

Syllabus for *Developing Spirituality Stress Hardiness*

Fall Semester 2012 (September 13 - December 13)

Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation's Recovery Education Program

Instructors: Marjorie Jacobs, 617-353-6628 *6 (voice mail)
Dan Hogan & Lianne Hope (Intern): 617-353-3549

Day, Time, Location: Thursdays, 10:00-12:00pm, LCR

60-90% of all visits to health providers are stress related. Stress affects our overall health and feelings of connectedness with others. When facing stressful situations, many people tend to retreat and isolate themselves in an effort to protect themselves. This strategy, in the long run, can be harmful to one's recovery and health.

In Developing Spirituality & Stress Hardiness, we will learn about the stress response, identify our own "stressors," and be introduced to strategies to cultivate our spiritual side as a way to cope better with the negative effects of stress and work toward our recovery. In addition, we will be exploring how connecting with others and embracing positive thoughts, emotions, and actions can make us stress hardy or resilient to the negative effects of stress. We will draw upon and cultivate our inner spiritual resources or *inner pharmacy*: our imagination, acceptance, hope, faith, joy, loving kindness, compassion, and gratitude. They promote health, recovery, and a sense of wellbeing. In class we will have short readings, discussions, and opportunities to connect with each other and practice skills like mindfulness, meditation, acceptance, loving kindness, and learned optimism. Each class will have an educational component (reading and/or discussion) and a relaxation or practice activity. We will also have some opportunity to talk about our stresses and spiritual challenges in order to receive help from the collective wisdom of the class.

You are encouraged to have an open mind to explore new ways of learning. Participation in class activities and doing at-home work (short readings, self-reflection and practice of techniques learned in class) are highly encouraged for you can make progress in your recovery. Regular and consistent attendance is essential. Please dress in comfortable clothing and shoes. Since we will be sharing experiences from our lives, all participants will be asked to honor confidentiality.

Course Goals:

- To learn about the stress response & the components of stress hardiness
- Increase our understanding that positive thoughts, feelings, actions, and relationships with others contribute to our recovery, our mental and physical health, and wellbeing.
- Learn and practice some mindfulness-based relaxation skills to become more hardy or resilient in the face of stress
- To learn and cultivate the skill of mindfulness to enhance self-awareness
- To begin to open our heart to acceptance, understanding, patience, gratitude, hope, & compassion for ourselves and others
- Begin to change ways of thinking and acting in order to develop stress hardiness
- To increase social interactions among students and experience feelings of connectedness and community
- To encourage students when home to read class handouts, practice meditation, and journal
Doing at home practice reinforces course content, builds stress hardiness (resilience to stress), and contributes to recovery.

Schedule of *Developing Spirituality & Stress Hardiness* Class Topics and Dates

September 13	Overview of Course: Goals, Syllabus, Role of Student (Class Guidelines & 6P's), Getting to Know Each Other With Active Listening, Assessments
September 20	Perception, Stress, & the Stress Response: Our Sources of Stress, Stress Effects on Body, Mind, and Spirituality Mindful Breathing Practice
September 27	The Relaxation Response: Changing Our Perception Walking Meditation & Seated Guided Imagery Practice
October 4	The Four Components of Stress Hardiness & Recovery: Cultivating Positive & Hopeful Thinking, Exploring Our Choices, Taking Action for Recovery Strong Back, Soft Front Guided Imagery Meditation
October 11	Tapping Into Our Inner Pharmacy: Power of Positive Emotions and the Placebo Effect Hand Warming Meditation
October 18	NO CLASS: MassPRA Conference
October 25	Cultivating Positive Emotions: happiness/joy, loving kindness, hope, faith, compassion, curiosity, awe, gratitude, etc. Broaden & Build Theory Hand & Heart Warming
November 1	Developing Optimism & Hope As A Mindful Choice Singing Statements of Optimism Partner Activity The Pause Practice
November 8	The Practice of Mindful Smiling Benefits of Mindful Smiling Partner Practice, Singing, Mantra Meditation
November 15	Cultivating an Attitude of Gratitude in Our Daily Life Gratitude Partner Exercises Gratitude Meditation Gratitude Journal
November 22	VACATION: NO CLASS
November 29	Opening to Love & Loving Kindness Intentional Acts of Kindness & Generosity for Self & Others Singing & Meditation Practice
December 6	Cultivating Compassion Compassion & Recovery Metta Meditation
December 13	Living Joy: Discussion & Meditation Practice Course Reflections, Evaluations, Assessments & Certificates