

THE CLUBHOUSE MODEL OF PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EVENING AND WEEKEND RECREATION PROGRAM

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This paper is designed to introduce the clubhouse model of psychosocial rehabilitation to the recreation practitioner. It will briefly outline the basic philosophies behind the clubhouse model. It will then guide you through the development and implementation of the Evening and Weekend Program at Progress Place - a very important component to the clubhouse program. It is the author's hope that you will see what a unique and innovative approach to holistic rehabilitation the clubhouse model has to offer.

Progress Place Rehabilitation Center is located in Toronto, Canada. It is based on the clubhouse model of psychosocial rehabilitation which originated in 1948 by John H. Beard. Fountain House in New York City is the home of the "original clubhouse". Fountain House was designed as an intentional community to create a restorative environment within which individuals who have been socially and vocationally disabled by mental illness can be helped to achieve or regain the confidence and skills necessary to lead vocationally productive and socially satisfying lives (Beard, Propst & Malamud, 1982).

Progress Place is the pioneering clubhouse in Ontario. Its doors opened in 1976 and was mostly a social and recreational program for ex-psychiatric patients who lived in the community. In 1983, Progress Place decided to experiment with the clubhouse model and in 1984, it became a full time clubhouse. In 1986, Progress Place became an accredited training center by Fountain House for the clubhouse model of psychosocial rehabilitation. It is one of five North American training centers and the only one in Canada. Progress Place enables persons with severe and persistent mental illness to live productive, dignified lives in the community. A structured, supportive environment exists along with an empowering work-oriented philosophy. Its approach provides support and friendship as well as help in finding jobs and a place to live. Progress Place offers realistic alternatives to inadequate housing, chronic unemployment, long term hospitalization and social isolation, which often characterize life for ex-psychiatric patients.

According to Beard, et al (1982), the clubhouse model of psychosocial rehabilitation has four fundamental messages:

1. The clubhouse is a club, and as in all clubs, it belongs to those who participate in it. As with most clubs, participants are called members. Membership is considered to be an enabling designation and it creates a sense of belonging.
2. All members are made to feel that their presence is expected and that someone actually anticipates their coming into the program each day.



3. The program is designed to ensure that each member feels wanted as a contributor to the program. The program is intentionally set up so that it will not work without the cooperation of the membership.
4. Each member is made to feel needed in the program. Clubhouse activities are carried out jointly by staff and members working together. Mutual support, caring and well being is at the heart of the clubhouse concept and underlies everything that is done to ensure that every member feels needed in the program.

Along with the messages that are conveyed to the membership, there are four fundamental beliefs:

1. A belief in the potential productivity of the most severely disabled psychiatric client.
2. A belief that work is a deeply generative and re-integrative force in the life of every human being.
3. Men and women require the opportunities to be together socially.
4. The development of a housing program which ensures that members can live in adequate housing that is pleasant and affordable.

Progress Place also offers guaranteed rights of membership. These rights of membership include: the right to a place to come to; the right to meaningful work; the right to meaningful relationships; the right to a place to return to.

All of the messages, beliefs and rights of membership encompass the basic philosophies of the clubhouse model. There are a variety of components to this model and each will be described in the following narrative.

Universal Standards

These are a set of guidelines that all clubhouses use to ensure consistency of the clubhouse model around the world (Propst, 1992).

Voluntary Nature of the Clubhouse

When our members come to Progress Place, they are never forced to participate in an activity. As a right of membership, our members have a guaranteed place to come to and the opportunity for meaningful work. If a member chooses to participate in the program, that's great - if a member chooses not to, that's okay too. The member must make the decision for him/herself as to what they want to do while at the clubhouse.

Work Ordered Day

Work has its own meaning to each individual person. Work at Progress Place offers our members a sense of belonging and being needed. Work provides a firm groundwork to organize one's day, provides a sense of identity and helps to develop relationships with others. Because the work in the clubhouse is meaningful, the contribution of each member is taken seriously. Our members become involved in work as a result of relationships that are developed with each and with staff.

The work ordered day at Progress Place begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. Our members participate in daily unit meetings and choose what type of work they would



like to do for the morning and/or afternoon. The types of jobs available range from maintenance work to statistics, and video work to preparing meals. All of our members choose what unit they prefer to participate in and those include the clerical unit (statistics, photocopying, intake, computer work, etc.), First Floor Unit (video, boutique sales, cash and counter, maintenance, etc.), and the Cafe Unit (preparing lunches, dinners etc.)

Work done in the clubhouse is considered to be meaningful. Work is not created out of tokenism. There are daily needs/responsibilities; tasks that must be completed in order for the program to survive. The program was specifically set up so that without the help of the membership, the program would collapse. This helps to create a sense of ownership, investment and pride. Work is meaningful and it has a sense of both urgency and purpose.

Transitional Employment Program

This is a continuation of meaningful work and is done in the community. Essentially TE (Transitional Employment) is an opportunity for our members to go out into the business community and work part-time (4-20 hours/week) at entry-level positions and are paid entry-level wages. The TE usually lasts up to 6 months. What's unique about the program and a major selling point to most TE and potential TE employers is the guarantee that a position will always be covered during regular scheduled working hours. Progress Place staff are first trained on a TE. Once a staff person understands the job completely, they will teach/supervise a member on the job. If a member calls in sick or is unable to work, the staff person will do the job in his/her place. This guarantees to the employer that the job will be filled at all times. The TE placements are placements and are not permanent employment opportunities in individual companies for our members. The benefits of TE to our members include: developing relationships with employers/supervisors, responsibility for job duties and job performance, punctuality and the routine of going to work.

Housing

Progress Place has developed a housing program which ensures that members can live in adequate housing that is pleasant and affordable. To date, 67 members are supported in the housing program. Our housing includes one group home, shared accommodation (2-bedroom apartments), one bedroom and bachelor apartments.

Staff and Member Relationships

Staff in the clubhouse have bottom line responsibility. Unlike the voluntary nature of membership, staff are required to be at the clubhouse five days a week for seven hours per day. Staff are instrumental in decision making and because of their consistency, they have bottom line responsibility. In working with our members, staff have a very unique role. Staff work together with members in a partnership role. Both staff and members have the opportunity to learn and grow, and to give and receive from each other. We rely on each other's talents, skills, visions and dreams. When the staff and member relationship is working, the clubhouse can grow, evolve, excite and deepen in its own identity (Vorspan, 1985). When it's not working members lack motivation, staff are burnt out, attendance drops and staff feel overwhelmed.



As staff, we need to motivate our members and try to make a more attractive clubhouse. According to Glickman (1989) we can do this by trying to be more welcoming, more creative in finding opportunities for our members, more energetic towards clubhouse activities, try harder to help a member find his/her niche in the club and be courageous in taking risks and delegating responsibilities.

Many new staff entering the clubhouse environment have been trained in traditional social work or social service programs. They often have experience working with clients who come to them and they provide clients with what the client lacks or needs. Many members who come into the clubhouse expect a more structured environment than what the clubhouse provides. Often members come with the "patient-hood" thinking pattern that they will be told what to do and when to do it. In a clubhouse environment, thinking patterns change and need to change. The clubhouse is not considered to be a clinical or therapeutic environment. It is therefore necessary for staff and members to change these thinking patterns and treat each other like human beings. This takes time and is an ongoing process but, most importantly, it is the beginning of relationship building. People must be willing to drop these artificial barriers.

The clubhouse consists of a healthy network of people who care about each other. There are two common analogies used when describing the clubhouse and the relationships within it. One is the family - a healthy group of people who feel attached to one another and who foster independence. The other is work - the members and staff are co-workers who work together to complete a variety of tasks.

Evening/Weekend Program

Progress Place offers its members an Evening and Weekend program which runs five nights a week and Sunday afternoons. A wide variety of meaningful adult recreation pursuits are offered including volleyball, swimming, slo-pitch, drama, choir, bridge, outings, etc. In order for the clubhouse to provide a holistic rehabilitation program, there must be an Evening/Weekend component.

The Evening/Weekend Program at Progress Place

According to the universal standards referred to earlier, standard number 30 states:

"The clubhouse has recreational and social programs during evenings and on weekends. Holidays are celebrated on the actual day they are observed"(Propst, 1992, pg. 29)

Historically, Progress Place has always been open on Friday evenings for a coffee house program. It became apparent that there was a need for more recreational opportunities. Progress Place received funding for a pilot project - to be open Monday and Wednesday nights as well as Sunday afternoons. This appeared to be successful and the need arose to hire a full time Evening Weekend Coordinator to set the program in motion. The Evening Weekend Coordinator works with several part-time staff and, of course, the members who participate in the Evening/Weekend program.



According to clubhouse philosophy, the Evening/Weekend program is designed to meet the members needs for companionship and socialization. The programs are all conducted in the evening, on the weekends and holidays, NOT during regular work hours (Beard et al., 1982).

The Evening/Weekend program enables members to return to the clubhouse after they have become fully employed, are attending classes or are involved in other programs in the community. It's also helpful to members if they are experiencing difficulties and are looking for some support. Finally, the informality of the Evening/Weekend program can help to ease re-entry into the rehabilitation environment for a member who has stopped coming to the club or who has been hospitalized.

In order to determine what types of programs the Evening/Weekend program should offer, a survey was developed and distributed to the membership. There were also a variety of meetings held for people who wanted to become a part of the overall planning process.

One of the meetings, which still exists today is the social planning committee meeting. This group was involved in determining the direction of the program and the activities to be offered. This group is also responsible for continually evaluating the Evening/Weekend program and does so through yearly surveys, attendance and the follow-up of the Goals and Objectives set forth at the onset of the Evening/Weekend program. The goals and objectives of the Evening/Weekend program are as follows:

1. To offer a wide variety of meaningful adult recreation pursuits, including inhouse activities and community based activities.
 1. in house activities
 2. community based activities
2. To ensure the Evening/Weekend program is consistent with the overall clubhouse philosophy by reviewing standards and philosophy, by having the coordinator attend the three week colleague training at Fountain House, and by requiring the coordinator to attend clubhouse meetings and to network with day staff.
3. To ensure members are participating in the development and implementation of the Evening/weekend program by involving them in the social planning committee, delegating specific tasks to them, and by encouraging members to lead activities.
4. To offer educational opportunities to our members through the Toronto Board of Education, and community resource information on hand in the clubhouse.
5. To promote a healthy lifestyle by offering a substance abuse self-help group, a nutrition group, and opportunities for physical activities.
6. TO HAVE FUN!!!

Progress Place members have the opportunity to engage in the following: dinner, english classes, math classes, movies, help yourself group, relaxation group, drama, choir, art group, euchre (instruction), bridge (instruction), skating, slo-pitch, aerobics, volleyball, swimming, outings, walking group, country line dancing, dance, Friday night activities, and drop in.

All members are welcome to join in the social planning committee that meets once a week. With the continued support and direction of this committee, the Evening and Weekend



program will continue to strive towards offering the best possible program that is also consistent with the overall philosophy of the clubhouse.

In conclusion, the clubhouse model of Psychosocial Rehabilitation is indeed an unique and innovative program. Progress Place, following the clubhouse model, offers its members a place where people can come to live their lives as wholly and creatively as possible. It is an environment that reflects the work ordered day and believes in the value of partnerships It creates an environment where members and staff work together towards completing meaningful work tasks. The Evening/Weekend program works hard to ensure that the program is consistent with the overall clubhouse philosophy. The program began with an understanding of the purpose behind having an Evening/Weekend program and went on to set goals and objectives. These are evaluated yearly by the membership. Progress Place will continue to strive towards offering a holistic rehabilitation program which includes an exciting Evening and Weekend recreation component.

References

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