

Managing Moods

Everyone has an occasional bad day. Yet for some people, a change in mood can mean trouble. When a participant begins to complain about experiences or commitments that previously were not an issue, the prescriber should take notice - and take extra care.

Communicating with a person experiencing mood changes can be difficult. It is important to be calm and empathetic, no matter how unreasonable or unaccommodating they may be. If a prescriber shows understanding, listens and asks questions, and offers constructive feedback, the more likely there is to be a positive outcome for all involved.

The following are possible situations prescribers may experience with their participants, as well as ineffective and effective examples of communication:

- 1. Mood Change:** The participant complains about having to take medicine.

Ineffective: You quit taking your medicine before and that was a total disaster! You know you are just going to get sick again!

Effective: It is not unusual for people to get tired of taking medicine. Taking medicine is up to you. But the last time you stopped taking your medicine, you ended up in the hospital. I would sure hate to see that happen again.

- 2. Mood Change:** The participant shows reluctance in keeping appointments with treatment team members.

Ineffective: I told you yesterday that you had an appointment to see your prescriber today at 10 a.m. It is your responsibility to get yourself to your appointments!

Effective: Let's talk about what got in the way of keeping the appointment, so we can work out ways to be sure you keep the next one.

Good communication is an important part of participant care. The better skills a provider has in dealing with a person experiencing mood changes, the better care he or she can provide.

To see more examples of positive and negative communication or to learn more about gaining skills for reacting to mood changes, refer to *Team Solutions Workbook 9, Session 3*.

Reference:

- Scheifler, P. 2009. *Managing Crisis*. In *Team Solutions, Workbook 9, Sessions 2 and 3*.

