

Making Choices In Your Recovery Journey

Housing, Employment, Treatment Choices,
Choosing a Treatment Team



Learn to Make Decisions That Are Right for YOU

Support and Information for Schizophrenia

Mental health recovery is an ongoing process, not a single outcome. Each person's recovery experience is unique. By making a personalized, inclusive plan for managing a mental health condition, a person has the best chance of living a meaningful life.

Making Choices That Are Right for You



Making choices and decisions along the mental health recovery journey is part of the process.

Choices within your recovery journey vary, like what to wear or what to eat for lunch. Some choices, however, have the potential for life-changing impact. These choices can be harder to make and might include choosing where to live, what job to have, or what day program to attend.

One of the more important choices you may make during your recovery journey is finding the right treatment options. You and your team will work together to figure out which medications and supportive services are best for **YOU** and your needs at that time.

Some of My Choices



Where to live



My job



Therapy



Medication options



Peer support



Friends



Go back to school



Treatment team

What makes a good choice?

Making good choices begins with **YOU** being part of the decision-making process in whatever way feels comfortable.



Good choices are about what is best for you at a given time—they do not have only one right or wrong answer.

Sometimes, making a good choice helps to **solve a problem** you might have or moves you one step closer to achieving your goals.

Thinking in the short-term and the long-term

It's easy to only think about the short-term benefit of a choice.

For example, staying in bed for an additional hour may feel great for the next hour. In the long term, it may make you late for work and get in the way of your goal of keeping a job.

Thinking about the **long-term effects** of choices can help you make good decisions.

Examples:

- If I start a regular exercise program—like walking for 30 minutes 3 days a week—after 2 or 3 weeks I may have more energy and could start focusing on my health
- If I take my medication regularly, my symptoms might get under control, and I could start thinking about school for next semester

Write down a choice you can make today and how it might affect you.

My choice _____

Short-term effect _____

Long-term effect _____

When choices seem hard or overwhelming—break them down into smaller pieces.

Example: Getting a Job

You might decide you would like to work. As you think more about it, you realize you are not sure what type of job you want, where to work, whether to work full-time or part-time, or even where to start.

Breaking down your choice into smaller pieces

Things to consider:

Problems that might get in the way of working	If I want or need to go back to school	Whether I am ready and able to work
Jobs I might like	Getting a job	What skills I have
When I would like to start working	Full-time or part-time	Who can help me in my job search

Tips

1

Knowledge is power.

Get enough information so you have the facts to make important choices and really be part of the decision.

2

Make a list of pros and cons,

and understand the trade-offs for each choice.

3

Get advice from someone you trust who shares your values.

Talking it out might help make the decision clearer.

Making Choices That Are Right for YOU

Worksheet

You might find it helpful to fill out and discuss this worksheet.

In what areas of your life are you currently facing choices?

Circle the ones that are important to you.



Where to live



My job



Therapy/
support groups



Relationships



School



Medication



Other _____



Who might be helpful to talk with about choices you are facing?

- Family member
- Friend
- Doctor
- Housing specialist
- Case manager
- Peer counselor
- Social worker
- Therapist
- Other _____

Break down your choices into smaller pieces.

Choice one:

Choice two:

Medication Options

If you live with schizophrenia, **antipsychotic medication** is an option that can help you control some of the symptoms of your illness.

If you believe medication might help you, there are options and choices. You should always speak with your doctor about the risks and benefits of any medication.



Short-acting Medication

Oral medications

are taken every day or multiple times a day.

Short-acting injectables

are used mainly for emergencies or crisis use—like in the emergency room.



Oral Solution



Dissolvable Tablets

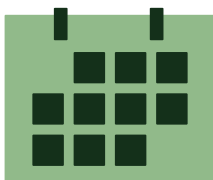


Pills

Long-acting Medication

Long-acting injectable medication slowly releases medicine into your body over time to control symptoms.

These injections are given by a healthcare professional once or twice a month or even less frequently depending on the specific product.



Long-acting medication stays in the body longer, which is why you don't have to take it as often.

Supportive Treatment

Medication plays one part in the mental health recovery process. Other **supports** are also a part of the treatment mix and helpful for many people.

Circle the types of support services you think might be helpful to you.



Therapy



Employment support



Housing support



Peer support



Support groups



Other _____

Medication Considerations

If medication is part of your treatment plan, you can begin a conversation with your doctor about the best medication for YOUR needs.



Your medical history



Side effects



Benefits & risks



Costs

- What symptoms do you need help with?
- What do you and your doctor expect the medicine to do?
- What medication have you tried in the past?
- What risks and side effects are you most worried about?
- What is the difference between short-acting and long-acting medication?
- How will you pay for the medication?
- Do you have issues taking your medication regularly?

Steps for Success



Learn from past experiences.

When making choices, think about past experiences where you've been faced with a similar decision. How can you apply lessons you learned before to your current choice?



Get the facts.

Collecting information and facts about the choices you are making will empower you to be part of decisions.



Ask for advice.

No person can be an expert in everything. There's nothing wrong with getting help and advice from someone you know and trust, particularly when a choice is not your area of expertise.

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