

**Allegany Rehabilitation Associates**  
**Personalized Recovery Oriented Services**

**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Total Number of Sessions:** 12

**Duration of each session:** 45 minutes

**PROS Service:** CRS Basic Living Skills

**Target population:**

- **Diagnosis:** Mood Disorders, Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorder, Anxiety Disorders, Substance Abuse Disorders, Personality Disorders
  
- **Barriers to be overcome:**
  - Low motivation toward life role goals due to mental health symptoms
  - Limited stress management skills
  - Limited decision making/problem solving skills
  - Limited time management, organization, and study skills
  - Limited knowledge of academic tools and resources

**Service Goal:**

The goal of this group service is to assist participants in gaining the skills and knowledge necessary in order to effectively pursue their life-role goal of furthering their education.

**Service Objectives:** To be able to identify

- To be able to identify a specific education related goal and the reason(s) behind that goal.
- To be able to identify potential barriers that may interfere with attaining life role goal.
- Participants will have an improved understanding of academic resources, including academic accommodations and financial aid.
- Participants will learn study, listening, note-taking, problem-solving, and memory skills that will contribute to achieving education related goals.

**References:**

- <http://www.nacacnet.org/research/PublicationsResources/Marketplace/Documents/FinAd7steps.pdf>
- [http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/partner\\_agencies/college.htm](http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/partner_agencies/college.htm)
- <http://cpr.bu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Higher-Education-Support-Toolkit.pdf>
- <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/clearinghouse/files/TI054.pdf>
- <http://www.bazelon.org/Portals/0/pdf/YourMind-YourRights.pdf>

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 1

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):** Participants will understand the purpose of the Education Planning group and will identify their specific educational goals and the reasons behind those goals.

**Handouts:**

- Setting Personal Goals Worksheet

**Activities:**

- Discuss the goal of this group including service objectives.
- Give each participant a folder and have them write their name on it.
- Explain that the participant (or the facilitator) will keep their folders throughout the 12 weeks to store any resources distributed and completed in group. The folders will be given to the participants to keep at the end of the 12 weeks.
- Discuss possible educational goals and their relative importance.
- Hand out the Setting Personal Goals Worksheet for participants to complete in group. Have participants identify their specific educational goals and the reasons behind those goals.
- Collect completed Setting Personal Goals work sheet and save for use throughout the duration of the 12 weeks.

**Homework:**

- If participants were unable to identify their educational goals and the reasons behind them, ask them to reflect on what they hope to accomplish in this group over the next 11 weeks.

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**Setting Personal Goals**

**Put yourself on a path.**

**Your first step should be to set some type of goal for yourself.** Personal goals are important because they help you know if or when you've succeeded. Consider the following questions:

What do you want to get out of furthering your education?

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What do you want to do with your education?

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How do you want to feel once you've accomplished your educational goal?

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**Write a statement of your goal in clear, concise terms.** Documenting this goal can help keep you on track as the various options present themselves. Your goal might be to:

- Get a better job
- Get a different type of job
- Get your GED
- Get an associate's degree
- Learn a trade
- Finish your bachelor's degree
- Feel better about yourself
- Set an example for your children
- Earn more money
- Enhance and expand your skills
- Explore an interest or hobby

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*Source: <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=672>*

**After you've clearly articulated your goal**, you can begin to look for the best way to achieve it...like searching for a program that will help you achieve your goal.

**If you're having trouble identifying or writing your goal**, you may want to take a self-assessment or aptitude test.

**Regardless of your reasons for continuing your education**, remember that you are not alone!

*Source: <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=672>*

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 2

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):** To be able to identify health, personal, interpersonal, and/pr academic barriers that may interfere with academic success and satisfaction.

**Handouts:**

- Student Self-Assessment Checklist (Appendix A; p. 7-11)

**Activities:**

- Explain how identifying personal barriers to academic success can help participants achieve their life-role goal of furthering their education.
- Handout the Self-Assessment Checklist for participants to complete in group. Discuss and process potential challenges.
- Ask participants to identify possible strategies to dealing with these challenges in the academic setting.
- Have participants identify how the challenges identified may or may not interfere with them achieving their life role goals.
- Collect the Student Self-Assessment Checklist for a reference tool in later session.

**Homework:**

- Have participants identify the two challenges that will likely impact their academic success the most.
- Have participants identify at least two strategies/personal strengths that will help them overcome these challenges.

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**Using the “Student Self-Assessment Checklist”**

The “Student Self-Assessment Checklist” (Appendix A; pages 9–11) can be used to help assess generalized problems that a student may be experiencing and can assist the student in clarifying the health, personal, interpersonal and/or academic issues that may be hindering his/her academic success and satisfaction. For example, a student may experience difficulty with communication skills, relationship skills, or skills related to self-care.

When it is challenging for a student to explain the issues that they are facing within the academic setting, ask the student to complete the “Student Self-Assessment Checklist” as a helpful starting point. Through a review of the completed “Student Self-Assessment Checklist,” areas of student concern will be revealed. Further exploration may help the student to clarify the underlying issues and to explore possible campus and community resources that could be helpful.

**Use this form to:**

- Assess generalized problems that a student may experience
- Assist the student to clarify health, personal, interpersonal and/or academic issues
- Review and discuss the need for additional campus supports

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**Session 2 Homework: Challenges to my Academic Success**

*Directions: Identify 2 challenges that will likely impact your academic success the most. Then identify at least two strategies/personal strengths that will help you overcome those challenges.*

1. Challenge that will likely impact my academic success:

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a. Strategy/personal strength that will help me overcome this challenge:

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b. Strategy/personal strength that will help me overcome this challenge:

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2. Challenge that will likely impact my academic success:

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a. Strategy/personal strength that will help me overcome this challenge:

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b. Strategy/personal strength that will help me overcome this challenge:

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 3

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):**

- To be able to identify personal challenges that participants may experience in the classroom setting.
- To be able to identify strategies and/or formal accommodations that can help manage specific challenges identified.

**Handouts:**

- Student Self-Assessment of College Classroom Difficulties (Appendix A; p. 12-16)

**Activities:**

- Review and collect homework from session 2.
- Explain how identifying potential challenges in the classroom can help participants achieve their life-role goal of furthering their education.
- Handout the Student Self-Assessment of College Classroom Difficulties for participants to complete in group. Discuss and process potential challenges.
- Ask participants to identify possible strategies to dealing with these challenges in the classroom setting.
- Collect the Student Self-Assessment of College Classroom Difficulties for a reference tool in later session.

**Homework:**

None

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**Session 3**

**Using the “Student Self-Assessment of College Classroom Difficulties”**

The “Student Self-Assessment of College Classroom Difficulties” (Appendix A; pages 12–16) can be used to help assess classroom-specific problems that a student may experience. This checklist delineates actions the student can take on his or her own that may improve the difficulties along with possible accommodations that can be formally requested if the student actions alone are not adequate.

Use this form to:

- Help a student to identify common disability-related limitations
- Review and discuss particular classroom difficulties
- Explore the suggested actions that the student could assume independently to address the problems that he or she reports experiencing
- Explore possible accommodations that could be formally requested if the individual efforts of the student are not sufficient

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 4

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):**

- To be able to identify legal rights in rights at the post-secondary education level.
- To be able to define academic accommodations and identify how to get appropriate academic accommodations.

**Handouts:**

- “Academic Accommodations” (p. 11)
- “How do I get academic accommodations?” (p. 12)

**Activities:**

- Explain and discuss:
  1. The Americans with Disabilities Act and how it applies to participants’ educational goal.
  2. The definition and purpose of academic accommodations.
  3. Common academic accommodations.
  4. How clients access academic accommodations.
  5. Handout the “My Accommodations” worksheet to be completed as homework.

**Homework:**

- Have participants complete the “My Accommodations” worksheet and bring it back for the next session.

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**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

In general, if you have a mental health problem that substantially limits you in one or more major life activities (sleeping, working, learning, speaking, caring for yourself, etc.) even if these symptoms are controlled by medications or some other form of treatment, or a history of such a problem, you may be protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (Federal Law). That means that once the school is aware of your disability it must take *reasonable steps* to revise policies and practices that create obstacles for you because of your disability.

- To comply with the ADA, schools must provide academic accommodations and make reasonable modifications to policies and rules when necessary to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.
- However, schools do not need to make changes if doing so would fundamentally alter their operations, surrender essential academic and technical requirements or cause them unnecessary financial burden.
- A school also cannot discriminate against a qualified student based on a disability—for example, by forcing a student to leave because of a mental health problem if the student meets the school’s basic academic and technical requirements.

**What are academic accommodations?**

Academic accommodations are designed to support students with disabilities so that they can profit from the curriculum and the activities available to the general population of students.

- Accommodations are not intended to water down the curriculum or reduce academic expectations but rather to provide fairness in *access* to the general curriculum.

Academic accommodations are not the same as academic modifications or adaptations.

- When an academic “adaptation” is made for a student, he or she participates in the same activity as his or her peers but an adaptation or variation is made to the materials or learning strategies used in the lesson or to the curricular goals and outcome expectations.

Academic or instructional “accommodations” are based on a student’s individual need and are intended to help the student do the same work and meet the same outcome goals as his or her peers.

**Academic accommodations**

Academic accommodations for people with disabilities vary according to an individual’s particular needs, but include such measures as:

- Allowing additional time to complete exams.
- Providing a private environment or alternate location in which to take exams.
- Permitting students to use equipment to take exams (e.g., a word processor or a machine that enlarges print).
- Allowing students to audio record lectures.
- Providing modified deadlines for assignments.
- Reducing course load or providing alternate work assignments.
- Providing preferential classroom seating.
- Providing early availability of syllabus and textbooks.
- Providing transportation services.

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- Providing access to extracurricular programs.
- Providing orientation to campus facilities.
- Allowing excused absences.
- Allowing the student to postpone assignments and exams.
- Allowing the student to work from home.
- Allowing the student to drop courses.
- Allowing the student to change roommates or rooms.
- Allowing an aide or helper to stay in the student's room.
- Providing retroactive withdrawals from courses if academic difficulties were due to depression or another mental health condition.
- Providing a leave of absence.

Check with your school to see if these accommodations are available. At most schools these services are standard and you shouldn't be afraid to ask for them. You will likely be asked to provide a mental health professional's explanation of why the accommodation is needed. If the school disagrees, it may request additional documentation or an independent assessment. If the school does not provide a needed accommodation, you have a right to file a grievance or a complaint with the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

#### **How do I get accommodation?**

1. The first place to start asking for accommodations is the office of your disability services coordinator on campus.
  - \*\*\*It is your responsibility to make the appropriate personal aware of your disability. No accommodations can be made if the school is not aware.\*\*\*
  - a. They will be able to help you with housing, academics and other accommodations you may need.
  - b. If your campus doesn't have a disability services center, it will still have an individual named as disability services coordinator.
2. Or you could check with your resident advisor, academic advisor, counseling center, health center, Dean of Students office or housing services for what types of accommodations are available and tell them the types of accommodations you need.
3. Your request does not need to take any particular form, but it may be best to put the request in writing.
  - a. You may be asked to provide a medical professional's statement about your disability, including the nature of the disability and how it affects your ability to participate in and benefit from the academic program, before receiving accommodations or modifications.
  - b. You have a right to see what this statement says.

Source: <http://www.bazelon.org/Portals/0/pdf/YourMind-YourRights.pdf>

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**Session 4 Homework:**  
**My Accommodations Worksheet**

*Instructions: Identify 2 different academic accommodations that might help you be successful in school and why you think so. Try to relate your answers back to your mental health symptoms.*

Academic Accommodations 1:

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Reason it might be helpful:

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Academic Accommodations 2:

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Reason it might be helpful:

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 5

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):**

- To be able to identify 3 potential financial supports for continuing education.

**Handouts:**

- None

**Activities:**

- Review and collect homework from session 4.
- Review and discuss the seven steps involved in applying for financial aid.
- Discuss how participants' mental illness may interfere with their ability to complete the financial aid process.

**Homework:**

- None

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**Financial Aid**

**1. Set Your Expectations High: You Can Afford College**

Faced with seemingly insurmountable tuition prices, complicated financial aid forms and hundreds of scholarship possibilities, it's difficult to know where to begin. In fact, paying for college may be so daunting that, in some cases, it might actually deter students and parents from the process altogether. College graduates can choose from more jobs and have been shown to earn \$1 million more than those with only a high school education over a lifetime. The key to affording college is knowledge—knowing not only how to pay for it, but also, and more importantly, where to look to find the resources that will allow you to afford a college education.

**2. Types of College Aid**

Aid for college comes in all shapes and sizes: need-based and non-need-based aid; federal and state aid; aid from colleges, themselves; and other scholarships.

A combination of the following may be available to you:

- The Federal Pell Grant
- The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- The Federal Perkins Loan
- Federal Family Education Loans or Federal Direct Loans
- Federal Work-Study employment (FWS)
- American Competitiveness Grant (ACG)
- Merit and other scholarships

**3. Where to Begin**

Navigating the financial-aid maze can be confusing and overwhelming. In fact, most students and parents may not even know where to start.

As you contemplate the process, to get your feet wet, NACAC recommends using the following two resources:

- The U.S. Department of Education: <http://studentaid.ed.gov>
- NACAC's Steps to College series on Financial Aid: [www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org)

Keep in mind that federal and most state governments, as well as colleges and some scholarship providers, use the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, for aid processing.

**4. Applying for Free: The FAFSA**

Most financial aid is given because the student has demonstrated need for it, and the amount of that aid is limited to the student's calculated need.

Simply stated, a student's need is determined as the difference between the cost of attending the school—sometimes referred to as the cost of attendance, or COA—and the amount the student and his/her family is expected to pay, also known as the Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

**COA – EFC = Student Need**

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The Expected Family Contribution is made up of the amount the student's parents can pay from their income and assets; the amount the student can contribute from earnings, plus savings account(s); and any amount that is being contributed as a non-repayable gift from any source. The student and parents are responsible for paying what they can; financial aid is intended to supplement such efforts, not substitute for them.

*To be considered for financial aid, you are required to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. Many states use the FAFSA for state grant or scholarship consideration. The FAFSA may also be used for institutional aid. To access and complete the FAFSA online, or for more information, visit [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).*

#### **5. Navigating the Rest of the Field: Finding Scholarships and Avoiding Scholarship Scams**

In contrast to need-based grants or scholarships, other scholarships are awarded to students based on their grades, accomplishments or other personal characteristics, rather than financial need. However, few students receive scholarships out of the blue. Maximizing your chances of receiving a scholarship requires research to find the scholarships and work to complete the applications. Call the financial aid offices of the colleges that interest you and ask about their merit or non-need-based scholarships. Another common source of scholarships are organizations in which you or your family are involved. Ask about these common sources of scholarships; many corporations award scholarships to children of employees, so ask your parents to check their place of work; local volunteer organizations may offer scholarships to worthy applicants; local or national religious organizations often have scholarships available to their members; and if you have a particular talent, like music or forensics, ask your advisor or teacher about national organizations relating to your talent that might offer scholarships. You may need a combination of these kinds of financial aid, because "full-ride" scholarships are limited. To research scholarships outside of your local area or personal contacts, look for scholarship directories in the library, bookstore or guidance office. You can also look for scholarships on a variety of Web sites and [www.nacacnet.org/lists](http://www.nacacnet.org/lists) links to these sites. While scholarships can be helpful in financing your college education, estimates show that families lose millions of dollars to scholarship fraud every year. Be careful, and choose your sources wisely. For more scholarship scam information, or to report

#### **6. Important Considerations**

In spite of your hard work and research, it is possible for a college to offer admission to a student but not to offer financial aid. A college is not obligated to provide financial assistance to all accepted students, so it's a good idea to apply to at least one college whose cost is within reach of your resources without substantial aid. You may also need to explore alternative educational plans, such as beginning your study toward a four-year degree at a less expensive two-year community college and then transferring to a four-year college or university to complete the degree. You might also check out colleges with cooperative education programs in which students can combine work with study as they advance toward a degree.

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**7. Where to Go for Help**

Refer to the following resources for help as you make your way through the financial-aid process:

- The financial aid office at your college(s) or career school(s) of choice
- State departments of higher education: Call the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) at 800/4-FED-AID (800/433-3243) or visit [www.ed.gov/Programs/bastmp/SHEA.htm](http://www.ed.gov/Programs/bastmp/SHEA.htm)
- The U.S. Department of Education: [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov)
- The NACAC Web site: [www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org)
- [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org) offers comprehensive student financial aid information, advice and tools
- [www.ibrinfo.org](http://www.ibrinfo.org) offers information about new federal student loan payment and forgiveness programs
- [www.projectonstudentdebt.org](http://www.projectonstudentdebt.org) offers advice for understanding borrowing

**ACCES-VR:** ACCES-VR can provide tuition assistance, fees, books and required materials, partial room and board and related supports for consumers who meet eligibility based on their economic need. ACCES-VR consumers must establish an individualized plan for employment (IPE) with an employment objective requiring college training to qualify for ACCES-VR assistance.

In all instances students and families must first access traditional financial aid such as the New York State tuition assistance program (TAP), federal PELL grants and/or Veterans college aid prior to relying on ACCES-VR sponsorship.

At virtually every college campus throughout New York State, there are disability related resources available to assist students with disabilities with full access and accommodations.

**More information on FAFSA:** FAFSA is a form that can be prepared annually by current and prospective college students (both undergraduate and graduate) in the United States to determine their eligibility for student financial aid (including the Pell grants, and work-study programs).

The U.S. Department of Education begins accepting the application beginning Jan. 1 of each year for the upcoming academic year. Each application period is 18-months, however most federal, state, and institutional aid is provided on a first come, first served basis. Students are advised to submit a FAFSA as early as possible for consideration for maximum financial assistance.

**Discussion questions: Could your mental illness interfere with your ability to complete the financial aid process? If so, how and what could you do to overcome this barrier.**

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 6

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):**

- To be able to identify one reason why time-management skills are important in academic success.
- To be able to identify one strategy to improve time management skills.

**Handouts:**

- “How effective are you at managing your time?” self-assessment (p.19)
- “To-Do List” worksheet (p.21)

**Activities:**

- Explain and discuss the importance of time management.
- Hand out “How effective are you at managing your time?” self-assessment to be completed in group.
- Explain and discuss the meaning of the various scores on the self-assessment.
- Explain the steps involved in creating a “to-do” list and how it relates to time management.
- Have participants create their own “to-do” list for the upcoming week.
- Participants will be asked to create a “do-list” every week for the remainder of the 12 weeks.

**Homework:**

- Have participants implement the “to-do” list they created in group over the next week and be prepared to share their experiences at the beginning of the next session.

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**Time Management**

*“Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not.”*

- Walter Bagehot

*The Importance of Time Management:*

- ❖ Reduces Anxiety
- ❖ Provides a Sense of Control
- ❖ Reduces the Number of Forgotten, Late, Missed Assignments
- ❖ Increases Amount of Time Spent Being Productive

**How effective are you at managing your time?**

Total: ____	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
How often do you plan in an effort to keep life from running out of control?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you put daily plans on paper?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you allow flexibility in your plans?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you accomplish all you plan for a given day?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you plan time for what matters most to you?	1	2	3	4	5
How often is your daily plan destroyed by urgent interruptions?	5	4	3	2	1

**Your Score:**

**6-10 = Poor Planner**

You should consider using new tools and processes to help you plan effectively. Consider a time management course.

**11-15 = Below Average Planner**

You may already have a planning system, but using it more effectively will help reduce the stress and lack of control you feel in your life.

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**16-20 = Average Planner**

Your planning system is working, but you can do better. You may need help focusing on priorities, dealing with urgent interruptions or writing your daily plan.

**21-25 = Above Average Planner**

Your planning system is working well. Keep up the good work, with periodic reviews to be sure you're planning around what matters most in your life.

**26-30 = Excellent Planner- or Candidate for Burnout?**

You have mastered planning and should experience the serenity that comes from taking charge of your life. But make sure you're in control of your planning rather than letting it control you.

**So where do I start?**

Creating a "To-do" List:

1. Create a list at the beginning of every week (Sunday or Monday), before bed or when you wake up
2. Write each class in order
3. List what is due for each class for the next week w/due dates
4. Estimate the amount of time needed to complete each "to-do"
5. Do the same for personal "to-do"s (i.e., laundry, dishes, cleaning, etc...)
6. Create "due dates" for personal "to-do"s
7. Now that you have your "To-Do" List, what are your priorities? Rank order the items on your "to-do" list from most important to least important (1 being the most).

EXAMPLE:

# 1 Mental Health (Taking Meds, going to program, etc...)

# 2 School (class, reading, studying, homework)

# 3 Personal needs (eating, sleeping)

# 4 Athletics/Hobbies/Activities

# 5 Leisure (T.V., Myspace/Facebook)

Emergencies are the only exception!

(Death in family, Medical problems)

8. In a day-planner, on your phone, or calendar---designate a specific day and time for each of your "to-do"s".

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**To-Do List Worksheet**

To Do	Due Date	Time needed to complete	Priority

In a day-planner, on your phone, or calendar (wherever you will see it and utilize it)--- designate a specific day and time for each of your “to-do’s” over the course of the next week.

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 7

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):**

- To introduce participants to the concepts of Active Learning, using the five senses.
- To introduce participants to the concepts of SQ3R and SQ4R study techniques.

**Handouts:**

- “To-Do List” worksheet (p.21)

**Activities:**

- Review and collect homework from session 6.
- Have participants create a new “to-do” list for the upcoming week in group.
- Explain and discuss active learning techniques.
- Explain and discuss the SQ3R and SQ4R methods of studying.

**Homework:**

- Have participants implement the “to-do” list they created in group over the next week and be prepared to share their experiences at the beginning of the next session.

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**Session 7: Study Skills**

**Active Learning Techniques:**

- active learning techniques=utilizing the five senses.
- most efficient learning takes place only when more than one learning channel is in use:
  - For instance, we remember only 10% of what is read,
  - 20% of what is heard,
  - 30% of what is seen, 50% of what is heard and seen together,
  - 70% of what is said (if thought is combined with speaking),
  - 90% of what is done.
  - In the first 24 hours after initial learning, it is possible to forget up to 80% of the material learned.
  - A review within the first 24 hours prevents this loss.

**SQ3R and SQ4R Study technique:**

What is the SQ3R Method of Study?

- The initials stand for steps in the process.
- The SQ3R technique can save you valuable time in studying.
- The main goals are to help you organize study material and to make you an active, thinking learner.

**1. S = Survey: Spend some time getting familiar with the material you are about to study.**

- Observe headings.
- Observe the structure of the chapter.
- Read the introduction.
- If there is a summary (formal or informal), read it.
- If there are end-of-chapter questions, read them. If there are illustrations or charts, study them.
- Note whether the author sums up repeatedly or only once.
- The survey step gives you a set for the job of reading.
- Thoughtfully done, it allows you even to predict what the author is going to say.
- It's a great time-saver

Note: If no clues are given, scan the material itself for general content.

**2. Q = Question: Ask yourself questions based on your survey.**

- As you approach each section, turn the boldface heading into a question.
  - For instance, turn a heading such as “The Genetic Code” into an active question such as, “What is the genetic code?” or “Why is it called a code?” Turn the summary statements into questions.
- The question step makes you into an active, not a passive, reader: you are reading for answers.

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**3. R = Read: Read the section to find the answers to your questions.**

- Take the material a section at a time. If you like, set a time goal.
- Underline after you read.
- Make notes of important points.
- Several options are available for this.
  - Underline in the text.
  - Place numerals in the textbook margin beside key points.
  - Make marginal notes in the text. Jot down key words in major phrases.
  - Use “divided page” in notebook.
    - Divide your page into three lengthwise sections.
    - The middle section will be the largest and contain an outline of the material.
    - On the left side of the page, key words that can be used as clues will be written for each major section of the outline.
    - The right hand margin will be reserved for a final review where you put into your own words the information presented.
    - This can be an excellent means of reviewing your material later.

**4. R = Recite: Use self-recitation as a understanding check.**

- Look away from the assignment and from any notes you have taken, and ask yourself the questions about what you have just read.
- Make the deliberate effort to recall the important points.
- If you can do so, you have mastered that part of the material.
- If not, you should re-read.
  - The recall step is what fixes the material in your mind. It makes reviewing for exams much easier.
  - Understanding while you read is not enough.

*Note: Don't wait till the end of the chapter to recite, but do it for each major section as you go along.*

**5. R = Review: Periodic reviews are very helpful for retention of new material.**

- As you complete the work, review it briefly by giving it a quick second reading.
- The more often you re-read, the better you will understand.
- Skim over the headings and recite what you previously learned.
- Re-read enough to check yourself and see either that you haven't omitted anything or that your memory is refreshed.
- Use a cover sheet to cover notes and only use the key words to help you remember the new material.
- Anticipate test questions and see if you can answer them.

**Special Notes:**

1. Additional sources of questions are charts and graphs, which are summaries even if

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they are presented visually.

2. Italicized phrases indicate important points.

3. It's easy to understand and memorize the steps of the SQ3R method, but putting them into practice requires deliberate effort. For a while you may find that your older, more passive habits will interfere with the active effort to study. But you can learn to apply SQ3R successfully, and you will find it rewarding.

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 8

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):**

- To be able to identify 2 reasons why taking notes is important in the educational setting.
- To be able to identify 2 effective note taking techniques.

**Handouts:**

- “To-Do List” worksheet (p.21)
- “Taking Notes” (p. 27)

**Activities:**

- Review and collect homework from session 7.
- Have participants create a new “to-do” list for the upcoming week in group.
- Explain and discuss effective note-taking strategies.
- Discuss how mental illness could affect one’s ability to take effective notes.

**Homework:**

- Have participants implement the “to-do” list they created in group over the next week and be prepared to share their experiences at the beginning of the next session.

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**Taking Notes:**

I. There are many reasons for taking lecture notes.

- A. Making yourself take notes forces you to listen carefully and tests your understanding of the material.
- B. When you are reviewing, notes provide a gauge to what is important in the text.
- C. Personal notes are usually easier to remember than the text.
- D. The writing down of important points helps you to remember them even before you have studied the material formally.

II. Instructors usually give clues to what is important to take down. Some of the more common clues are:

- A. Material written on the blackboard.
- B. Repetition.
- C. Emphasis.
  - 1. Emphasis can be judged by tone of voice and gesture.
  - 2. Emphasis can be judged by amount of time instructor spends on points and number of examples used.
- D. Word signals  
(e.g., “There are two points of view on . . . .”; “The third reason is . . . .”; “In conclusion . . .”).
- E. Summaries given at end of class.
- F. Reviews given at beginning of class.

III. Each student should develop his or her own method of taking notes, but most students find the following suggestions helpful:

- A. Make your notes brief.
  - 1. Never use a sentence where you can use a phrase. Never use a phrase where you can use a word.
  - 2. Use abbreviations and symbols.
- B. Put most notes in your own words. However, the following should be noted exactly:
  - 1. Formulas.
  - 2. Definitions.
  - 3. Specific facts.
- C. Use outline form and/or a numbering system. Indentation helps you distinguish major from minor points.
- D. If you miss a statement, write key words, skip a few spaces, and get the information later.

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- E. Don't try to use every space on the page. Leave room for coordinating your notes with the text after the lecture. (You may want to list key terms in the margin or to make a summary of the contents of the page.)
- F. Date your notes. Perhaps number the pages.

**Discussion Question: How could your mental illness affect your ability to take effective lecture notes?**

*Note: Remember, receiving lecture notes is a common accommodation. However, it is still a good idea to take your own notes and use the notes provided to supplement your own.*

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 9

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):**

- To be able to identify 3 strategies to being a good listener.
- To be able to identify how mental illness can affect one's ability to listen during class.

**Handouts:**

- "To-Do List" worksheet (p.21)
- "Ten Bad Listening Habits and How to Overcome Them" (p.30)

**Activities:**

- Review and collect homework from session 8.
- Have participants create a new "to-do" list for the upcoming week in group.
- Explain and discuss effective listening strategies.
- Discuss how symptoms of mental illness could interfere with ability to listen.

**Homework:**

Have participants implement the "to-do" list they created in group over the next week and be prepared to discuss it at the next session.

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<b>Ten Bad Listening Habits and How to Overcome Them</b>	
<b>Bad (How to tune out!)</b>	<b>Good (How to overcome)</b>
1. Calling subject uninteresting and tuning out.	1. Can I USE it? Sift, screen, and bear down on subject.
2. Criticizing delivery (poor organization, etc.)	2. Dig out what's needed. The responsibility is on YOU, not the lecturer.
3. Getting over stimulated and tuning out.	3. Withhold evaluation until comprehension is complete (i.e. hear him out before judging.)
4. Listening only for facts (utterly inefficient). The worst listeners do this and think it's good.	4. Listen for ideas and concepts. Facts then arrange themselves. This helps retention.
5. Outlining everything (rigid).	5. Mostly you can't. Use flexible techniques. (list of ideas and facts a good technique)
6. Faking attention.	6. Concentrate (Who are you kidding?)
7. Tolerating or creating distractions. (Can't hear speaker, etc.)	7. Eliminate them, Be assertive about it.
8. Avoiding difficult material.	8. TRY it.
9. Letting "emotional words" throw you off.	9. Be aware some words throw you. Don't be thrown. Tolerate.
10. Wasting "the differential between speech and thought speed." Lecturer 100 wpm; Average thinker 400wpm. Mind wanders while speaker catches up. You're tuned "out for 50, in for 10."	10. USE the time-gap to concentrate. 3 ingredients of good concentration: a. Anticipate what the lecturer is going to say are what was said with what you anticipated. b. Identify the instructor's evidence. c. Recap about every 5 min.

**Discussion Question: How could your mental illness affect your ability to listen in class?**

*Note: Remember, recording lectures is a common accommodation. However, it is still a good idea to listen and pay attention to the lecture as best you can.*

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 10

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):**

- Participants will learn strategies to help them remember information more efficiently.

**Handouts:**

- “To-Do List” worksheet (p.21)
- “Suggestions for Remembering” (p.32)

**Activities:**

- Review and collect homework from session 9.
- Have participants create a new “to-do” list for the upcoming week in group.
- Explain and discuss strategies to help participants remember information they have learned.
- Discuss how remembering information will contribute to participant’s ability to achieve their life role goal.

**Homework:**

- Have participants implement the “to-do” list they created in group over the next week and be prepared to share their experiences at the beginning of the next session.
- Have participants practice utilizing one of the memory strategies they learned in this session and be ready to share their experiences at the beginning of next session.

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**Suggestions for Remembering**

1. Meaningful material is remembered much more easily than is meaningless material. The more meaningful the material to you, the more relationships you can see, the more principles you understand, the more you will remember.

2. Mnemonic or memory devices, are useful for immediate recall only. They should be used with caution. It is far better to see meaningful relationships between parts of the material, because often the mnemonic device is remembered long after the material it stands for is forgotten. Sometimes a mnemonic device can malfunction and lead to a wrong answer.

*For example, the mnemonic device “In fourteen hundred and ninety-two Columbus sailed the ocean blue” was recalled as “In fourteen hundred and ninety-three Columbus sailed the deep blue sea” by one child and “In nineteen hundred and forty-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue” by another.*

Another mnemonic device is one used by some people to recall, in order, the colors of the visual spectrum. They simply remember the name Roy G. Biv. Each letter of that name is the first letter of one of the colors in the spectrum: R-red, O-orange, Y-yellow, G-green, B-blue, I-indigo, and V-violet. Then, it is only necessary to remember the name in order to reproduce the colors in sequence

3. In reviewing material, relating parts to the whole is the best way of remembering. Any charts or organization you can make will help.

4. Use many senses in learning—visual, auditory, etc. For example, you may see material in different ways such as by reading the text and reading your notes. You may say it to yourself and remember how it felt to say it. You may hear yourself saying it, hear it in lecture, or hear it from other students. You may feel yourself write it or even experience a different kinesthetic feeling by typing or writing it in different forms or on charts. Occasionally, the sense of smell may reinforce memory as in the case of smelling H<sub>2</sub>S.

5. Practice the material in the form in which you are to be tested. For instance, giving a principle or law orally does not guarantee your ability to write it or to apply it. On the other hand, writing a poem or selection does not guarantee your ability to deliver it well orally. It is more effective to actually do some Chemistry problems than to read about how to do them.

6. Attitudes are extremely important. If you are mentally set to be interested and to learn, it is likely that this will happen. If you are preparing to be bored, it is likely that you will be bored and you are less likely to remember or learn.

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 11

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):**

- Participants will learn a systematic approach to problem solving and decision making.

**Handouts:**

- “To-Do List” worksheet (p. 21)
- “Problem Solving” worksheet (p.36)

**Activities:**

- Review and collect homework from session 10.
- Have participants create a new “to-do” list for the upcoming week in group.
- Explain the steps involved in a systematic problem solving/decision making model.
- Distribute “Problem Solving” worksheet for participants to complete in group.
- Discuss the importance of effective problem solving as it relates to participants’ life role goals.

**Homework:**

- Have participants implement the “to-do” list they created in group over the next week and be prepared to share their experiences at the beginning of the next session.

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**Problem Solving and Decision Making**

**A 5 Step Problem Solving Strategy**

1. Specify the problem - a first step to solving a problem is to identify it as specifically as possible. It involves evaluating the present state and determining how it differs from the goal state.
2. Analyze the problem - analyzing the problem involves learning as much as you can about it. It may be necessary to look beyond the obvious, surface situation, to stretch your imagination and reach for more creative options.
  - seek other perspectives
  - be flexible in your analysis
  - consider various strands of impact
  - brainstorm about all possibilities and implications
  - research problems for which you lack complete information. Get help.
3. Formulate possible solutions - identify a wide range of possible solutions.
  - try to think of all possible solutions
  - be creative
  - consider similar problems and how you have solved them
4. Evaluate possible solutions - weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each solution. Think through each solution and consider how, when, and where you could accomplish each. Consider both immediate and long-term results. Mapping your solutions can be helpful at this stage.
5. Choose a solution - consider 3 factors:
  - compatibility with your priorities • amount of risk
  - practicality

**Keys to Problem Solving**

- Think aloud - problem solving is a cognitive, mental process. Thinking aloud or talking yourself through the steps of problem solving is useful. Hearing yourself think can facilitate the process.
- Allow time for ideas to "gel" or consolidate. If time permits, give yourself time for solutions to develop. Distance from a problem can allow you to clear your mind and get a new perspective.
- Talk about the problem - describing the problem to someone else and talking about it can often make a problem become more clear and defined so that a new solution will surface.

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**Decision Making Strategies**

Decision making is a process of identifying and evaluating choices. We make numerous decisions every day and our decisions may range from routine, every-day types of decisions to those decisions which will have far reaching impacts. The types of decisions we make are routine, impulsive, and reasoned. Deciding what to eat for breakfast is a routine decision; deciding to do or buy something at the last minute is considered an impulsive decision; and choosing your college major is, hopefully, a reasoned decision. College coursework often requires you to make the latter, or reasoned decisions. Decision making has much in common with problem solving. In problem solving you identify and evaluate solution paths; in decision making you make a similar discovery and evaluation of alternatives. The crux of decision making, then, is the careful identification and evaluation of alternatives. As you weigh alternatives, use the following suggestions:

- Consider the outcome each is likely to produce, in both the short term and the long term.
- Compare alternatives based on how easily you can accomplish each.
- Evaluate possible negative side effects each may produce.
- Consider the risk involved in each.
- Be creative, original; don't eliminate alternatives because you have not heard or used them before.

An important part of decision making is to predict both short-term and long-term outcomes for each alternative. You may find that while an alternative seems most desirable at the present, it may pose problems or complications over a longer time period.

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**Problem Solving**  
Identify a problem and try to come up with solutions to overcome it. By considering all of the options you will hopefully come up with the best solution.

 Identify Your Problem



For	Against



Chosen Solution

Steps Required										
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										

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**Title of Service:** Education Planning

**Session:** 12

**Duration:** 45 Minutes

**Service Objective(s):**

- Participants will learn what test anxiety is and will be able to identify 1 short-term and 1 long-term technique for reducing it.

**Handouts:**

- Participants' resource folders

**Activities:**

- Review and collect homework from session 11.
- Explain what test anxiety is and how it could effect success in the academic setting.
- Explain and discuss both short and long term techniques for reducing test anxiety.
- Discuss common myths about test anxiety.
- Distribute participants' resource folders with all of the resources provided in groups through out the 12 weeks.

**Homework:**

- None

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**What is Test Anxiety?**

Most students feel some degree of unease in testing situations; this is a normal response. Lower levels of anxiety can even be beneficial in keeping you alert during the test. It is also common, however, for students to be slowed down by anxiety, especially when they are more focused on the physical responses (heart beating, sweaty palms, upset stomach, etc.) or on the fear of failing than on recalling information for the test.

**How to Reduce Test Anxiety**

To reduce test anxiety, you need to understand both the relaxation response and how negative self-talk undermines your abilities.

**Relaxation Techniques**

The relaxation response is any technique or procedure that helps you to become relaxed and will take the place of an anxiety response. Someone simply telling you to relax or even telling yourself to relax, however, without proper training, does little to reduce your test anxiety.

There are both short-term and long-term relaxation response techniques which help control emotional (somatic) test anxiety. These techniques will also help reduce worry (cognitive) anxiety. Effective short-term techniques include The Tensing and Differential Relaxation Method and The Palming Method.

**Short Term Relaxation Techniques**

**The Tensing and Differential Relaxation Method**

The Tensing and Differential Relaxation Method helps you relax by tensing and relaxing your muscles all at once. Follow these procedures while you are sitting at your desk before taking a test:

1. Put your feet flat on the floor.
2. With your hands, grab underneath the chair.
3. Push down with your feet and pull up on your chair at the same time for about five seconds.
4. Relax for five to 10 seconds.
5. Repeat the procedure two to three times.
6. Relax all your muscles except the ones that are actually used to take the test.

**The Palming Method**

The palming method is a visualization procedure used to reduce test anxiety. While you are at your desk before or during a test, follow these procedures:

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1. Close and cover your eyes using the center of the palms of your hands.
2. Prevent your hands from touching your eyes by resting the lower parts of your palms on your cheekbones and placing your fingers on your forehead. Your eyeballs must not be touched, rubbed or handled in any way.
3. Think of some real or imaginary relaxing scene. Mentally visualize this scene. Picture the scene as if you were actually there, looking through your own eyes.
4. Visualize this relaxing scene for one to two minutes. Practice visualizing this scene several days before taking a test and the effectiveness of this relaxation procedure will improve.

Short-term relaxation techniques can be learned quickly but are not as successful as the long-term relaxation technique. Short-term techniques are intended to be used while learning the long-term technique.

**Long Term Relaxation Techniques**

The Cue-Controlled Relaxation Response Technique is the best long-term relaxation technique. Cue-controlled relaxation means you can induce your own relaxation based on repeating certain cue words to yourself. In essence, you are taught to relax and then silently repeat cue words, such as "I am relaxed."

After enough practice, you can relax during tests. The Cue-Controlled Relaxation Technique has worked with thousands of students

**Negative Self-Talk**

Negative self-talk is a form of worry (cognitive) anxiety. This type of worrying can interfere with your test preparation and can keep you from concentrating on the test. Worrying can motivate you to study, but too much worrying may prevent you from studying at all.

Negative self-talk is defined as the negative statements you tell yourself before and during tests. Negative self-talk causes students to lose confidence and to give up on tests. Further, it can give you an inappropriate excuse for failing tests and cause you to give up on learning.

Students need to change their negative self-talk to positive self-talk without making unrealistic statements.

Positive self-statements can improve your studying and test preparation. During tests, positive self-talk can build confidence and decrease your test anxiety. These positive statements; as well as others, can help reduce your test anxiety and improve your grades. Before the test, make up some positive statements to tell yourself.

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**The 12 Myths about Test Anxiety**

1. Students are born with test anxiety.
2. Test anxiety is a mental illness.
3. Test anxiety cannot be reduced.
4. Any level of test anxiety is bad.
5. All students who are not prepared have test anxiety.
6. Students with test anxiety cannot learn math.
7. Students who are well prepared will not have test anxiety.
8. Very intelligent students and students taking high-level courses, such as calculus, do not have test anxiety.
9. Attending class and doing my homework should reduce all my test anxiety.
10. Being told to relax during a test will make you relaxed.
11. Doing nothing about test anxiety will make it go away.
12. Reducing test anxiety will guarantee better grades.

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**APENDIX A**

**Higher Education Support Toolkit**