

Personal Medicine

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“Joe” from Kansas said:

“I think there’s a lot of other things that’s medication that’s maybe not considered medication. There’s things - things that you can do that does change what your body does and it may not be medicine . . . I still think one of the best mood stabilizers there is in life – maybe not for everyone – but for me, is math.”

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Recovery Defined

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

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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Recovery’s Four Dimensions

- I. Health – Managing or overcoming symptoms
- II. Home – Safe and stable environment
- III. Purpose – Meaningful activities, independence, and resources for participation
- IV. Community – Supportive relationships

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Guiding Principles of Recovery

1. Recovery emerges from Hope
2. Recovery is Person-Driven
3. Recovery occurs via Many Pathways
4. Recovery is Holistic

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Guiding Principles of Recovery

5. Recovery is supported by Peers and Allies
6. Recovery is supported through Relationships and Social Networks
7. Recovery is Culturally Based and Influenced
8. Recovery is supported by Addressing Trauma

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Guiding Principles of Recovery

9. Recovery involves Individual, Family, and Community Strengths and Responsibility
10. Recovery is based on Respect

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Today's Objectives

1. Gain an understanding of the Personal Medicine concepts.
2. Consider the use of Personal Medicine concepts with a variety of client populations.
3. Examine the specific use of Personal Medicine with SUD & co-occurring conditions.
4. Identify Personal Medicine strategies that may be personally useful.

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Dawn Farm's Rationale for Personal Medicine

- Higher Percentage of clients presenting concerns beyond addiction alone
- Early psych diagnoses are frequently inaccurate
- Post Acute Withdrawal Syndrome
- Client safety in psych matters is our first concern
- Chronic Pain and Sleep Disturbance are common
- Dr. Patricia Deegan's Personal Medicine Model offered hope

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What is Personal Medicine?

- Things we do that help us feel well and limit unwanted symptoms.
- Things we do that put a smile on our face and give life meaning and purpose.
- Things we do to help us avoid unwanted outcomes like loss of work, homelessness, jail, hospitalizations, or losing custody of our kids.

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Personal Medicine Examples

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Working out regularly | • Use Affirmations |
| • Joining a house of worship | • Fishing on Sundays |
| • Singing in the choir | • Providing for my family |
| • Cognitive Rehearsal | • Limit Caffeine & Nicotine |
| • Regular Fun Activities | • Practice Self-Compassion |
| • Daily Meditation | • Painting or writing poetry |
| • Cooking for Family/Friends | • Go to an AA or NA meeting |
| • Develop Social Supports | • Journaling Daily |

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Characteristics of Personal Medicine

- It's what we DO to be well, not what we take. It's active not passive.
- It helps limit unwanted symptoms and maximize our enjoyment of life.
- It's something we do NOW, in the present. It is not a future goal.
- It's an ACTION we take, not a feeling or state of mind.

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Which of these is Personal Medicine?

1. I will use St. John's Wort for depression.
2. I will play Frisbee with my dog after work to relieve stress.
3. I will release stress by swimming laps four days a week when I get out of the hospital.
4. I will use self-harm strategies to calm myself and to help manage my flashbacks.
5. I will use controlled breathing exercises when I get anxious.

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Why is Personal Medicine Important to SUD Recovery?

1. Simply taking pharmaceutical medicine is not enough to make us well.
2. Meds can do a lot to manage symptoms, but we have to be proactive and build a worthwhile life.
3. Effective recovery often depends on finding the right balance between pharmaceutical and behavioral strategies.
4. Finding this balance maximizes our chances of identifying and creating the life we want.

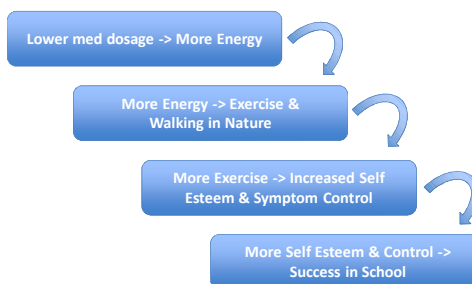
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Pat Deegan's Experience

At 17 years old, she received a diagnosis of schizophrenia. She was told that the most important thing she could do is to take her prescribed meds exactly as directed.
So that's what she did . . .

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Cascading Effects of Combined Meds & Behaviors



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“I will live my life, not my diagnosis. My dreams are the stars that guide my journey of recovery. I will pursue my goals today!”

Dr. Patricia Deegan

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Personal Medicine Worksheet

| Personal Medicine | Active Ingredient (How does it help?) | Top 3 to work on |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Example: Something I do to feel better | Walking in the Park | Connects with Nature and improves my mood |
| Something I do to feel better is: | | |
| Something I do that makes my life meaningful is: | | |
| Something I do that helps me feel good about being me is: | | |
| Something I enjoy doing on a daily basis is: | | |
| Something I do that helps me when I feel bad is: | | |
| The most important thing in my life is: | | |

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Personal Medicine is “Personal”

| Personal Medicine Strategy | Active Ingredient – How it helps |
|----------------------------|---|
| Walking in the Park | Time to talk with my friend |
| Walking in the Park | Get out and avoid isolation |
| Walking in the Park | Connect with nature, get grounded, connect with my Higher Power |
| Walking in the Park | Feel connected to the people of the neighborhood |

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Personal Medicine Worksheet

| Personal Medicine | Active Ingredient (How does it help?) | Top 3 to work on |
|---|--|--|
| Example: Something I do to feel better | Walking in the Park | Connects with Nature and improves my mood |
| Something I do to feel better is: | Go swimming for 30 minutes 4 times a week | Lifts my mood and makes me less angry |
| Something I do that makes my life meaningful is: | Feed and care for my dog | The caring/responsible relationship helps me stay sober. |
| Something I do that helps me feel good about being me is: | I don't know | |
| Something I enjoy doing on a daily basis is: | Pray & meditate for 5-10 minutes | Calms me down |
| Something I do that helps me when I feel bad is: | Call my brother | He makes me laugh |
| The most important thing in my life is: | Working a program of recovery – meetings, Steps and a sponsor. | Staying sober gives me hope for the future |

If you find yourself working with someone who doesn't have any Personal Medicine . . .

Generally everyone has something that brings them happiness or makes them feel better – not necessarily big things. If you're having trouble identifying these, meet the client in a different environment and get to know the client in their world. Clients frequently demonstrate surprising strengths in their world.

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If you find yourself working with someone who doesn't have any Personal Medicine . . .

Help the person cultivate their Personal Medicine. This can be done by using peer supports who can make suggestions or share some wisdom from their own experience, strength and hope. Also, the Personal Medicine Cards developed by Pat Deegan's organization can be helpful in developing ideas.

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Personal Medicine Card Example

Personal Medicine: *Depression*

Talk with Friends

Isolation can ,make our depression worse. If we call or visit friends, it breaks isolation and helps us feel connected and cared about. And we don't always have to talk about our depression and ourselves! Sometimes talking with friends about a variety of subjects such as sports, hobbies, news and even TV shows can help heal our depression

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Personal Medicine Card Example

Personal Medicine: *Depression*

Special Instructions for My Personal Medicine

I will call _____

The phone number is _____

The phone number to the help line is _____

Did the Personal Medicine work? -> Use it again
It didn't work? -----> Try another strategy

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Personal Medicine Fidelity Standards

1. Helps me feel better and strengthens my recovery.
2. Is something I do NOW in my life.
3. Is NOT a feeling or state-of-mind.
4. Is NOT something I take like vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol or recreational drugs.
5. It is personal and unique to me as an individual. No two people's Personal Medicine will be exactly the same.

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Katy's Personal Medicine Worksheet

| Personal Medicine | Active Ingredient (How does it help?) | Top 3 to work on |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Example: Something I do to feel better | Walking in the Park | Connects with Nature and improves my mood |
| Something I do to feel better is: | Take St. John's Wort | Lifts my mood |
| Something I do that makes my life meaningful is: | Going to my nursing school classes | Gives me hope for the future |
| Something I do that helps me feel good about being me is: | Paint my nails | Makes me feel worthy, like I deserve to feel pretty |
| Something I enjoy doing on a daily basis is: | Morning shower | Helps motivate me to get out of bed |
| Something I do that helps me when I feel bad is: | Call my friend | I unload my worries and she makes me laugh |
| The most important thing in my life is: | Becoming a nurse | I want to help others |

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Katy's Personal Medicine

1. Paint My Nails – it helps me feel worthy, like I deserve to feel pretty.
2. Morning Shower – Helps motivate me to get out of bed and start my day.
3. Going to Nursing School – I want to help others.

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Personal Medicine and pharmaceutical medicine are sometimes woven together when developing a plan for recovery from the co-occurrence of a substance use disorder AND conditions like mental illness, chronic pain, a mood disorder or sleep disturbance.

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There are two compelling statements which drive the application of Personal Medicine concepts with SUD Clients:

“Skills Not Pills”

“I am an Active Agent in my own Recovery”

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Dawn Farm Personal Medicine Goals:

1. To reduce client suffering, increase self-efficacy, and enhance recovery.
2. To provide a framework that engages clients in actively monitoring and managing their psychiatric/co-occurring conditions.
3. To provide an immediate response to psychiatric symptoms that does not interfere with our ability to determine the nature and course of their psychiatric symptoms.

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Dawn Farm Personal Medicine Goals:

4. To increase global quality of life for clients dealing with psychiatric symptoms and chronic pain.
5. To establish Personal Medicine as part of Dawn Farm's treatment culture—becoming fully integrated into our thought, language and practice.

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Developed Topics for Groups

Anxiety
 Depression
 Sleep Disturbance
 Tobacco Recovery
 Chronic Pain

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Essential Elements of Dawn Farm Personal Medicine Groups

1. Client identification
2. Client education on co-occurring condition and its relationship to alcoholism/addiction
3. Exploration of behavioral strategies associated with effective management of the co-occurring condition
4. Clients develop a weekly plan on a Diary Card, discuss the success or failure of the plan at the next group, and develop a new or revised plan

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The P.L.E.A.S.E. Skills

PHYSICAL CARE – Take care of your mind and mood by taking care of your body. Practice health promoting activities like good personal hygiene, dental care, safe sex and other behaviors.

ILLNESS (Treat It) – If you are sick or injured, or have an ongoing medical, dental or psychological condition, get proper and timely treatment. Take prescribed medication as directed.

EATING EFFECTIVELY – Eat a healthy diet of balanced meals and snacks mindfully though out the day, and eat in moderation. Limit foods that can encourage you to feel overly emotional and irritable like caffeine and sugar.

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The P.L.E.A.S.E. Skills

AVOID ISOLATION, DRUG USE & ALCOHOL – Isolation can enhance anxiety or depression. Alcohol, non-prescription medications and street drugs can make your mood unpredictable. Limiting nicotine also supports better sleep and a calm and even mood.

SLEEP IN A BALANCED WAY – Don't sleep too much or too little. Work to establish a regular bedtime routine and a schedule for sleep. Seven and a half to eight hours of sleep per night is recommended for the average adult.

EXERCISE REGULARLY – Get an effective amount of exercise, as this will both improve your body image and release endorphins, making you happier. Building up to 20 minutes a day is a good goal. If you're just getting started, brisk walking is good exercise or try Yoga!

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Anxiety Strategies

- The Relaxation Response
- Mindfulness Meditation
- Controlled Breathing
- Regular Exercise
- Cognitive Rehearsal
- Self-Soothing with the Senses
- Just Noticeable Change (JNC)
- Examine Thinking Patterns
- Journaling

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Depression Strategies

- Meditation
- Regular Exercise
- Practice Gratitude
- Nurture Relationships
- Help Others
- Self-Compassion
- Pursue Fun Activities
- Behavioral Activation
- Challenge Negative Thoughts
- Affirmations
- Cognitive Rehearsal

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Sleep Strategies

- Limit Caffeine/Nicotine
- Regular Exercise
- Manage Sleep Space
- Consistent Sleep Schedule and Routine
- Use Calming Strategies
- Plan for Worry Thoughts
- Examine Negative Sleep Thoughts
- Soak Up Some Sun
- Journaling
- The Relaxation Response
- Mindfulness Meditation

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Tobacco Recovery Strategies

- Learn about Co-Addiction
- Learn the long-run benefits
- Identify your “Why?”
- Know your Triggers
- Plan for Triggers
- Change your routines
- Assess need for NRT
- Develop a tapering schedule
- Develop social supports
- Set a “Quit Date”
- Meditation for Stress
- Reward yourself
- Cognitive Rehearsal
- Affirmations

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Basic Principles of Chronic Pain

- All Pain Is Real – Pain Theory
- Our Thoughts and Emotions about pain drive our experience of it
- Opioids are ineffective for Chronic Pain
- Focus on improving function, not reducing pain
- Expectations Count

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Chronic Pain Strategies

- Pain Monitoring
- Pain Coping Skills
- Progressive Relaxation
- Pain Cycle and Pacing
- Managing Depression
- Sleep & Exercise
- Communication and Pain
- Acceptance and Pain

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For Further Information

- “Recovery, Rehabilitation and the Conspiracy of Hope” <https://www.patdeegan.com/pat-deegan/lectures/conspiracy-of-hope>
- “Integrating Personal Medicine into Service Delivery: Empowering People in Recovery” <http://psycnet.apa.org/record/2013-42745-005>
- Personal Medicine & Recovery, Patricia E. Deegan, PhD
- <https://www.patdeegan.com/commonground>

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