

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Introduction

Most people with psychiatric disabilities are unemployed and/or underemployed even though many say that they want to work. It is the purpose of this Brochure Series to provide information and encouragement, to de-mystify the process of going to work, and to help people know what questions to ask and what issues to consider so they can make good work-related decisions for themselves.

This Brochure Series was designed primarily to be a self-help tool. By this, we mean that a person (or group of people) with a psychiatric disability would not necessarily need the assistance or involvement of service professionals in order to read and use the brochures. However, that doesn't mean that people have to read or use the brochures alone. As with any other major undertaking, it can be helpful to have company along the way. It can be easier to take in new information or consider hard questions if there is someone to talk it over with, or who is on the same journey.

We offer this Facilitator's Guide to help people who want to find structured and semi-structured ways to use the brochures with groups of people with psychiatric disabilities considering work. Some may choose to use the Brochure Series as an educational tool about the process of going to work. Others may use the brochures as supportive materials as they are actually taking actions to pursue employment. Whether used for education or rehabilitation, please note that the Brochures Series is intended to be an introduction and supporting resource, and is not a substitute for quality individualized Vocational Rehabilitation services and counseling.

Exactly how you use the brochures and this guide will depend on your particular group and setting. In this guide we offer some suggestions, discussion questions and additional sources of information which we hope will be helpful. The suggestions offered here are ideas, not formulas. You will have to pick and choose, and make some decisions about what will best serve your group. In most sections there are many suggestions for discussion topics and activities, and you probably won't need to use all of them. Test out these ideas and strategies and also use your own experience and judgement. As you gain experience facilitating/leading groups, you will get better at knowing what will work, and you will get better at working without this guide.