight loss, smoking cessation, aerobics, and independent living skills). It is the role of the practitioner to be knowledgeable about the resources that are available in the community and to encourage interested clients to take part.

Practitioners should keep in mind that clients are most motivated to make lifestyle changes that help them accomplish personally meaningful goals. For example, if a client wants to do more activities with his children, eating a more healthy diet and losing weight might help him be more active and able to play physical games with them. If a client wants to get a job, improving her grooming might help her to look better and feel more confident in approaching potential employers. If a client is interested in going back to school, he might be interested in improving his sleep habits so that he is more alert during class time.

Goals of the Module:

- Explore with clients how having a healthy lifestyle can help them achieve personal goals.
- Provide information about how people can lead a healthy lifestyle, focusing on diet, exercise, personal hygiene, and sleep habits.
- Help clients select and try out strategies and skills for improving their health and making lifestyle changes.
- Help clients make individualized plans for making changes in their lifestyle.
- Work with additional support persons (such as staff members or family members) to help people develop skills and follow through on their plans to change lifestyle habits.

The Importance of Getting Additional Support for Clients in this Module

Because making lifestyle changes can be especially challenging, it is usually helpful for clients to get support from others, including staff members, family members, friends, therapists, fellow IMR participants, case managers and peer support groups. As clients select specific strategies and skills to try, it is often critical to have the support of other people.

In general, support persons are most helpful when they can assist clients in making lifestyle changes in the following ways:

- Break down desired changes into small steps.
- Teach skills as necessary (using modeling, role playing, reinforcement, and feedback).
- Encourage clients to practice new skills in their home environment.
- Assist in carrying out the steps of their plan to change their lifestyle.
- Provide positive, constructive feedback.
- Help clients progress from one step to the next.

Of utmost importance, support persons must provide encouragement all along the way, to keep up the client's spirits and foster his or her internal motivation.

The practitioner is encouraged to be systematic about developing support for the clients during this module. Some clients are readily able to identify someone who can help them make lifestyle changes and will ask them directly for assistance and support. Other clients are less able to do so for a variety of reasons, including the severity of their symptoms, shyness, or lack of confidence. In these instances, the practitioner will usually be most effective by asking permission from the client to speak directly to a support person and to collaborate on developing a specific plan for providing support to the client as he or she works through the module. For example, while reviewing the "diet" topic with a client who lives with his parents and wants to learn how to prepare more nutritious meals for himself, the practitioner might ask permission to contact his mother or father to collaborate on developing a plan for the client to get practice in cooking at home.

In residential or inpatient settings, the practitioner should work directly with staff members to inform them about the module, request support for specific clients, and plan how to provide support step-by-step. It is usually most effective if a specific staff person is responsible for helping a specific client. Many staff members may be unfamiliar with the steps of teaching and reinforcing skills and will benefit from a short training on this topic. Regular follow-up meetings with staff members (e.g., weekly) during this module are also recommended. A possible agenda for such follow-up meetings might include:

- Review the home assignments and practicing of strategies and skills from past IMR session.
- Review current topic in the module (e.g., diet, exercise, personal hygiene, sleep habits), including description of strategies and skills covered and those selected by specific clients.

- Discuss current home assignments and identify opportunities for practicing new strategies and skills from the topic area.
- Discuss and demonstrate how staff member members can actively teach clients new strategies and skills.
- Discuss how to prompt clients to use skills *in vivo* and how to provide reinforcement to clients when they spontaneously use skills.

The following table provides examples of how support persons can assist clients in making lifestyle changes:

Skill or strategy	Setting	Support Person	Example of support
Doing laundry once a week (from "Personal Hygiene")	Inpatient treatment program	Staff member on 3-11 shift	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach client to sort clothes into dark and light 2. Teach client to measure laundry detergent 3. Teach client to select correct laundry cycle 4. Provide encouragement at every stage <p>Next steps: Teach client to use dryer and fold clothes</p>
Cook more nutritional dinners (from "Diet")	Own apartment	Sister	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist in making a list of 4 simple nutritional dinner entrees 2. Help select one entrée. Assist in making a shopping list of ingredients 3. Using a recipe, spend 1-3 sessions in kitchen teaching client how to prepare the first entree 4. Provide encouragement at every stage <p>Next steps: Client makes the first entrée on his or her own, selects another entrée to learn how to cook</p>
Join a health club (from "Exercise")	Supported apartment or Community residence	Case manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist in locating local health clubs 2. Accompany on visit to a club to evaluate services and pick up literature about membership 3. If client decides to join, help work out schedule for visits to use exercise machines 4. Offer to join client in exercise session of his or her choice 5. Follow up on regularity of

			<p>client's independent visits to club and whether he or she enjoys the exercise</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. If indicated, help person practice conversation skills that can be used to talk to other health club participants 7. Provide encouragement at every stage 8. Next steps: assist client in choosing an aerobics class and/or asking someone to join them on a walking program
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Using this module in a group

In using this module in a group format, the practitioner first encourages group members to explore, without pressure, the different areas in which they might want to make changes. It is then important for the practitioner to help group members decide for themselves about changes they would like to make and strategies they would like to try. The practitioner should also help group members apply the information from the module to their own experience and to tailor strategies and skills to the individual. In some instances, it may also be necessary to find extra information and resources for group members who want to pursue a lifestyle change that is not covered in this module or address a problem which requires a more intensive or specialized program (e.g., someone may want to join a weight loss group or explore a smoking cessation program).

Number and Pacing of Sessions

The "Healthy Lifestyles" module can usually be covered in 2 to 4 sessions, although some clients may benefit from spending more than 4 sessions. In providing this module in a group format, it is usually helpful to spend at least one session for each topic (Diet, Exercise, Personal Hygiene, Sleep Habits).

Structure of Sessions

- Informal socializing and identification of any major issues while reviewing the previous session.
- Discuss the home assignment from the previous session.
- Praise all efforts and problem-solve obstacles to completing homework.
- Follow-up goals.
- Set the agenda for the current session.
- Teach new material (or review materials from a previous session if necessary).
- Summarize progress made in the current session.
- Develop a home assignment to be completed before the next session.

Strategies To Be Used in Each Session

Motivational strategies

Educational strategies
Cognitive-behavioral strategies

Motivational Strategies

As in the modules “Using Medication Effectively” and “Drug and Alcohol Use,” it is important to avoid lecturing or preaching. It is more effective for practitioners to keep an open mind and to help people reach their own conclusions about what’s best for them. Because society tends to blame people for their unhealthy lifestyle habits and fitness problems, many people feel ashamed of their difficulties and this can interfere with them talking about them. Empathizing with the person and avoiding being judgmental are the best strategies for creating an open and accepting environment in which unhealthy lifestyle habits and their effects can be discussed.

The following general motivational strategies may be helpful throughout this module:

- For each major topic covered in the handout, help the person to identify at least one way that information about that topic might be helpful to him or her.
- Keep in mind the goals that each person identified in the first module (“Recovery Strategies”) and the goals that are reviewed in each session.
- In each session, help the person identify information and strategies that could help him or her achieve his or her personal goal.

The following are examples of motivational strategies that may be helpful in the separate topic areas of the module:

Diet

A client might say she thinks that junk food slows her down and reduces her energy for playing with her children. The practitioner can use the strategies of “reflective listening” and “expressing empathy” by saying something like, “It sounds like your relationship with your children is important to you and you think your diet might be having an effect on the quality of the time you spend with them.” If she agrees, the practitioner can help her plan some changes in her diet.

Exercise

A client might tell the practitioner that he would like to begin to exercise to lose some weight and makes a plan to walk for 20 minutes five days a week. After 2 weeks the client may report that he only walked once and expresses that “it’s too much trouble to walk. It’s not worth it.” The practitioner can use the strategy of “exploring the pros and cons of change” by making a pros and cons list (or completing a decisional matrix) about exercise. If the client decides that the advantages of exercise outweigh the disadvantages, the practitioner can then help him to continue with his walking plan, and may help him make modifications to increase his chances for success. For example, the client may decide to start with walking a shorter time period (e.g., 10 minutes 5 days per week) or on a less frequent schedule (e.g., 20 minutes 2 or 3 days a week).

Personal Hygiene

In discussing personal hygiene, the client may say that bathing regularly is not necessary and that he feels like he is being pressured by staff members to bathe more often “for no reason.” Rather than argue with the client, the practitioner can use the strategy of “connecting information and skill to the client’s personal goal” by helping the client see how bathing and smelling good might help him get a girlfriend, which he has identified as his goal. It is also important for the practitioner to “roll with resistance” rather than argue with the client or confront him about the “errors” of his thinking.

Sleep Habits

A client may decide to stop drinking coffee after 5 PM to see if it improves her sleep. After a week of cutting down on caffeine she may report to the practitioner that she is sleeping a little better. The practitioner can use the strategy of “supporting self-efficacy” to praise her success and then help her review additional strategies she might try. Because of the success the client has had she may become interested in trying other strategies, such as going to sleep at the same time every night and getting up at the same time every morning.

Educational Strategies

Educational strategies for this module focus on ensuring that people understand the basic information about their health. The best learning takes place when people can relate information to their own life experiences. For example, clients may connect the information about personal hygiene to their experiences in meeting new people. That is, clients may report that when they are well-groomed and wearing clean clothes, people react more positively to them (or, they react more positively to other people who are well-groomed and wear clean clothes). In discussing exercise, some clients may recall times that exercising has helped improve their mood or their energy level.

The following educational strategies can be used:

- Review the contents of the handout by summarizing or taking turns reading.
- Pause frequently to check for understanding and to learn more about the person’s point of view.
- Allow plenty of time for questions and interaction.
- Pause to allow the person to complete the checklists and questionnaires.
- Break down the content into manageable “pieces.”
- Find a pace that is comfortable for the person.

Cognitive-behavioral Strategies

Cognitive-behavioral strategies in this module focus on helping people learn and put into practice strategies and skills for leading a healthier lifestyle.

Practitioners can help clients learn and practice skills by breaking the skill down into small steps, modeling the skill, working on a few steps at a time, setting up home assignments to practice the steps, and using positive reinforcement as the

client progresses. The practitioner can also help the person develop self-monitoring skills such as completing daily or weekly checklists for activities such as following one's diet, exercising, bathing, brushing one's teeth, or going to bed at the same time. It is often critical for practitioners to enlist members of the client's support system to help with practice and reinforcement.

The following are examples of cognitive-behavioral strategies that may be helpful in the separate topic areas of the module:

Diet

Practitioners can model how to plan a balanced meal, followed by a role-play with clients taking the lead in planning their own meals. In an inpatient setting, clients can practice filling out their menu for the day or role play going to the cafeteria and choosing their meal. People living in a community residence might do role-plays making choices from the menu of a local restaurant, followed up by a field trip to the restaurant. Clients living independently can be encouraged to make out a shopping list during the session, followed up by a home assignment of taking a trip to the grocery store. Clients living at home can be encouraged to ask family members to help them practice making healthy food choices at family meals.

Exercise

Different types of exercise (e.g., practicing a yoga routine, using an aerobics DVD) can be done in the session with a follow-up home assignment. If there is a local gym accessible to clients, the practitioner can organize a field trip to the facility to learn more about it. After helping clients to identify someone they would like to join them in an exercise activity, practitioners can also do role-plays to help clients practice how they might approach that person. Practitioners can also demonstrate the use of a self-monitoring sheet for recording exercise and encourage clients to record their own exercise as a home assignment.

Personal Hygiene

It is especially important in this topic area for practitioners to take into account the person's living situation (e.g., inpatient, residential, or independent living), the area of hygiene the client wants to improve, and the client's skill level. The following are some examples of using cognitive-behavioral strategies to assist clients in improving their personal hygiene:

Showering or bathing: In an inpatient setting, some clients may need assistance in breaking down the skill of bathing. Staff members can be helpful in reminding clients to bathe on specific days and record their bathing a self-monitoring sheet. Staff members can also be helpful in reminding clients of the steps of bathing or helping them to gather materials, such as soap, shampoo, and towels.

Using personal hygiene products: Some clients may be confused by the abundance of advertisements (especially on television) focused on grooming products (e.g., teeth-whitening products, mouth wash, special shampoos, deodorants for sports/dating/stress) and may benefit from problem-solving around identifying which products are important to basic grooming and locating stores for purchasing them economically. In a residential setting,

practitioners might bring in small samples of shampoo, toothpaste and deodorant for clients to try.

Combing or brushing hair: Practitioners can do role plays to demonstrate the advantages of combing or brushing one's hair. That is, practitioners can mess up their hair and ask for feedback, then comb out their hair and ask for feedback. Practitioners can then ask clients what they observed as the differences between the two examples and which example they would prefer to see in a job interview or on a date. If possible, obtain inexpensive combs to give to clients so they can mess up their own hair, comb it out, and get feedback from each other.

Wearing neat and clean clothes: Doing laundry can be broken down into steps and then practiced. Staff members can be enlisted to help inpatients in using the laundry room of their facility. Clients living in the community can use their own washing machine or make a field trip to the laundromat.

Washing hands regularly: Behavioral tailoring (or example, putting post-a-note reminders on one's bathroom mirror or in the kitchen) can be used to help clients remember to wash their hands before a meal or after they use the bathroom. Some clients may benefit from problem-solving around obstacles to washing their hands regularly, such as lack of easy access to a bathroom or sink. For example, some people carry small containers of waterless hand sanitizers in their pockets.

Tooth brushing and flossing: Practitioners can model brushing and flossing and then make arrangements for clients to practice these in session. A dentist or dental hygienist can be invited as a guest speaker to demonstrate and answer questions.

Home Assignments

- § It is very important to help clients identify situations outside the sessions where newly learned strategies and skills for leading a healthy life can be put into practice. Developing home assignments involves helping the person identify changes they want to make, breaking them down into small steps and then practicing the steps outside the sessions. Whenever possible, practitioners should enlist support persons (such as family members, staff members, fellow IMR participants, friends, case managers, therapists, and members of peer support groups) to help with home assignments.

In each topic area of this module there are checklists asking clients to identify strategies they might like to try for a leading a healthier life. Practitioners can use responses to these checklists as the basis for many home assignments, by helping the person select one of those strategies and make a plan to put it into practice.

Here are some suggestions for possible home assignments for a variety of clients in each topic area:

Diet:

- Plan a menu for this week's meals.
- Make a grocery list that would include ingredients for this week's meals.
- Cook a meal with a family member.
- Keep a food diary for a week.
- Limit desserts to once a day.
- Drink 4 glasses of water per day.
- Eat at least 2 servings of vegetables per day.
- Eat at least 2 servings of fruit per day.
- Have 1 bag of chips at lunch instead of 2.
- Have 2 sodas per day instead of 4.
- Have 1 helping of the entrée at dinner instead of 2.

Exercise:

- Take a 20-minute walk 3 times per week.
- Do an aerobics tape 3 times per week.
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator 5 days per week.
- Visit the local gym to see what is offered.
- Sign up for an exercise class.
- Identify someone who wants to lift weights together.
- Go on a bike ride with a friend.
- Use the exercise bike in the gym 3 times per week.

Personal Hygiene:

- Take a bath or shower twice a week.
- Use deodorant daily.
- Wash hair weekly.
- Comb hair daily.
- Brush teeth twice a day.
- Floss teeth daily.
- Do laundry on Saturday.
- Wash hands before each meal.

Sleep Habits:

- Keep a sleep log for a week.
- Go to bed and get up at the same time every day for a week.
- When you have a bad night's sleep, avoid taking a nap the next day and keep track of how well you sleep that night.
- For one week, listen to music for 10 minutes each night before going to bed.
- For one week, read for 10 minutes each night before going to bed.

§ Follow up on the home assignment by asking how it went. For example, the practitioner can ask, "Were you able to take a walk this week?" "How many times?" "How did it go?" It's important to praise all efforts and highlight successes.

§ If clients do not complete the home assignment or encounter obstacles that made completion difficult, the practitioner can gently ask what got in the

way. It may be helpful for the practitioner to role-play one or two strategies for overcoming obstacles.

Tips for Common Problems

- People may be reluctant to acknowledge that they have a problem that requires a change in their lifestyle. It is best to avoid confrontation and to use some of the strategies listed under “Motivational Strategies” in order to help people feel comfortable learning and discussing information from this module. In an open, non-judgmental atmosphere, people often gradually begin to be interested in examining their diet, exercise, personal hygiene, and sleep habits.
- Some people may not want to make a decision about consistently changing behaviors in their lifestyle, but may be willing to brainstorm alternative activities and coping strategies for occasional situations. For example, they may not want to change their sleep habits on a regular basis, but would be interested in trying to get a better night’s sleep in preparation for an interview or taking a test.
- Some people want to change their lifestyle, but have had negative experiences in their previous attempts to do so. Provide support and encouragement, and suggest that this is a fresh start. Let people know that changing to healthier habits is a challenging goal, and that it often takes more than one attempt to succeed. Encourage a step-by-step approach and giving oneself credit for taking steps toward a healthier lifestyle.
- Encourage people to set realistic goals and not to get discouraged if their goals are not met quickly. It’s also important to continue to make the connection between making lifestyle changes and achieving one’s personal goals.
- When clients are making plans to use a strategy or skill to make changes in their lifestyle, practitioners can help in the following ways: break down the strategy or skill into small steps, explore opportunities for practice, prompt and cue clients to use the skill, provide reinforcement, enlist someone in the person’s the strategy or support system (e.g., family members, friends, staff members). If clients have difficulty carrying out the plan, it is important for the practitioner to troubleshoot, guided by questions such as: Is the rationale for the skill clear to the client? Is the skill broken down into small enough steps? Are there sufficient opportunities to practice? Does the person need more support to carry out the plan?
- Some people may already know a great deal about a healthy lifestyle or feel they don’t want to make any changes. It is still desirable to go over the handout to check people’s understanding and to explore how their lifestyles affect their goals. Sometimes people have received information in a piecemeal fashion; going through this handout may help people synthesize what they have previously learned. It may be possible to review the module in a short period of time if people are already familiar with the contents.

Some Tips for Separate Topic Areas

Diet

Clients often state a goal of losing considerable amounts of weight. It is important to help clients set a realistic beginning weight loss goal (such as 1-2 pounds per week) and to break it down into small steps. For example, the practitioner might help a client start with completing a weekly food log as a starting point and then help him select one or two changes he might like to make in his diet, such as cutting down on desserts or increasing the number of daily servings of vegetables.

Exercise

Clients may be overzealous in their exercise goals, such as planning to practice yoga everyday even though they have not tried yoga before. The practitioner can help clients start small and build on their early successes. For example, a client might be more successful by starting with trying out a yoga tape or attending a class, followed by up making a plan for practicing yoga twice a week.

Personal Hygiene

It is often helpful to link behavior changes in this area to clients' personal goals. For example, it may help clients feel more motivated to shower regularly if they recognize how it might help them in their goal of making new friends or getting a job.

Sleep

Clients with chronic sleep problems may be reluctant to try new strategies for getting a better night's sleep. The practitioner can suggest taking a slow, step-by-step approach, starting with completing a sleep log. Using the initial sleep log as a "baseline," the practitioner can encourage clients to take the role of scientists conducting an experiment. In this role, they would select a strategy to try, use it regularly for a week or two, keep a sleep log, and then compare the results to their original log.

Review Questions

At the end of this module, practitioners can use either open-ended questions or multiple choice questions to assess knowledge of the main points.

Open-ended questions

1. What are two benefits of following a healthy diet?
2. What are three reasons to exercise?
3. How often should you brush your teeth each day?
4. Name three things that can help you sleep better.

Multiple Choice and True/False Questions

1. Which of the following is a good tip for shopping for groceries economically?
 - Shop on an empty stomach
 - Make a grocery shopping list
 - Shop for food in a convenience store

2. The following are reasons to exercise EXCEPT –
 - To help you look and feel better
 - To have less energy
 - Reduce the risk of medical problems

3. Which of the following is a reason to brush your teeth?
 - Makes breath smell fresh
 - Prevents tooth decay
 - Makes your smile attractive to other people
 - All of the above

4. Which of the following is NOT a strategy to get a good night's sleep?
 - Do something relaxing before bedtime
 - Drink beverages with caffeine
 - Have a bedtime routine

5. By eating a balanced diet you will gain weight.
True or False

6. Five minutes of exercise a day is enough to stay healthy.
True or False

7. The recommended time for hand washing is five seconds.
True or False

8. Going to bed at the same time every night and getting up at the same time every day will help you sleep better.
True or False