

CHANGES MODULE 12: Get the power



When we experience mental health problems, we are often confronted with **powerlessness** i.e. the feeling that we have no control over a situation. Sometimes this is caused by others discriminating against us, or others making decisions for us when we were unable to. Learning how to 'get the power back' is an important step for building hope for the future.

Here are some tips for developing **empowering behaviour**:

1. When appropriate, make amends and/or share grievances with those who you have harmed or who have harmed you
2. Seek out situations, jobs and people who affirm your intelligence, perceptions and self-worth and avoid those who are hurtful, harmful or demeaning to you
3. Seek to find your vocation – i.e. what you genuinely want to do with your life, and develop the will and the wisdom to follow it
4. Apologise *only* for your mistakes. Don't cover up, analyse or take responsibility for the mistakes of others
5. Share with others all those things for which you feel guilt or shame
6. Affirm and enjoy your strengths, talents and creativity – never hide these qualities to try and protect someone else's ego
7. Learn to trust in the healing power of the truth
8. Learn to express your love and gratitude
9. Appreciate that an empowering relationship is one that is reciprocated i.e. giving as well as receiving
10. Realize that you have choices and be prepared to follow them through
11. Be good to yourself. Treat yourself with gentleness and respect
12. Gradually learn to tolerate greater levels of success, pleasure and power
13. Acknowledge that bad feelings are common to everyone
14. Don't allow yourself to be patronised. Never let disagreement or anger (or any other expression of your personal rights) to be treated as part of your problem



Discussion Options

What do you do to help you feel empowered?

What has stopped you from doing the things you wanted to do in the past?

Further reading

“Taking Back Control of Your Life”, Mental Health Recovery.

<http://mentalhealthrecovery.com/info-center/taking-back-control-of-your-life>

“5 Steps to Becoming a More Empowered You”, Linda Sapadin

<https://psychcentral.com/blog/5-steps-to-becoming-a-more-empowered-you/>

Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent and Lead. Brené Brown.