

PRS, Inc. Recovery Academy

# COURSE CATALOG



**Psychiatric  
Rehabilitation  
Services**

*PRS wishes to gratefully  
acknowledge the generous  
contribution of Red Thinking  
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help designing this catalog.*

# INTRODUCTION

We are very pleased to be presenting the PRS Recovery Academy Course Catalog. This catalog contains the classes that are going to help you reach your recovery goals. We urge you to carefully consider the options contained in this catalog to determine which courses are most helpful to you.

The courses contained in this catalog have been chosen by the clients of PRS to be those that they find relevant to recovery. These have been researched and developed by the Recovery Academy staff into lesson plans. Many of these courses are based on Evidenced Based Practices with demonstrated successful outcomes. We are confident that you will find that these classes will provide you the opportunity to learn new skills that will help you reach your goals.

Unless stated otherwise, these classes will meet once a week for twelve weeks. There will be a registration week that precedes each twelve week quarter. We encourage you to come to registration week prepared to register for the courses that are most relevant to you. To prepare for this it might be helpful to review your goals and the choices in this catalog with your PRS Rehabilitation Services Coordinator, your Mental Health Case Manager, your Residential Counselor, family members and friends.

Not all the courses within this catalog will be offered each quarter. Some courses have very small class size limits and may require special registration procedures. Please see the individual listings for these details.

At the end of this catalog is a note sheet for you to list the courses that you are interested in taking. Please use this note sheet to prepare your choices for registration week.

There will be a registration packet distributed prior to registration week. This will contain the actual schedule of courses at each center and additional registration materials.

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# SUGGESTED STUDY TRACKS

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In order to choose the courses that best meet your goals, we have included the following pages that outline suggested courses that are grouped into tracks of study. This is provided to help guide you in the process of choosing which courses you plan to register for each quarter.

Please use these tracks in discussion with your case manager, psychiatrist, PRS case coordinator, family member and anybody else involved in providing you support as you move into recovery.

## **General Recovery Academy Recommendations**

Intro to Recovery	W.R.A.P.
Recovery: Reaching Life's Goals	Assertiveness Training
Grieving Mental Illness	Focus on Change
Stress Management	Understanding your Illness
Advocacy	

## **Employment/Volunteering**

<i>Recommended:</i>	<i>Electives:</i>
Planning Ahead	Coping Skills
Customer Service Skills	Anxiety Management
Volunteering	Money Management
Computer Skills	First Impressions
Advanced Computer Skills	Spanish for Beginners
Communication Skills	American Sign Language
Motivation	
Job Talk	
Turning Point	
Next Step	

## **Education**

<i>Recommended:</i>	<i>Electives:</i>
Education Skills	GED Prep
Study Skills	Sex Education
Computer Skills	Cultural Awareness
Advanced Computer Skills	English as a Second Language
Thinking Skills	Vietnamese Education & Support
Mind Works	

## **Independent Living**

### *Recommended:*

Basic Living Skills  
 Basic Cooking Skills  
 Safe Living  
 Money Management  
 Healthy Living  
 Coping Skills  
 Relapse Prevention

### *Electives:*

Reaching Residential Success  
 Weekend Planning  
 Seeking Safety

## **Getting Healthy**

### *Recommended:*

Caring for Physical and Mental Health  
 Healthy Living  
 Let's Get Healthy  
 Smoking Cessation  
 Exercise  
 Overcoming Disordered Eating A  
 Overcoming Disordered Eating B  
 Nutrition

### *Electives:*

Diabetes Support Group  
 Basic Cooking Skills  
 Seeking Safety  
 Let's Get Moving  
 Walk for Health  
 Yoga

## **Substance Abuse Recovery**

### *Recommended:*

Co-Occurring Disorders Support Group I  
 Co-Occurring Disorder Support Group II  
 Planning Ahead  
 Crisis Management  
 Coping Skills  
 Relapse Prevention

### *Electives:*

AA  
 Smoking Cessation  
 Anger Management for DD  
 Seeking Safety

## **Emotional Wellness Electives** *(Serving as electives to ALL tracks)*

Anger Management  
 Constructive Self-Talk  
 Coping Skills  
 Seeking Safety  
 Self Esteem  
 DBT and Mindfulness  
 Focus on Change  
 Relapse Prevention  
 Coping with Panic Attacks

Anxiety Management  
 Crisis Management  
 Dealing with Depression  
 Understanding Your Emotions  
 Improving Self Esteem  
 Symptom Management  
 Medication Management  
 Understanding your Illness  
 Facing Your Feelings

## **Other Electives** *(Serving as electives to ALL tracks)*

Making and Building Friendships  
 Social Skills I  
 Social Skills II  
 Weekend Planning  
 Sex Education  
 Recovery Academy Chorus  
 Creative Writing

Art & Music in Recovery  
 Expressive Arts  
 Mind Works  
 Exercise  
 Recovery Academy Magazine  
 Humor  
 Preventing Procrastination

## **30 and Under**

This course is designed to assist clients who are 30 years old and under with learning to manage everyday practical life skills. Some of the topics that will be covered include: budgeting your money, how to save money effectively, establishing credit, finding housing, choosing a compatible roommate, moving in and moving out of residences, taking care of your health, caring for your home or apartment and other relevant topics. Participants will build confidence and skills for managing their lives effectively and increasing their independence. (*Registration is limited to individuals under the age of 30.*)

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## **Advanced Computer Skills**

This class requires successful completion of Basic Computer Skills or demonstrated knowledge of computers. Topics covered will include Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Additional information will be provided on use of the internet and internet tools include creating a basic webpage, uploading to Youtube, facebook and other social network sites. Training will also be provided on internet dangers, such as viruses and worms.

## **Adventures in Volunteering**

This 12-week course gives participants an opportunity to experience “giving back” to their local community. Many organizations rely on volunteers to keep things running and appreciate the time and effort volunteers contribute. Participants will benefit from working as a team, learning new skills, gaining unpaid work experiences that can be added to a resume, and gaining the overall satisfaction that comes from helping others. This course requires a 2-hour commitment weekly.

## **Advocacy**

This course seeks to empower the individual to know and stand up for his/her rights as a citizen. As the mental health system moves towards the recovery model, it is important to know something about the consumer/survivor/ex-patient movement and its efforts to alter the outlook of the mental health system. Important articles in that movement will be studied. Empowering individuals to become equal partners in their treatment plans will be emphasized and ways of combating stigma will be explored.

## **American Sign Language**

American Sign Language (ASL) is a beginning level class that will focus on learning an important language that can help you communicate with individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. This class will give clients a great tool for future employment or volunteer goals, as communicating with deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the workplace is an asset and will set you apart from others. Clients will learn the ASL alphabet, numbers, phrases, spelling and much more.

## **Anger Management**

This course is designed to assist clients in developing insight and understanding of anger and accepting anger as a normal part of life. Participants will be introduced to the physiological aspects of anger and will explore the effects of anger on physical and psychological health. They also will learn to identify their anger triggers, patterns or cycles of anger and anger-related behaviors. In the latter part of the course, participants will learn skills and tools to manage anger and ways to express angry feelings appropriately. Skills learned in the course will be applicable to clients' everyday lives and will help them improve personal and work relationships.

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## **Anger Management for Dual Diagnosis Clients**

This course is designed for clients who have both a mental illness and substance issues to learn how to manage their anger effectively. They will gain awareness and understanding of how and why their anger manifests, how to identify events that may trigger their anger, how to create an effective anger control plan and they will develop a better understanding of the aggression cycle. This course will equip participants with the necessary skills to gain and stay in control of their anger by teaching them coping techniques, cognitive restructuring and the conflict resolution model.

## **Anxiety Management**

Many people experiencing the symptoms of anxiety can begin to wonder whether there is something really wrong with them and comments from others such as, "Just pull yourself together" or "There is nothing to be afraid of" are not very helpful. Anxiety affects your whole being. It is a physiological, behavioral, and psychological reaction all at once which causes one to remain in a state of uneasiness, fear, worry, and apprehension. This course is designed to better understand the nature of anxiety and how to better manage thoughts and symptoms that contribute to anxiety.

## **Art and Music in Recovery**

Art and music allow individuals to stay focused in the present moment, without worrying about the past or the future and have been helpful to those in recovery through promoting wellness, relieving stress and helping to express emotions. Art and music help individuals that have different needs, from reduction of anxiety to deeper self-understanding. In this class you will explore personal feelings and therapeutic issues such as self-esteem and personal insight, make positive changes in mood and emotional states, enhance awareness of self and environment, express oneself both verbally and non-verbally, develop coping and relaxation skills, interact socially with others and improve concentration and attention span. These skills are essential for optimal mental health and will help to manage life stressors in a more productive manner.

## Assertiveness Training

The purpose of assertiveness training is to teach clients appropriate strategies for identifying and acting on their desires, needs and opinions while remaining respectful of others. This training is tailored to the specific needs of course participants and the situations they find particularly challenging. Assertiveness training is a broad approach that can be applied to many different personal, academic, health care and work situations. Participants also will learn how to communicate in a clear and honest fashion, which usually improves all relationships. Specific areas of intervention and change in assertiveness training include conflict resolution, realistic goal-setting and change in assertiveness training include conflict resolution, realistic goal-setting and taking a more active approach to self-determination.

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## Basic Computer Skills (Business Unit)

This course is designed to provide an introduction to computer skills at a beginner's pace. The course will assist clients in using the computer to create documents needed for job, volunteer and school applications as well as teach them the skills required to complete online tasks such as email and electronic job applications. The skills learned and practiced in this course are considered essential for, and transferable to, work and school. *(Registration is limited to 10 individuals. Classes meet twice a week.)*

## Basic Cooking Skills

This course is designed for clients who have very little knowledge or experience in the kitchen and would like to learn basic kitchen and cooking skills. Participants will learn basic kitchen safety, appropriate cleaning methods, health standards regarding handling and storing food, as well as basic cooking skills. Clients will gain an understanding of cooking that they can apply to preparing simple, basic, healthful meals at home. *(Classes meet three times a week.)*

## Basic Living Skills

This course is designed for clients that need to strengthen and enhance their basic living skills. Participants will learn about and work on: basic cooking skills, including food management techniques and items needed in the kitchen; basic cleaning skills for their household and personal space, including the expected frequency of each task; and lastly, self-care tasks such as personal hygiene, which includes showering, dental health and properly cleaning their clothing, and taking pride in one's personal appearance. By strengthening their basic living skills, clients not only will exhibit the ability to be more independent in caring for themselves but also will increase their self-esteem and confidence.

## Caring for Your Physical and Mental Health

Taught by George Mason University Nursing Students, this course is designed to provide an overview of general health topics as well as specific topics that clients identify as important in their recovery. Clients will learn

about topics such as disease and illness prevention, regular testing and screenings for major health conditions, and caring for themselves physically. In addition, clients will identify specific areas of physical health that are pertinent and that they would like to learn more about. Clients will gain an understanding of health conditions that are more prevalent to individuals with serious mental illness or the aging population and prevention techniques and lifestyle choices that will impact the development of these illnesses.

## Communication Skills

Interpersonal communication is the process of sending and receiving messages with another person or group of people. The process sounds and appears to be easy. However, in reality, communication involves a very complex set of skills, as complex as those necessary for driving a car or reading a map. Part of the reason for this complexity is that messages can be communicated and received in a variety of ways i.e. listening, speaking, nonverbal signs, touch and eye contact. People need adequate communication skills in order to survive and thrive in our challenging society. Effective communication skills are critical in many walks of life including:

- Developing and maintaining friendships
- Participating in the community
- Being successful in educational settings
- Finding a job
- Succeeding in the work place
- Maintaining intimate relationships.

This course is designed to help students become more effective and successful at building and using communication skills.

## Constructive Talk

Self-talk is the continual dialogue that you have with yourself. It is also the raw material from which you manufacture your own self-image. Self-dialogue can help you achieve power over behaviors. If you control your self-talk, you can use your subconscious to help you achieve your goals. This course will help students practice and build skills/tools to help change personal “self-language.”

## Co-occurring Disorders Support Group I and II

The new Co-occurring Disorders Support Group will be based on the Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change and the curriculum will be taken directly from the book, *Group Treatment for Substance Abuse: A Stages of Change Therapy Manual*. The group will be divided into two sessions that are based on the particular stage a person is in with regard to their primary drug of choice. Because the groups contain people in similar stages the lesson plans can be designed to specifically target the most useful topics and interventions to promote movement through the Stages of Change. The lesson plan will include a brief introduction to the Transtheoretical Model. A self-assessment will then be made

to determine which stage each person is in with regard to their primary drug of choice. *(Individuals that are in Pre-contemplation, Contemplation or Preparation stages will be assigned to Support Group I. Individuals that are in Action or Maintenance stages will be in Support Group II.)*

## Coping Skills

This course is designed for clients who have difficulty managing stress and coping with life's difficulties. Clients will learn to identify symptoms and sources of stress. They will learn to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy levels of stress, and when and why unmanaged stress can be harmful. Finally, they will explore a comprehensive set of tools to prevent and cope with a variety of stressors. Skills taught will include pacing, wellness, relaxation exercises, communication skills, social support and problem solving. Clients will benefit by increasing their ability to identify, cope with and manage stress in a healthy manner.

## Coping With Panic Attacks

Many people experiencing the symptoms of anxiety and panic attacks begin to wonder whether there is something actually wrong with them. Comments from others such as, "Just pull yourself together" or "There is nothing to be afraid of" are not very helpful. Panic attacks negatively impact your whole being. It is a physiological, behavioral, and psychological reaction all at once which causes one to remain in a state of uneasiness, fear, worry and apprehension. This course is designed to better understand the nature of panic attacks and how to better manage thoughts and symptoms that contribute to them.

## Creative Writing

Creative writing can technically be considered any writing of original composition. Creative writing fulfills a need for individual expression which contributes to positive mental and physical health. In this course, clients will use creative writing assignments as an outlet for and expression of their inner world. Through story writing, clients will discover and share experiences about themselves.

## Crisis Management

How do you know the difference between a crisis, an emergency, and being really stressed out? What do you do if you are having a psychiatric crisis? Crisis Management is a course that will help clients understand and identify the difference between feeling stressed and experiencing a crisis. Clients will learn personal crisis management skills such as self-soothing, mindfulness, among others. Clients will also learn how to access crisis services in their community. The course curriculum will teach clients how they can maintain safety and how to help a peer who may be experiencing a crisis.

## **Cultural Awareness Group**

Northern Virginia is an area that contains a multitude of cultures and ethnicities. Participants in this course will identify and appreciate their cultural heritage while also learning about the cultures of others and increasing their sensitivity. They will be able to utilize this knowledge and understanding of the culture and values of others to improve their social skills, enhance their social interactions and be able to develop a richer quality of life. This understanding is the foundation for building cultural competency.

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## **Customer Service Skills**

This course, developed to help clients build leadership, customer service and practical work skills and behaviors, is designed with a classroom instruction component and a direct learning component. Participants will be required to practice at work stations (front desk, snack bar, administrative support and, at Mt. Vernon, the Thrift Shop). Participants will be required to complete shifts at work stations each week and to work at every work station offered in order to complete the requirements of the course. Work stations will be designed for both individual and team participation. Each week for the classroom portion of the course, participants will address relevant subjects (e.g., managing a workload) and will focus on various aspects of customer service — front desk and people skills, teamwork and leadership skills. During direct learning, participants will be trained to perform various workstation tasks while practicing work etiquette, to solve workplace challenges, and to improve work relationships, work behaviors and communication.

## **DBT and Mindfulness**

This course is designed to utilize skill trainings developed by Marsha Linehan to assist clients with emotional regulation, use of effective coping skills, distress tolerance and interpersonal skills. Clients will complete both in class and homework assignments to monitor their emotional reactions and pinpoint the behaviors that they would like to increase as well as decrease. In addition, clients will learn about the concept of mindfulness and complete exercises that will assist them with staying in the present moment and managing internal emotions. Finally, clients will learn to monitor their reactions to situations and improve interpersonal skills with others.

## **Dealing with Depression**

This course will assist clients with understanding depression and how it affects their lives, and will teach them the skills they need to cope with depression by developing their own plans for managing symptoms and staying well. Clients will learn to cope with symptoms of depression, track and control their moods, build a support system, increase their self-confidence and self-esteem, avoid conditions that can exacerbate mood swings, and learn to use relaxation, diet and exercise to stabilize their moods.

## Diabetes Support Class

The prevalence of diabetes has more than doubled in the United States, and there is evidence that diabetes is more prevalent (14%) in the mentally ill than in the general population. Are antipsychotic medications the cause in the rate of diabetes for persons with mental illness, or is it simply caused by lifestyle? Significant advances in treatment and self-management can dramatically reduce many diabetes complications. Diabetes is considered one of the most psychologically demanding of the chronic medical illnesses because it requires strict daily management. Although diabetes is a chronic condition, it is manageable. This course will provide a good framework for what students need to know about diabetes and ways to treat it. Students will discover how food, activity, and stress affect diabetes. This course is designed for any client who has diabetes or pre-diabetes and likes to live full, happy lives by learning to manage his/her diabetes.

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## Education Skills

This class, taught by a Fairfax County Public School teacher, will help under-prepared clients/students learn the skills needed to enroll in college level courses or enter the work force. The course will focus on Reading Comprehension skills (including identifying the main idea, organization and study skills), Writing skills (including grammar, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure and essay composition), and Math skills (including addition/subtraction, multiplication/division, fractions, work problems, basic geometry and algebra and calculus). This class will provide group learning as well as individualized attention. *(Classes meet twice a week.)*

## English as a Second Language

The purpose of this class is to help non-English speaking clients to move toward a more complete integration into the community at large. Offered during Fall and Spring Semesters each year, this course is designed to help clients with limited English language proficiency improve their English language skills. This course provides instruction in basic speaking, reading, writing and comprehending the English language. Participants will learn to make simple statements in English, to ask questions related to basic needs and common activities, to recognize letters and combine them into simple words, to recognize some written/printed words and to demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of those words. *(Classes meet twice a week.)*

## Expressive Art

Expressive Art involves assisting clients in expressing feelings, thoughts, hopes and fears through the creative arts. Participants will be able to move into recovery and wellness by creatively using the arts without being concerned with proper artistic technique but using their playful and expressive skills. This course is designed to begin the journey of self-study by searching one's inner feelings through drawing, pottery, painting, music and poetry. Expressive arts courses are demonstrated ways of using the arts in the process of recovery.

## **Facing Your Feelings**

This course provides general information about negative emotions and distress intolerance. It considers how our negative beliefs about distress and the methods we use to escape our distress, keep distress intolerance a problem in the long term. The course highlights the importance of negative emotions to our survival, and that our emotions are not permanent but are ever changing experiences. Students will learn skills to tolerate distress by accepting our negative emotions, which one can develop by way of mindfulness practice. Students will develop a distress tolerance action plan to help promote emotional wellbeing.

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## **First Impressions**

Proper hygiene practices are important because they affect an individual's wellness, relationships with others, self-confidence, self-esteem, and level of motivation. This course is designed to teach clients the benefits of developing healthy personal grooming and hygienic habits. Issues pertaining to one's personal appearance, body cleanliness, self-esteem and personal care are addressed. By the end of this course, clients will understand how to complete tasks to manage personal hygiene and the importance and benefits of developing and maintaining a daily grooming routine.

## **Focus on Change**

This is a process group that has a small group format of a maximum of eight clients. The group is designed to help clients become aware of emotions relating to both positive and negative changes in their lives. Clients will explore the impact of changes in their lives and constructive changes they can make to improve their well-being. They will examine and process changes that affect them in the following areas: changes in life and healthy coping actions, increasing positive qualities, improving relationships, coping with life stressors, problem solving, finding strengths, positive self-talk, and goals for the future.

## **GED Preparation**

This class, taught by a Fairfax County Public School teacher, will prepare clients for the GED test. The course will focus on the five subject areas covered by the GED: Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Reading and Mathematics. Each area covers the material that high school students learn during that particular course of study and will prepare participants to take the GED test. The class will provide group learning as well as individualized attention. Participants will have the opportunity to take practice tests to determine areas of strength and weaknesses to better prepare them for the exam. *(Classes meet twice a week.)*

## **Grief and Loss as it Relates to Mental Illness**

This group is designed around the book *Grieving Mental Illness* by Virginia Lafond. The book was written for anyone coming to terms with mental

illness. It discusses the phases of grief (denial, anger, sadness and despair) experienced not only by those with mental illness but also by family members and others. The author goes beyond the illness itself and discusses the subjective experience, what the inner person experiences when his illness becomes part of life's realities.

## Healthy Living

This course is designed to help clients gain knowledge and tips on healthy living practices including fitness and exercise, nutrition and personal care. Participants will explore how physical activity, adequate nutrition, weight management, food safety, stress management and related topics are important to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Discussions will include how adopting healthy lifestyle behaviors and changes can positively impact mental illness. Opportunities will be provided to engage in activities designed to promote self-awareness. Team building experiences (group presentations) will be part of the curriculum, as well. Participants will develop confidence in their ability to manage their health and improve their quality of life.

## Humor

Having a sense of humor is not only an important social skill, but an intelligent and creative coping skill as well. This course will educate participants about the value of incorporating humor into one's everyday life. Participants will be introduced to the different types of humor, and will be given an example of each in the form of books, cartoons, sitcoms, and film. Class members will try their own hand at writing and performing humorous essays, poems, and sketch comedies, and will learn how to locate humorous materials on their own.

## Improving Self Esteem

An overview of what low self-esteem is, how it can be a problem, and what kind of impact it can have on a person's life. The course provides a model of, how low self-esteem develops and might remain dormant in a person's life. This model is further examined to show how low self-esteem is maintained at a destructive personal level. Students will begin to address the problem of low self-esteem by tackling their own biased expectations-negative emotions.

## Introduction to Recovery

This is an introductory course designed to help clients become aware of the recovery process and its phases, the impact of serious mental illness on their lives, how to better manage stress as they begin to move through the process and how to enhance meaning in their lives. Participants will have the opportunity to explore what recovery means to them, to practice a variety of coping skills and to explore personal values and wants. They will learn and be prepared to begin the process of setting goals and objectives for recovery.

## **Job Talk**

This course will teach clients how to develop skills needed to obtain and maintain employment. Participants will learn how to identify and evaluate their skills and preferences, write a resume, conduct a job search, contact employers, fill out job applications, handle an interview and discuss disclosure of mental illness to an employer. They will have the opportunity to practice contacting employers by telephone, role-play interview scenarios and get feedback, and write sample resumes and cover letters. Participants will gain confidence in their ability to move forward with the job search process.

## **Let's Get Healthy**

This group is designed to help those clients who are interested in and committed to making a lifestyle change with regard to their health. This course incorporates a holistic approach to weight management, exercise and nutrition. Participants will engage in a combination of written, verbal and hands-on activities to learn tools for living a healthier lifestyle. With the information acquired in this course, participants will gain essential information to improve their overall wellness.

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## **Let's Get Moving**

*Let's Get Moving* explores the many simple exercises one can do to stay fit and healthy. Each week, a new exercise will be introduced and practiced to help participants learn about fitness-oriented activities they can add to their everyday lives to improve their overall health. By participating in this group, clients will increase their personal fitness level, learn proper exercise techniques, and learn how to integrate exercise into their daily schedules. Participants will work with the instructor to identify the fitness activities they most enjoy, and set goals for adding these activities into their lives.

## **Making and Building Friendships**

This course is for clients who want to learn more about how to make and cultivate new friendships as well as maintain and strengthen current ones. This course will touch on a variety of areas such as: communication and interpersonal skills, personality types, the best way to make and keep friends and finally how to strengthen existing relationships. Clients will also learn more about themselves, the people they surround themselves with and ultimately what makes a good friend.

## **Medication Management**

Managing your medication is a vital part in your recovery. In this course participants will understand the importance of taking medication as prescribed. Participants will learn about potential stumbling blocks that may interfere with taking medications, and they will identify strategies to deal with these personal stumbling blocks. Participants will understand the importance of medication adherence to their recovery. Participants will choose and use knowledge and skills as evidenced by selecting and attaining one personal practice goal per session. Participants will demonstrate skill acquisition as

evidenced by demonstrating, choosing and using at least one strategy for staying on their medication as prescribed.

## **Mind Works**

This course is designated to enhance clients awareness of various leisure activities that stimulate and enhance brain functioning. With the use of various written and hands on exercises, clients will sharpen focus and concentration while enhancing memory and problem solving skills. This course will aid clients by increasing their repertoire of leisure activities, combat symptoms, and promote relaxation and enjoyment. The thinking skills that they will acquire will help them achieve personal goals such as obtaining employment, volunteering, and/or returning to school. Exercises are designed to promote relaxation and fun to improve their quality of life.

## **Money Management**

The Money Management course covers all the basics of smart banking and financial literacy that clients need to live independently. Money Management will teach participants basic banking concepts, budgeting and savings tips for long-term goals. Topics covered will include how to open and manage savings and checking accounts. The use of ATM, debit and credit cards also will be discussed, as well as the importance of credit scores and avoiding identity theft. Participants will learn to plan, organize and budget for basic financial responsibilities, and to overcome the impulse for excessive spending.

## **Motivation**

Motivation is a significant issue in Mental Health. Some individuals experiencing mental illness have difficulty with low motivation, poor energy levels and diminished hope for the future. The lack of motivation creates a challenge for individuals who want to make psychosocial, self-directed changes and achieve personal growth. This course is designed to help gain the tools to address lack of motivation and find practical solutions to move forward.

## **Next Step**

This class provides instructional and work related activities to assist the student to learn the skills necessary to obtain and sustain gainful employment. Within this group students will enhance self-esteem and confidence through classroom discussion, discuss appropriate employment behavior, and gain assistance in establishing vocational objectives through group discussions. The groups will focus on the following topics; work readiness, work attitudes, work quality and performance, employers expectations, interpersonal/working relationships, resume writing, applications, and vocational development. Classes will be conducted twice a week.

## **Nutrition**

This course is designed for clients who would like to improve their health and learn about ways to incorporate nutritious eating habits into their daily lifestyles. Participants will learn about the basic components of a healthy diet, ways to incorporate healthy eating and good nutrition into their daily routines, how to evaluate foods based on ingredients and nutrition labels, and strategies for choosing healthy foods at the grocery store and in restaurants. Participants will learn to evaluate their diets and determine which food choices are healthy and which need improvement. Participants will feel more confident in their ability to shop for healthy foods to prepare at home and in their ability to make healthy choices when dining out.

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## **Orientation to the Recovery Academy**

The Recovery Academy is a new day program structure that organizes classes similar to that of a school. This class is designed to help participants understand the structure of the Recovery Academy so as to make the best use of its resources. The focus will include using the Recovery Academy to reach goals, how to register for classes and tips to maximize success. *(All new clients to the Recovery Academy will be encouraged to take this class.)*

## **Overcoming Disordered Eating Part A**

Overcoming Disordered Eating Part A reviews the dilemma of inappropriate eating and provides a plan of action so that you can begin modifying the behaviors that are related to your eating disorder and weight management challenges. During these sessions you will evaluate the cycle that keeps your eating disorder active, discuss self-monitoring, regular eating, the significance of regular weighing, binge eating, purging and focused exercise. This will be a voyage from unhealthy attitudes and consumption of food to a happier and better adjusted lifestyle of learning and welcoming change.

## **Overcoming Disordered Eating Part B**

These classes will support you in changing the thoughts associated with your eating disorder and regulation of your body weight. Since you have learned some strategies to modify your disordered eating behaviors, recognized what maintains the eating disorder, developed self-monitoring, and regulated eating and weighing, you are now ready to look closer at attitudes, feelings, and beliefs that uphold those actions associated with disordered eating. You are your own best advocate and by remaining methodical in this recovery process, you will realize success in reaching and maintaining healthy weight management goals.

## **Planning Ahead**

Identifying and setting realistic goals is a critical step in one's recovery. The objective of goal setting is to help visualize and bridge the gap between one's current state and the desired state. Without identifying a specific goal,

one is unlikely to achieve significant and positive change. This course is designed to begin the process of thinking ahead and planning one's life by determining wants, current needs, and the steps and support needed to accomplish personal life goals.

## Preventing Procrastination

Do you find yourself putting things off to the last minute and then being in a time crunch to get them done? Procrastination can be a barrier to achieving goals and meeting responsibilities. The Preventing Procrastination course is designed to provide you with information about procrastination and suggest strategies for how one can address this problem.

Procrastination is a fairly typical behavior. Most people have procrastinated on certain tasks at certain times in their life and many people are chronic procrastinators. However, there is a difference between general procrastination, which we all do at certain times, and more problematic procrastination. You procrastinate when you put off things that you should be focusing on right now, usually in favor of doing something that is more enjoyable or that you're more comfortable doing. Putting off important tasks and projects until later can cause emotional anguish and keep you from accomplishing your professional and personal goals. So if you are a person who finds that procrastination has taken over and has stopped you from leading a good life, you will find that this course will help you understand your procrastination, and learn ways to overcome procrastination to lead a more fulfilling life.

## Reaching Residential Success

This course is designed to focus on skills needed to move from a residential program or shared residence into more independent living. It also will be relevant to those clients who reside in a shelter. Over twelve weeks, participants will learn skills and tips to help them be successful in their current residence and to set goals for greater independence. *(Participants should currently reside either in a shelter or a structured residential program.)*

## Recovering: Achieving Your Life Goals

Clients will acquire knowledge that they can use in their daily lives to address basic personal needs and goals. Clients will learn the importance of establishing and maintaining a balanced life and develop skills necessary to meet personal needs and goals. This curriculum covers the following topics: getting needs met, housing, planning to work, returning to school, balancing life, scheduling, and relationships.

## Recovery Academy Chorus

Singing is a positive force for mental health as it is calming, relaxing and intellectually stimulating. Decades of research has proved an unequivocal link between singing and well-being, both physical and psychological.

These benefits include lower blood pressure, greater lung capacity, more energy, relief from asthma, elevated mood, improved memory, increased concentration, better posture, stronger stomach muscles and toned facial muscles. It doesn't matter if you have a great voice or not! If you love to sing, come join our Chorus and have fun by learning new songs and singing some oldies too. We will be having concerts throughout the semester so that others can also enjoy the positive effects of music.

## **Recovery Academy Magazine**

Recovery Academy Magazine is a class that will create a newsletter for the Recovery Academy each semester. This magazine will consist of client stories, pictures, jokes, art, poems, short stories, paintings, drawings or anything else that is created by clients and can be put on paper. Individuals who are interested in this class will be working on writing, typing and/or putting all of these client artifacts together in a magazine format. You must have some basic computer knowledge in order to actively participate in this class.

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## **Relapse Prevention**

Anyone who has a long-term illness can experience a relapse. When people go through relapse, the symptoms of their illness get stronger, and the symptoms that had gone away may come back. The main goal of treatment is to manage the illness; that is, to keep it under control, so symptoms do not get in the way of reaching life goals. Reducing the chances of relapse is very important. This course will help you identify how to recognize relapse, understand personal costs of relapse, and identify ways to minimize the risk of relapse.

## **Safe Living**

This class is designed to help participants learn about the safety issues surrounding them in everyday life. Participants will learn to identify the personal safety issue at home as well as in the work places. Some examples of the information covered are: Food safety at home; fire safety and prevention at home; fall prevention; security in the home and outdoor safety. This class will help participants improve their knowledge and awareness of the day to day practice of living safely.

## **Seeking Safety**

This class is designed for those who have experienced trauma in their lives to learn to develop healthy coping skills to manage that trauma. Utilizing the book *Seeking Safety* by Lisa Najavits, this group focuses on helping clients work toward breaking their destructive habits such as substance use, dangerous or harmful relationships, and self-harm. The class provides helpful tools and techniques that teach safe coping skills such as recognizing when to ask for help, honesty, setting boundaries, coping with triggers, self-nurturing, and healing from anger. This class meets twice a week.

## **Self-Esteem**

Good self-esteem is an essential part of working toward recovery and good mental health practices. This is a one-hour course that examines the origins and developmental factors that influence self-esteem. Themes explored in this course include understanding what self-esteem is and how to recognize if a person has good or poor self-esteem, how self-esteem impacts our lives and symptoms, and how depression is linked to self-esteem. Participants will explore personal belief systems and the role the brain plays in the development of self-esteem. Exercises to build self-esteem will be learned and practiced.

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## **Sex Education**

This group is designed for clients who would like to increase their knowledge of human sexual and reproductive health. Topics covered include functions of male and female sexual anatomy, purpose and timelines of specific health-related tests and screenings, symptoms of sexually-transmitted infections, how these infections are contracted and methods of protection, birth control methods and pregnancy. In addition, intimacy in dating relationships and appropriate sexual behaviors in various settings will be addressed. From a mental health perspective, participants also will learn about the effects that mental illness and psychiatric medications can have on sex drive.

## **Smoking Cessation**

Smoking can have a negative impact on many areas of your life. Smoking can cause health problems, can be a financial burden, and above all else it is an addiction. Quitting smoking can be difficult, but with commitment and support you can quit. This class is for people who are thinking about quitting or have recently quit smoking. Clients will learn tips and techniques for how to quit and be successful at remaining smoke free. Within this class, clients will be expected to set a quit date and will gain the support of fellow classmates to stick to that date.

## **Social Skills I**

Social Skills I is an introductory course and a prerequisite for Social Skills II. It will address the core social skills that are the basic building blocks of effective communication. The four essential foundation skills will be discussed: listening to others, making requests, expressing positive feelings and expressing unpleasant feelings. The remainder of the course will address conversational skills: the ability to initiate, maintain and end conversations with others in a friendly, rewarding and socially appropriate fashion. Many opportunities will be available to role play and obtain feedback. Participants will feel more confident in their ability to communicate effectively with others in a variety of settings.

## **Social Skills II**

Social Skills II is designed to foster improved assertiveness and conflict management skills. Improving assertiveness includes learning to speak

forthrightly, stating opinions, expressing feelings and needs in a direct way, and refusing inappropriate requests. Participants will also learn to distinguish what are realistic demands placed on others. The second part of the group will address conflict management skills. These skills overlap a great deal with assertiveness skills and are critical for most aspects of successful living, including enjoying close relationships with others and being effective in the workplace. Many people have difficulty handling interpersonal conflict. Common reactions include withdrawing from the situation or denying the conflict exists. Such coping strategies may provide temporary relief but often worsen the situation in the long run as conflicts remain unresolved. Participants will learn how to understand and respond to the other points of view as well as giving their own. *(Successful completion of Social Skills I is a prerequisite for taking Social Skills II.)*

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## **Spanish for Beginners**

Spanish for Beginners is a beginning level Spanish class that will focus on learning the Spanish language and also learning about Spanish culture. This class will give clients a great tool for future employment or volunteer goals, as speaking Spanish in the workplace is an asset and will set you apart from others. Clients will learn the Spanish alphabet, numbers, phrases, spelling, reading and other beginning level Spanish sentences.

## **Spirituality**

This course is designed to help participants build their spiritual awareness and learn how to apply values, beliefs, personal strength and hope to everyday challenges and life issues. The course is offered in a one-hour weekly group session with a focus on the spiritual issue being explored that week. Students will be asked to complete worksheets and be open to sharing their beliefs, values and needs with their fellow peers. The course will explore six spiritual themes: Spiritual Awareness, Spiritual Growth, Values, Creativity and Wonder, Relationships and Ceremonies (marking milestones to commemorate life experiences), Healing and Closure.

## **Stress Management**

Stressors are a normal component of daily life. How one chooses to deal with these stressors determines whether that stress will produce growth or result in breakdown of normal body function. This course is designed to help clients understand the basic principles of holistic stress management through the presentation of coping skills, the study of the mind-body relationship in stress management, the mental contribution of daily life stressors and to learn techniques to deal with these stressors. These strategies and relaxation techniques are essential for optimal health. Utilizing them regularly will help participants manage stressors in a more productive manner throughout their lives.

## Study Skills

Has it been awhile since you have been in a classroom? Do you break into a cold sweat at the thought of taking an exam? This is a two-part class; the first component, Study Skills, will go hand in hand with the second component, Study Hall. This class is recommended for anyone who is thinking of going back to school, is already taking community or college courses, or who is a participant in the Recovery Academy. The class will present ideas to make studying and test-taking painless-and even fun.

## Supported Education

The purpose of this course is to help participants prepare to enter the world of higher education. It is designed primarily for those who already have a high school diploma or GED, although special consideration may be taken for those who are currently scheduled to take the GED test. Topics will include organizational/study skills, choosing an area of study, admissions to college, entrance exams, Financial Aid, accessing disability services and educational accommodations, social skills for college, and managing an illness while in school.

## Symptom Management

This course will educate participants about the basics of the recovery philosophy and the personal meaning in behavior which seems unusual. Clients will be encouraged to use symptom management techniques as part of a holistic perspective which includes tending to one's needs in the areas of mind, body, and spirituality, and to one's need to be part of a community. Clients will learn to manage their own individual mental health symptoms using creative methods, such as tracking their progress in a journal. Topics covered will include coping with hearing voices that are distressing, bothersome thoughts, depression, and physical ailments which might accompany mental health symptoms. The idea that the most important aspect of one's recovery is relationships with others will be emphasized.

## Thinking Skills

This course is focused on helping clients to improve their cognitive skills. These include skills to improve thinking, including such areas as paying attention or concentrating, learning and remembering information, responding in a reasonable amount of time to environmental demands, planning ahead and solving problems. This course will utilize a computer program designed to help participants practice and improve their thinking skills in a hands-on format. This course will help participants improve thinking skills to improve their ability to reach goals such as employment, volunteering and returning to school as well as improve their day-to-day cognition. Only basic computer skills needed. *(Registration is limited to 5 individuals. Preregistration and pretest is required. Classes meet twice a week.)*

## Turning Point

How do you get to your favorite restaurant, favorite vacation spot or any other goal? By choosing and aligning yourself to head in that direction. If you aren't taking steps in the direction you want to go, you will never get there.

The same idea applies to anything in life: if we aren't putting ourselves on the road that leads to where we want to go, we aren't going to get there. But first we need to find out where the road(s) are that take us where we want to be. First, we need a map.

This course is designed for those who want to make a change and head in a new direction. Participants may have a very specific goal in mind, but may not know how to reach the goal or have fears of heading out into the unknown. This is a very common experience and an obstacle that can be overcome. We will examine the choice to challenge ourselves and grow as human beings. We will explore the choices available to us in the community and be empowered to strive for our goals, no matter how challenging they might be. *(Registration is limited to ten individuals. Preregistration is required.)*

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## The Inner World — Understanding Your Emotions

Some individuals with a mental illness show no emotions or have blunted emotions, but nonetheless have emotions somewhere inside. This is an introductory course designed to help participants become aware of their emotions and name them. Students will gain an understanding of how to express their feelings constructively, both positive and negative. Participants will gain individual insight into which emotions trigger certain thoughts and behaviors. The skill of identifying feelings and knowing what to do with them will help participants in their recovery from mental illness.

## Understanding Your Illness

This course is designed to assist clients to develop insight and understanding into their mental illness. Topics discussed will include the origin or cause of illness, symptoms, feelings around dealing with an illness and diagnosis, relapse and crisis management and recovery. This course is based around the Team Solutions Workbook for Understanding Your Illness by Neuroscience Treatment Team Partner Program and Eli Lilly.

## Vietnamese Education and Support Group

This is a twelve-week course designed to introduce to Vietnamese clients the subject of basic nutrition and health. The goal of this class is to provide participants with knowledge and skills to enhance their nutritional health and wellness. Participants will learn how to read food labels, identify food groups and identify nutritional properties. Opportunities will be provided for participants to practice comparison shopping, design menus and demonstrate healthy cooking skills. Clients will increase their confidence in their ability to shop for nutritious foods and to prepare healthy meals at home.

## Walk For Health

This group is designed to help those clients who are interested and committed to making a lifestyle change in regards to their physical health. In this course you will utilize pedometers to track your steps as you do various group activities and games such as listen to fun, energetic music that you can sing and dance along to. This is an exciting way to improve your health! Participants will understand that getting physically healthy does not have to feel like a chore.

## Weekend Planning

Have you found yourself incredibly bored during the weekend? Take this class and you'll find your boring weekends turn into fun filled days of getting out in the community and being productive! You'll learn to plan for your weekends by developing hobbies, learning about various volunteer opportunities and eventually plan your own vacation. Not only will you learn to plan, but you'll also learn the very important skill of following through with your short and long term goals.

## Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) was developed by Mary Ellen Copeland as a means of promoting wellness and reaching recovery. This course emphasizes dealing with psychiatric symptoms as they occur. The course promotes self-awareness and encourages clients to develop actions to take when symptoms become bothersome or overwhelming. Participants will identify wellness activities that they enjoy. They will create a plan for daily living including exercise, hygiene, diet, sleep and everyday chores. Clients also will develop an awareness of symptoms that might require taking necessary positive actions (like contacting support resources) before they worsen. WRAP includes a plan or advance directive to be put into action in the event that symptoms escalate into a crisis situation. Participants will create their own WRAP plan based on what works best for them.

## Yoga

Clients will be introduced to a variety of yoga styles during this course. They will learn many basic postures as well as practice bends, hip openers, arm balances and inversions. Some classes will focus on alignment and holding postures while other classes will focus on flowing movement through a series of postures. This course is not religiously based because the meditation component focuses on the well-being of the mind and body, and the integration of the breadth with movement, rather than spiritual pursuits. Through this course, clients will become more comfortable with their bodies and learn some anatomy of muscles and bones. The main objective of this course is to have clients feel an overall improvement in their health and happiness.

# **PRS Recovery Academies**

## **PRS Tysons Recovery Academy**

1761 Old Meadow Road McLean, VA 22102

(703) 536-9000

## **PRS Mount Vernon Recovery Academy**

8794S Sacramento Drive

Alexandria, VA 22309

(703) 360-8394

## **PRS DC Recovery Academy**

3845 South Capitol Street, SW

Washington, DC 20032

(202) 373-0800

## **For more information call:**

Thomas Schuplin

Director of the Recovery Academy

(703) 531-6390

[tschuplin@prsinc.org](mailto:tschuplin@prsinc.org)