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A Small Changes Approach to Healthier Eating Facilitator Notes

Main Learning Points and Review of Healthy Steps from Last Session: *Choosing Healthy Eating and Wellness*

1. A healthy lifestyle can help your general well-being.
2. Small steps can add up to big changes.

Review Healthy Steps from last session.



Note

This session could be used for family/friend groups or sessions. It offers an opportunity for the participant and family to practice skill-building together.

Remember

It is important to acknowledge and discuss participants' successes, progress and challenges.

Tips for this Session

Save plenty of time to focus on the “Small Healthy Step” practice options between sessions. Ask participants to think about why it is important to reinforce new knowledge and skills they learned during the session and between sessions. Ask if anyone wants to share an experience where they either “learned by doing” (such as cooking) or got better at something the more they did it (like riding a bike, dancing, cooking, driving, or working on computers). Also, ask participants if they have ever found it helpful to reread an article or letter so they can better recall the information. Practice options should reinforce knowledge and skills from the current session, as well as previous sessions. Always review practice options when you reconvene, so participants understand that practicing is a valuable use of their time.

Additionally, have you noticed that there are different options in each “Small Healthy Step” practice assignment? We designed them this way because people go through a natural set of steps when making change. The options match these steps. The first option is usually designed for people who are at an early step: *thinking* about making the change, but not ready to actually *do it*.

The second option frequently encourages people to involve their support system and the third and fourth option (and the take an “*Extra Healthy Step*”) are generally more action-oriented for people who are ready to engage in a new skill or behavior. The fourth option encourages individuals to choose their own healthy step.

Trying to persuade people who are not ready to engage in a new skill or behavior can have the opposite effect; they “dig their heels in” even further. Thinking about doing something new or different can help move people toward doing something different at a later time. All of the steps are a natural part of the change process, so you should encourage participants to take the step they’re ready to take.

Suggestion for Topic Introduction and Relevance to Participants

“Think about a choice you made recently that you feel good about. It doesn’t have to be about food choices. It can be any decision you made that you think was a good decision. Who would like to share that with us?”

(Encourage responses from the group.)

“Now think about two small steps that helped you follow through with that choice.”

“For example, today you made the decision to come to this session. What are some steps you took to make that happen?”

(e.g., set an alarm to wake up, took a shower, got dressed, caught the bus, planned for transportation home, etc.)

“In today’s session you will learn how to use similar small steps to make healthier decisions about eating; a ‘small changes’ approach.”

Topic Assessment Answer Key

1. A 2. C 3. D 4. B

T – topic introduction
R – relevance to participant
I – identify objectives
M – materials for session
M – motivate to use

Review of Session 1: Choosing Healthy Eating and Wellness



Main Learning Points of Session 1

What were the main learning points of Session 1? If you did not attend the last session, you may guess, and also write the answers as people say them:

1. A healthy l_____e can help your general well-being.
2. Small steps can add up to big c_____s.

Take a Small Healthy Step Review:

What small healthy step did you choose to work on between sessions?

Did you complete your small healthy step?

1. **Yes.** How did it go? _____

2. **No.** What got in the way of completing your practice?

If you still plan to complete your practice, when will you do it?

3. **I didn't choose a personal practice option.**

Topic Assessment



Mark one: Pre Post

Your Score:
+ ____ out of 4

Directions:

1. Read each question carefully.
2. Read every answer before marking one.
3. Mark only one answer to each question.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Obesity can lead to physical health problems including: diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and certain types of cancer.

- A. True B. False

2. Which one of the following steps would help lower your daily calorie intake by 100 calories?

- A. Eat more bread than vegetables
B. “Super-size” your order at a fast-food restaurant
C. Substitute water or diet soda for one regular can of soda
D. Eat a piece of your favorite cake for dessert

3. ____ out of ____ Americans are overweight or obese.

- A. 1 out of 5
B. 2 out of 5
C. 1 out of 3
D. 2 out of 3

4. A small changes approach can help you feel and/or stay:

- A. Overweight
B. Motivated
C. Awake
D. Out of trouble

Topic Assessment



5. I am confident that I will track everything I eat or drink today.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure

6. This information is important for me to know.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

At the end of the session, answer these questions before turning in this paper:

7. This session helped me.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. What I liked about this session: _____

9. How this session could have been better for me: _____

A Small Changes Approach to Healthier Eating

Objectives for this Session

1. Identify at least 1 health risk associated with being overweight or obese.
2. Understand that people with mental illness are more likely to have health problems than people without mental illness.
3. Identify at least 1 small healthy step you could add to your daily eating habits.

For many years, we have heard about an obesity epidemic. An obesity epidemic means that more and more people are becoming extremely overweight. Being extremely overweight can cause many physical health problems. Some of these problems are:

1. Diabetes
2. High blood pressure
3. Heart disease
4. Sleep apnea (a health problem that affects your breathing when you sleep)
5. Certain types of cancer

Despite the many health problems that obesity can cause, the average American's waistline continues to grow! Clothing companies actually have started making waistbands larger by one inch and hip inseams larger by three inches since the 1940s to make us believe that we are the same size that we once were. Today, two out of three Americans are overweight or obese.

Main Learning Point #1

Two out of three Americans are overweight or obese.

Maintaining a healthy weight and lifestyle is challenging for everyone. Why is it so important for people with mental illness to choose healthy eating? Staying healthy is possibly even more challenging for people with mental illness.

A Small Changes Approach to Healthier Eating (continued)

A few of these challenges are:

1. Symptoms
 - Anxiety
 - Being withdrawn
 - Depression
 - Mania
2. Lifestyle
 - Low income
 - Having fewer choices about meal selections
 - Low activity
3. Medication Side Effects
 - Drowsiness or sleepiness
 - Increased appetite

For many reasons, people with mental illness are more likely to:

- have a diet high in sugar and fat and low in fiber
- be less physically active
- eat, smoke, and drink alcohol to cope with stress
- have trouble finding healthcare

All of these challenges increase the chances a person will develop health problems such as diabetes, heart disease and lung disease. All of these problems affect the quality, and possibly even the length, of a person's life. Knowledge and tools that help you choose better health can help make life better.

Main Learning Point #2

People with mental illnesses face more challenges in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.



Have you ever gone on a diet or tried to lose weight? Yes No
If yes, about how many times have you tried to lose weight? _____

A Small Changes Approach to Healthier Eating (continued)

If you have ever gone on a diet, you are not alone. About 45 million Americans diet each year. However, diets don't usually work. When most people diet, they end up feeling cheated because they miss their favorite foods. They also get tired of eating diet foods, and they go back to their old way of eating. Eventually, the weight creeps back on. Many people want to make a lifestyle change but have trouble doing so because of some of the reasons listed above.



Would you like to have your cake and eat it too? Yes No

Most people would answer, “YES!” When living a healthy lifestyle and using a “small changes” approach to healthy eating, you can have your cake and eat it, too—just maybe not as much. It's important to be satisfied and to allow yourself to eat the foods you enjoy, within reason.

There are many small healthy steps that you can make as part of the “small changes” approach. For example, in order to reach or maintain a healthy weight, experts suggest you eat 100 fewer calories than you do now, or you increase your physical activity to burn up that extra 100 calories.

The average person can lose 10 pounds in one year this way—and the good news is he or she won't even miss 100 calories.

Main Learning Point #3

A small changes approach can help you stay motivated to make changes.

A Small Changes Approach to Healthier Eating (continued)

Small Steps for Success

Ways to Trim 100 Calories from Your Day:

1. Substitute water or diet soda for one can of regular soda.
2. Leave 3-4 bites on your plate.
3. Take a 15-20 minute walk.

Below are a few more “small steps” you can use as part of a “small changes” approach to making healthier food and drink choices.



- 1. Don't Drink Your Calories!** In addition to regular soda, other drinks with sugar, such as alcohol and some juice drinks, provide empty calories that have little or no nutritional value. For example, if a person cut out one 12-ounce can of regular soda and did this for an entire year (without adding other calories), that person would weigh about 16 pounds less at the end of one year.
- 2. Avoid Fast Food.** If you do eat at a fast food restaurant, say “no” to “super-size.” Are we super-sizing French fries or people? Is it healthier to “super-size” or “smart-size” a meal? If someone chooses not to super-size a meal, this cuts about 500 calories.
- 3. Switch from whole milk to 2% milk.** If a person switched from whole milk to 2% milk (and drank the recommended 3 servings of milk per day) at the end of a year that person would weigh about 5.6 pounds less. He or she would have healthier bones, also.

Main Learning Point #4

Small steps add up to big changes!

Review & Moving Forward



The *main learning points* of this session are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Move Forward – Take A “Small Healthy Step” to Ensure Your Success!

It’s important to practice new knowledge and skills. What will you do between now and the next session? Please choose one healthy step from the list below:

- 1. STUDY.** I am going to reread my handout at least once.
- 2. SHARE.** I will share my handout with someone in my support system. I will ask _____ to read it and talk with me about it.
- 3. PRACTICE.** I will practice one of the small steps for success such as, cutting 100 calories from my day or saying “No” to Super-Size. Fill in which small step you will practice: _____
- 4. OTHER** (Choose Your Own Healthy Step):

Motivation to Practice. How will practicing help you reach your goals?