





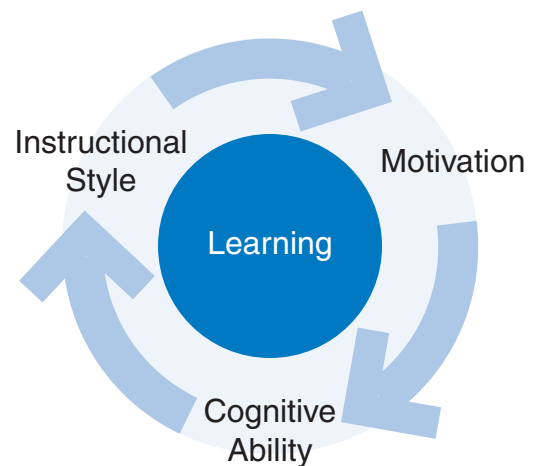
## Introduction

How can you best reach every person in your Team Solutions and Solutions for Wellness sessions? How can you infuse each participant with a sense of excitement and confidence about using the information and tools learned?

This chapter provides facilitators with strategies and techniques to enhance participants' motivation and engagement in the program. Motivated and engaged participants are more likely to make the lifestyle and behavior changes that will enhance their mental and physical health and well being.

Participants in Team Solutions and Solutions for Wellness will learn a lot of new information. Therefore, it is important to take into account the learning needs of the participants.

Learning is an interactive process! Your instructional style, and the participants' motivation and cognitive ability, always work together to promote greater knowledge and behavioral change. The diagram below illustrates this important interaction.



## Learning Objectives

After reading this section, facilitators will be able to:

- A. Identify three basic reasons people are motivated to learn
- B. Identify barriers to learning and change
- C. Identify and apply instructional techniques to enhance motivation and engagement
- D. Identify and use the TRIMM approach to Team Solutions and Solutions for Wellness sessions.

## Background Information

Let's consider how adults approach learning situations, some common truths and myths about how people learn new information, and what it is that motivates people to learn and make changes in their lives.

### Adult Learners are Different

- A. **Age matters.** Adults may take longer to learn, but the good news is that when they learn, they process at a deeper level because they have many experiences to link to the new information.
- B. **Goals matter.** Adults want to be able to apply what they have learned and immediately put it to practical use.
- C. **Habits are set.** Adult learners may be set in their ways, and their ways may be contrary to what we will be presenting. They may not want to change because it seems like tremendous effort will be required or they may even feel threatened when told those behaviors must change. They need to know we respect their opinions and experience. Learning about wellness usually involves changes in attitudes, actions, and behaviors. Respecting the value of incremental changes will make adult learners feel more in control.
- D. **Simply presenting the ideas is not likely to lead to behavioral change.** Why? For many reasons, but here are some important ones:
  - Adults without mental illness remember less than 10% of what they read and 50% of what they see and hear. People with mental illness have even greater difficulty remembering. However, everyone remembers much more of what they say themselves and what they do. That is why the deepest learning comes when new material is actively applied to real life situations.
  - Even when people know what they are supposed to be doing, they may be unaware of the need to change or not ready to change.

### Myths And Truths About Learning

#### Truths:

- Different individuals will learn different things, in different ways, at different speeds.
- Learning through understanding is better retained than learning by rote.
- People remember more of what they learn if they were actively involved in an emotionally gratifying learning experience.
- Repetition usually enhances learning.
- Multi-sensory instruction that involves opportunities to listen, see, even touch, taste or smell, enhances learning.
- The learners who are inwardly motivated to learn will learn more.
- People remember new information better when it is given a context that is personally relevant. This is done by relating new information to their existing knowledge and experiences.

#### Myths:

- Everyone starts with the same base of knowledge.
- Everyone learns at the same pace.
- Everyone learns better from listening.
- Everyone can immediately link new knowledge to experience.
- Everyone will learn on his or her own.
- Learning is the transfer of knowledge from a teacher to a relatively passive learner.

### What Motivates Someone to Learn and Change

Motivation isn't an all-or-nothing phenomenon. Rather, people usually progress through different readiness to change states, which reflect increasing commitment to change. According to The Stages of Motivational Readiness for Change Model (SOC) developed by Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983, there are five stages, which are described in the table on the next page.

## Background Information (cont.)

### Stages of Change

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Intervention</i>
Precontemplation	No intention to change behavior	Increase awareness
Contemplation	Thinking about change	Motivate, tip the balance
Preparation	Making a plan	Concrete action plan
Action	Implementing plan	Assist with feedback support
Maintenance	Continuation of desirable actions	Reminders, avoiding slips

Prochaska J, DiClemente C, Norcross, J (1992). *Amer Psychologist*.47:1102-1114

Group leaders have multiple opportunities to help people progress from one stage to another by:

- Increasing knowledge about wellness and nutrition
- Using instructional strategies that enhance motivation
- Enlisting social support
- Helping to develop a sense of self-efficacy around wellness behaviors.

An important motivational principle articulated by Rollnick and Miller (1995) is that readiness to change is not a participant trait but is an ever changing product of interpersonal interaction. The group facilitator should therefore be highly attentive and responsive to the participants' motivational signs. Resistance to change on the part of the participant is seen as a signal that the group facilitator needs to modify motivational strategies.

### Motivation to Learn

What about motivation to learn? People learn the most when they are motivated. Motivation to learn about wellness can come from various sources.

- Personal growth: to feel better or know that they can effectively cope with health status changes.
- Inherent interest: to learn for the sake of learning, seek knowledge for its own sake.

- Social relationships: participating in a group brings an opportunity to meet people.
- External expectations: to comply with instructions from another person or fulfill the expectations of someone with authority. This motivation usually results in the least amount of lasting learning and behavioral change.

### Barriers and Motivation

Most people also have barriers against learning and change. As much as they may want to learn about wellness and make the changes to have a healthier lifestyle, they may also experience barriers to change. Barriers could be:

- Lack of confidence in their ability to learn or succeed at the task
- Lack of interest because there is no perceived benefit
- Lack of time, money or scheduling problems
- Lack of cognitive ability needed to pay attention and remember.

The co-existence of positive and negative motivations is called ambivalence. This means that as much as someone wants to change and learn, they may also have barriers and resist it. It is important to know why people want, and do not want, to learn so we can best help people resolve their ambivalence. In the following sections, we describe ways to enhance participants' motivation to learn and change.

## Treatment Approaches

For this reason, the group facilitator states his/her goals, “I hope that you will be able to...” and then the participants are invited to state why they are there, how they feel about the subject matter, and what their expectations are. The facilitator can try to relate the group lesson to participants’ interests and experiences.

To the extent that goal achievement can be measured by the outcome tests, this might be a good time for participants to take a pre-test. They can later measure what they actually learned and compare performance to their goals.

### **Material Presentation:**

Now that everyone has agreed to a topic and has become motivated to learn, it is time to start the task. This is a key moment. As a facilitator, you are most likely to keep the group’s attention and promote learning if you engage participants in an active learning process. Suggestions about ways to do this are in this chapter and are also included in the specific sections as well.

### **Motivate Participants to Act Upon What They Learned:**

Now comes the challenge of putting into action what was discussed and learned.

People without psychiatric disability find it difficult to stay motivated to follow treatment and wellness programs. It is even harder for people with psychiatric disorders, since the illness may affect their capacity for motivation.

One reason people lose motivation is they forget the goal. A simple restatement of expectation often is enough to keep someone on track.

Giving certificates of task completion promotes self efficacy and serves as a visual reminder of a goal that was set. In essence, every time you look at the certificate you are reminded of what you learned.

Participants will be motivated if they feel supported and find the task enjoyable. The facilitator might ask each participant, “What would motivate you to do this?” Have fun with this question and also discuss how hard it is to stay motivated. Learn from the participants’ responses about what they value and use that to move them toward wanting change.

This might be the time to give the post test, but be sure to have everyone score their own. Then share as a group if people felt they met their goals.

**Learning and Laughing Tip –  
“What is the most surprising thing you learned today?”**

TRIMM gives a purpose for conducting each session and breaks down each meeting into five parts. Within each of the TRIMM sections, there are many opportunities for continuing to enhance motivation and learning. Also, general organizational strategies for forming the group can promote optimal learning. Below is a list of useful organizational guidelines for the group facilitator:

- Six to ten people is an ideal group size in order for everyone to participate.
- Circles and half-moon seating arrangements enhance the level of engagement. Be sure the room and chairs are comfortable.
- Give participants an opportunity to put other concerns aside and be fully present.
- Encourage participation, but do not force it on anyone. Silence, or “passing”, should always be an option.
- Give quiet people a chance to participate nonverbally – by writing on the chalkboard, passing out materials or taking notes.
- Try to use activities that build on and further the learning gains from the previous sessions.
- Do the activities correspond with the learning styles of the participants?

## Treatment Approaches (cont.)

- Is the group fun and action-oriented? Experiment with learning and laughing. Be creative. Go with what works for you and your group, even if your approach is different from someone else's.
- Effective group facilitators guide participants to their own knowledge rather than supplying them with facts.
- People learn more when they can connect the new information to their life experiences and knowledge. To help them do so, the group facilitator should draw out participants' experience and knowledge which is relevant to the topic.
- Always show respect for each person's learning style and the wealth of experiences that participants bring to the group.

### Some Tips for Providing a Good Learning Experience

Instructional style can make a difference in the amount of learning and behavioral change that takes place.

Make learning fun. The beginning of a group should be devoted to **ENGAGING** the members, that is motivating them to learn about and practice wellness. Occasionally participants are naturally enthusiastic about learning, but more often they need the group facilitator to inspire, challenge, and stimulate them.

There is no single formula for motivating people to engage in wellness behaviors. Many factors affect someone's motivation to learn and practice wellness principles: interest in the subject matter, perception of its usefulness, general concern with health, self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as patience and persistence.

Not all group participants are motivated by the same needs, desires or values. Some group participants will be motivated by the requirements or approval of others, some by overcoming personal challenges. Ultimately the goal of the instructor is to help the participants become self-motivated and independent in their learning and practice of healthy life styles.

### General Instructional Strategies to Motivate Participants

- Create an atmosphere that is open, friendly and positive
- Motivate the participants by enhancing their reasons for participating in the group and decreasing the barriers.
- Find out why the participants are in the group (the motivators) and take the time to discover the barriers to learning. Use that information to plan motivating strategies.
- A successful motivating strategy includes showing participants the relationship between doing the activities and a desired or expected outcome.
- Help participants find personal meaning and value in the material.
- Help participants feel that they are valued members of the group.
- Ensure participants' positive experience by giving opportunities for successful completion of tasks that are neither too easy nor too difficult.
- Give frequent, early, positive feedback that supports participants' beliefs that they can do well.
- Give the participants opportunities to have some control over aspects of the learning process by choosing tasks or stating opinions.

## Treatment Approaches (cont.)

### More Tips for Effective Teaching

**Tip 1:** Provide participants with multi-sensory learning aids to explain abstract concepts. Visual presentation coupled with verbal explanation is better than discussion alone. A picture is worth a thousand words.

**Tip 2:** Use in-class activities and repetition to reinforce new information. After new information is presented in the group, allow the participants to put the ideas into action by completing an in-class assignment. These assignments can be short, but they should allow the instructor to see whether everyone understands the critical ideas underlying the new material.

**Tip 3:** Help participants “link” a new piece of information to something they already know. This will increase the odds of learning the new material.

**Tip 4:** Use a vocabulary that everyone understands.

**Tip 5:** Treat participants with respect. This means that you respect that there is a reason for their approach to learning, whether it is effective or not.

**Tip 6:** Hold participants to a high but realistic standard. This means that you expect them to be able to learn and change, if not now, then at some other point in time.

**Tip 7:** Help participants set achievable goals for themselves. Failure to attain unrealistic goals can be disappointing and frustrating.

**Tip 8:** Be enthusiastic about your subject—that is a crucial factor in motivation to change. If you become bored or apathetic, participants will too. Your enthusiasm will come from confidence, excitement about wellness, and genuine pleasure in running a group.

### A Few Words About Feedback....

Give participants feedback as quickly as possible.

Praise effort and success. Positive feedback helps learning more than negative comments, especially when the praise is specific. Always try to frame feedback in a positive way. If you think a behavior can be improved, explain what specifically you suggest.

Be specific when giving feedback. Comments like “Great” are less meaningful than “It is great that you are thinking about ways to eat less sugar.”

Use tests that participants can self score immediately.

Avoid demeaning comments. People are very sensitive about their abilities, appearance and bodies. Be sensitive to how you phrase your comments and avoid remarks that might hurt feelings.

### Tips for Dealing with Cognitive Dysfunction

90% of people with schizophrenia have difficulty paying attention and remembering new verbal information. Impaired attention and concentration is one of the diagnostic criteria for people with affective disorders. It is reasonable to assume that almost every participant in the group, if they have a psychiatric disorder, will also have difficulty paying attention and remembering new material. That makes it hard for them to feel competent at learning the material you are giving them.

What happens when people feel incompetent to learn? They stop learning!

Below are some tips for ways to help the person with poor attention, concentration and memory feel like they are able to learn.

1. Provide an environment that is calm, safe, uncluttered and organized.
2. Break the material into small units.
3. Provide multi-sensory learning aids and colorful visual reminders
4. Repeat information in different ways.
5. Encourage the participants to talk and link new information with their experience.

## Summary

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It is very gratifying to see people make changes that move them closer to recovery. When you structure your sessions to motivate participants, they are more likely to make those changes. Now you have learned about ways to structure the sessions, and you have learned specific facilitating techniques that enhance motivation to learn and change. Motivated participants are receptive to new ideas and more successful at engaging in wellness behaviors.

The successes of participants are part of what will keep you motivated and excited about your role as a facilitator. That is what the circle of learning is about! Your instructional style, the participants' motivation and cognitive abilities all work together to lead to positive change.

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