

# Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle

## *Complete Wellness: the Whole Person*



## A Handbook with a Focus on Healthy Lifestyles for People Living with Psychiatric Disabilities

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# Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle: *Facilitator's Notes*

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## Objectives of the Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle Handbook

This handbook addresses a variety of topics related to healthy living for people with psychiatric disabilities. It can be used in an individual or group/classroom setting, and was designed to be completed over the course of several sessions. After completing the handbook, individuals will be able to:

- Discuss how living a healthy lifestyle can improve physical and mental health
- Identify key physical health concerns and issues
- Identify key treatment team members who can help in addressing physical health and wellness issues
- Calculate Body Mass Index (BMI)
- Identify an underweight, normal, overweight, or obese BMI
- Identify at least one behavior that the individual can do that can help develop a healthier lifestyle

## 10 THINGS You Can Do to Engage Individuals in Learning and Using this Material

1. **Take time to process all the information you cover.** One page could take an hour depending upon the individuals' and groups' learning styles and format utilized to teach the material. *Focus on the quality of your delivery rather than the quantity of material covered.*
2. **Have individuals read a few lines at a time** and process by asking questions to help them apply the material to their own lives. *Personalize the material to the individual when ever possible. Check for comprehension throughout your session* by asking general questions such as: "So what have we learned in the last two paragraphs?" or more specific questions such as: "How would you define Complete Wellness?" *Have individuals circle or underline specific words or concepts.* Highlighting important information can help in the learning process.
3. **Encourage the use of the "On the Path to Healthy Living Questionnaire" in other settings.** For example, an individual may want to complete the questionnaire with their nurse, case manager or a family member in preparation for a doctor's visit.
4. **In a group setting, have individuals complete their "On the Path to Healthy Living Questionnaire" and process their answers by using a chalk board or flip chart.** Select a few questions from each section and by a show of hands list the number of no and yes answers on the board. The more popular or less popular answers can be discussed.
5. **When reading the "Seven Steps Toward Healthier Living" ask individuals to define what healthier living means to them.** Encourage them to take the page home and place it on their refrigerator door or bulletin board as a way to remember and build these steps into their

lifestyle. Ask individuals to think about which of the seven areas they would like to work on and why. Follow-up and ask about this during the next session.

6. **Use the “Small Steps Can Add Up to Big Changes” section at the end of the handbook as a *practice assignment to build upon the concepts on the page.*** Have individuals complete it at home and bring it back to process with the group. *Encourage additional practice assignments between appointments by asking people to apply the new knowledge they have learned between sessions.* For example, after completing the “**On the Path to Healthy Living Questionnaire,**” individuals can be asked to follow-up with one of the people they have identified at the bottom of the questionnaire with one physical health/wellness issue that they identified as an issue. At the beginning of the next session, ask participants how this practice assignment went.
7. **In a group setting, have individuals find their Body Mass Index (BMI) and do NOT have them reveal their BMI unless they desire.** NOTE: If a person is overweight, a healthy goal would be to achieve a 5%-10% weight loss over a 6-month period (1-2 pounds per week). For some people, especially those who have gained weight while taking psychotropic medication, not gaining additional weight, or losing 1-2 pounds per month can be a healthy place to start.
8. **Bring in an expert on nutrition, physical fitness or physical health/wellness** to lecture to the group and answer questions.
9. **Utilize the Mind and Body - Managing My Illness, Empowering Myself DVD.** This DVD provides encouragement and hope to consumers and staff that a Complete Wellness lifestyle is not only possible but within reach. Actress, Linda Hamilton, shares her personal journey on the connection between physical and mental health. Betty Vreeland, APRN, provides simple practical steps on how to integrate a Complete Wellness approach into one’s life.
10. **Pre and Post Knowledge Assessment.** Duplicate the Knowledge Assessment (on the following page) and have individuals complete it before starting the handbook (pre-knowledge assessment). This may help you identify those areas they may need more help with and can help facilitate your lesson planning. When you’ve completed the handbook, have individuals complete the knowledge assessment, again, (post-knowledge assessment) so that you can measure how much they have learned and identify subject areas that may require review. *We recommend calling this a **knowledge assessment rather than a “test.”***

**Knowledge Assessment Answer Key:**

- 1 = d
- 2 = True
- 3 = True
- 4 = d

## Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle Knowledge Assessment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the **BEST** answer:

1. Physical health and well-being can
  - a. Improve physical and mental health
  - b. Decrease risk for chronic illnesses such as diabetes and hypertension
  - c. Improve overall quality of life
  - d. All of the above
  
2. People can choose to live a healthier lifestyle
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
3. A recovery process that combines mental and physical health can be referred to as a “Complete Wellness” approach.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
4. A Body Mass Index (BMI) reading of 30 is in which of the following ranges:
  - a. underweight
  - b. normal
  - c. overweight
  - d. obese

## Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle References

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## **Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle Additional Resources**

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The following resources may be used to augment the information provided in the Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle Handbook. The facilitator may also choose to augment with other health and wellness materials as appropriate.

### **5 to 9 A Day; National Cancer Institute; National Institute for Health**

<http://www.5aday.gov/>

Educational information on diet and disease prevention. Discusses portions and types of fruits and vegetables.

### **Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005: US Department of Agriculture**

<http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines/> - A written document

<http://mypyramid.gov> An interactive website with personalized information about the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

### **Hearts & Minds: National Alliance for the Mentally Ill**

[http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=Hearts\\_and\\_Minds&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=13960&MicrositeID=0](http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=Hearts_and_Minds&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=13960&MicrositeID=0)

Brochure and video written for people in recovery from a mental illness. Adds information on nutrition, exercise, stress management, and vocational issues from a personal perspective

### **President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports**

<http://www.fitness.gov/nolanryan.htm>

Nolan Ryan Fitness Guide-Has helpful suggestion for staying motivated, making the time for exercise, as well as, specifics regarding what types of exercise should be done.

### **U.S. Department of Human Services**

[www.smallstep.gov](http://www.smallstep.gov)

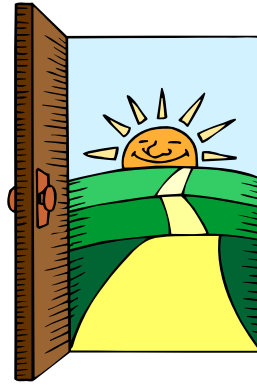
### **Weight and Waist Measurement; Weight-control information Network; National Institute of Health**

<http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/tools.htm>

Consumer friendly information on BMI and waist measurement as a means to determine health risks.

## Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle: *Participant Handbook*

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Healthy living can make a positive impact on many areas of our lives. Living a healthy lifestyle is not only about feeling good physically. Physical well-being can improve your mood, decrease your risk for chronic illnesses, such as diabetes and hypertension, and may even improve your overall quality of life! Like many Americans, people diagnosed with psychiatric disabilities may practice unhealthy lifestyle habits such as lack of regular physical activity, poor nutrition and overeating, smoking and other drug abuse, not visiting health care professionals regularly, and not getting enough sleep. These unhealthy behaviors may increase the risk for disability and illnesses such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and sometimes even shorten one's life span.

The good news is people can choose to live a healthier life! Developing a healthy lifestyle does not have to be overwhelming. It can be a step-by-step process making small changes that add up to a healthier you. A recovery process that combines mental and physical health can be called a "complete wellness" approach. It is important to recognize where you are on your "Path to Healthy Living," and to set goals that are important to you as you make this journey.

Turn the page to see where you are "On the Path to Healthy Living Questionnaire." You are now taking your first step on a journey toward "Complete Wellness." Congratulations!



## On the Path to Healthy Living Questionnaire

Here are some questions to help you think about your overall health. These questions can also help you begin a discussion with your health care professional. Remember, you don't have to tackle all of these questions today. Just reading this list is already a step on your path to Healthier Living.

### Physical Health

Has it been over a year since the date of my last physical exam?  yes  no  
*If yes, is there anyone I can call to make an appointment for a checkup?*  yes  no  unsure

Do I have a regular primary care provider (PCP)?  yes  no  
*If yes, who can I call?* \_\_\_\_\_  
*If no, do I know how to find a PCP in my community?*  yes  no  unsure

Do I have any physical health problems that I know of?  yes  no  unsure  
*(For example: high blood pressure, diabetes, or a problem with my weight.)*  
*If yes, can I list all of my physical problems?*  yes  no  unsure

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Do I take any medication for these problems?  yes  no  
*If yes, can I list the medications?*  yes  no  unsure

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(Use an extra page if you need it to list all physical problems and medications)

Do I have any problems with my hearing?  yes  no  unsure  
*If yes, who can I call?* \_\_\_\_\_

Has it been more than six months since the date of my last dental exam?  yes  no  
*If yes, who can I call to make an appointment for a check-up?*

Has it been more than a year since the date of my last eye exam?  yes  no  
*If yes, who can I call to make an appointment for a check-up?*

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## Weight/Nutrition

What is my height? \_\_\_\_\_ What is my weight? \_\_\_\_\_

What is my body mass index (BMI)\*? \_\_\_\_\_

Am I at a healthy weight?  yes  no  unsure

What is my waist circumference? \_\_\_\_\_ (inches)

How many beverages with sugar do I drink per day? (soda, juice, coffee, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Should I cut down on beverages with sugar?  yes  no  unsure

Do I snack on “junk” food (cookies, chips, candy, etc.) frequently?  yes  no

What healthier snacks could I choose to eat? \_\_\_\_\_

Do I eat seconds or large portions frequently?  yes  no  unsure

Should I cut down on the amount of food that I eat?  yes  no  unsure

Do I eat dessert (cake, cookies, ice cream, etc.) frequently?  yes  no

Am I making healthy food choices?  yes  no  unsure

*If not*, what are some things I can change about my diet to live healthier?

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\* A Body Mass Index (BMI) hand-out and chart is included. Please ask your health care professional how to figure out your BMI if you do not know how to do this.

## Smoking

Do I smoke?  yes  no

*If yes*, how many cigarettes do I smoke per day? \_\_\_\_\_

Am I interested in cutting down or quitting?  yes  no  unsure

*If yes*, is now the time for me to quit smoking?  yes  no  unsure

Do I know where can I find help quitting smoking?  yes  no  unsure

*If yes*, where: \_\_\_\_\_

## Physical Activity/Sleep/Stress Reduction

Do I get at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week?

yes  no  unsure

What type of physical activity do I do regularly? \_\_\_\_\_

Do I get enough physical activity?

yes  no  unsure

How much sleep do I get? \_\_\_\_\_

Do I wake up feeling rested?

yes  no

*If no*, do I know what I can do about it?

yes  no

*If no*, who can I ask? \_\_\_\_\_

Do I generally feel a lot of stress?

yes  no  unsure

Do I participate in any activities that help me relax?

yes  no  unsure

How many beverages with caffeine do I drink per day? \_\_\_\_\_

Should I cut down?

yes  no  unsure

Name one helpful thing that can help reduce my overall stress level (such as deep breathing): \_\_\_\_\_

## My Team

Below is a list of people on my treatment team who may be able to help in my journey towards healthier living. Check the people I think may be of help:

My psychiatrist  yes  no  unsure

My nurse  yes  no  unsure

My therapist  yes  no  unsure

My case manager  yes  no  unsure

My family doctor  yes  no  unsure

A family member  yes  no  unsure

A friend  yes  no  unsure

My clergy  yes  no  unsure

Another mental health consumer  yes  no  unsure

What other Community Resources (such as the YMCA) can help you?  
\_\_\_\_\_

List the name(s) of one or two people who can help me with questions/issues that I have about my physical health/wellness: \_\_\_\_\_

## Seven Steps Toward Healthier Living



1. **Continue with your mental health and recovery plan.** Remember, your health is a very important part of your recovery plan. The recovery process should reflect all aspects of your life including your physical, mental and social well-being.
2. **Make healthy food choices every day.** Some healthy suggestions include: trying a piece of fruit for dessert instead of a cookie or ice cream, or try drinking water instead of soda. Choose and prepare foods and beverages with little added sugars.
3. **Daily physical activity of 30 minutes or more** can improve your overall health and reduce the risk of disease (you can even break that up into 10 minutes 3 times a day).
4. **Find a balance between relaxation and stress.** Make time for relaxing and having fun every day because it can help you to cope with stress. Learning deep breathing exercises can help too!
5. **Address addictive behaviors.** Part of the recovery process is attending to all issues that impact our health and wellness and make a difference in the quality of our lives. Addressing addictive behaviors including alcohol and other drugs including tobacco and caffeine are important.
6. **Get regular physical health check-ups and exams.** Make sure you have a primary care provider. Schedule yearly vision and dental exams and other screening tests as needed.
7. **Welcome hope, connection, and support into your life.** Embrace and develop experiences that involve feelings of hope, love, connection, contentment, and support that facilitate reaching your life goals.

## **Small Steps Can Add Up to Big Health Changes**

What health/wellness issue(s) concern you the most?

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Below are some steps that people can take that may help achieve “complete wellness.” Check off the items that you think could help you on your journey toward complete wellness:

- Talk to someone on my treatment team about the next step(s) I can take on my journey toward “complete wellness.”
- Schedule an appointment with a primary care provider
- Schedule an appointment with a dentist
- Schedule an appointment with an eye doctor
- Try to make healthier food choices
- Try to be more physically active
- Talk to someone on my treatment team about addressing addictive behaviors (including tobacco and caffeine)
- Make more time for fun and relaxation
- Increase skills that can help me cope with stress
- Talk to someone on my treatment team about my mental health recovery plan and goals
- Talk to someone from my support network about how I can welcome hope, connection, and support into my life.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Many of us have several “complete wellness” issues that need to be addressed. List one or two steps that you are willing to take this week toward a healthier you? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle - APPENDIX

### Body Mass Index (BMI)

**Body Mass Index** or BMI is a measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to both adult men and women. If the BMI goes above the normal range (25), the risk for some diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, some cancers and even premature death increases. The higher the BMI goes above normal, the higher the risk. For adults, BMI falls into one of these categories:

BMI	Weight Status
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Normal
25.0 – 29.9	Overweight
30.0 and Above	Obese

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/bmi-adult.htm>

### WHAT IS MY BMI?

If you know your height and weight, a BMI table can be used to figure out your BMI. To use the table, find your height in inches in the left-hand column labeled “Height.” Move across to your weight in pounds. The number at the top column is the BMI at that height and weight.

For example, if someone is 5 feet and 4 inches (64 inches) and weights 174 pounds, their BMI = 30. This example is highlighted in yellow on the table. What weight status does this number fall into? \_\_\_\_\_

Source: [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/obesity/bmi\\_tbl.htm](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/obesity/bmi_tbl.htm)

What is my BMI number? \_\_\_\_\_ A BMI of 25 or greater puts you “at risk.”

Am I “at risk” of developing health problems? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No

If I answered yes, who can I talk to about this? \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: As little as a 5%-10% weight loss over a 6-month period (1-2 pounds per week) is a healthy goal to reduce health risks. Preventing additional weight gain is a healthy goal for some people.

## Body Mass Index Table

	Normal						Overweight					Obese						Extreme Obesity																				
BMI	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54		
Height (Inches)	Body Weight (pounds)																																					
58	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167	172	177	181	186	191	196	201	205	210	215	220	224	229	234	239	244	248	253	258		
59	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173	178	183	188	193	198	203	208	212	217	222	227	232	237	242	247	252	257	262	267		
60	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179	184	189	194	199	204	209	215	220	225	230	235	240	245	250	255	261	266	271	276		
61	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185	190	195	201	206	211	217	222	227	232	238	243	248	254	259	264	269	275	280	285		
62	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191	196	202	207	213	218	224	229	235	240	246	251	256	262	267	273	278	284	289	295		
63	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175	180	186	191	197	203	208	214	220	225	231	237	242	248	254	259	265	270	278	282	287	293	299	304		
64	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180	186	192	197	204	209	215	221	227	232	238	244	250	256	262	267	273	279	285	291	296	302	308	314		
65	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210	216	222	228	234	240	246	252	258	264	270	276	282	288	294	300	306	312	318	324		
66	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216	223	229	235	241	247	253	260	266	272	278	284	291	297	303	309	315	322	328	334		
67	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223	230	236	242	249	255	261	268	274	280	287	293	299	306	312	319	325	331	338	344		
68	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203	210	216	223	230	236	243	249	256	262	269	276	282	289	295	302	308	315	322	328	335	341	348	354		
69	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209	216	223	230	236	243	250	257	263	270	277	284	291	297	304	311	318	324	331	338	345	351	358	365		
70	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243	250	257	264	271	278	285	292	299	306	313	320	327	334	341	348	355	362	369	376		
71	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222	228	236	243	250	257	265	272	279	286	293	301	308	315	322	329	338	343	351	358	365	372	379	386		
72	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228	235	242	250	258	265	272	279	287	294	302	309	316	324	331	338	346	353	361	368	375	383	390	397		
73	144	151	158	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235	242	250	257	265	272	280	288	295	302	310	318	325	333	340	348	355	363	371	378	386	393	401	408		
74	148	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241	249	256	264	272	280	287	295	303	311	319	326	334	342	350	358	365	373	381	389	396	404	412	420		
75	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279	287	295	303	311	319	327	335	343	351	359	367	375	383	391	399	407	415	423	431		
76	156	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254	263	271	279	287	295	304	312	320	328	336	344	353	361	369	377	385	394	402	410	418	426	435	443		

Source: Adapted from Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults: The Evidence Report.