The Guidance Center of Westchester

PROS Course Catalogue 2017

The Guidance Center PROS is licensed by the NYS Office of Mental Health to provide adults, ages 18 and older, diagnosed with mental illness with mental health treatment and psychosocial rehabilitative services.

Our PROS offers instructional courses and individual services in many different subject areas to meet the individual recovery needs of participants. PROS services teach and reinforce skills to help participants achieve goals in employment, education, living, socialization, relationships, and wellness.

Our PROS courses are curriculum-based and follow 16-week lesson plans which begin in May, September, and January. However, newly admitted participants, space permitting, may usually join a course at any time. Most, but not all, courses are offered at all times of the year. A current schedule of courses is on the last page of this catalogue. A number of courses are designed for young adults. Otherwise all courses are open to all PROS participants based on their individual recovery goals and needs.

On the following pages are brief descriptions of courses offered by The Guidance Center PROS. Please note that not all courses may be offered during each class cycle. A current schedule is available at the PROS office or may be requested by email or fax.
Please note that while only participants in The Guidance Center PROS, may enroll in the courses in this Catalogue, individuals who are in Pre-Admission status are welcome to “audit” or sit in on classes (space permitting) prior to making a decision about whether or not to seek PROS admission. A special weekly Pre-Admission Engagement class is held for those in the process of trying out The Guidance Center PROS.

PROS classes and groups are offered in 3 general categories: Community Rehabilitation and Support; Intensive Rehabilitation; Clinical Treatment.

COMMUNITY REHABILITATION AND SUPPORT (CRS) services help participants learn to live and function successfully in the community by providing practical information and supports, and by teaching skills to overcome barriers related to mental illness. The services that make up CRS include Wellness Self-Management, Basic Living Skills, Benefits and Financial, Information and Education on Self-Help, Individualized Recovery Planning, and Community Living Exploration. Descriptions of CRS courses we currently offer follow:

Wellness Self-Management

Wellness Self-Management for Young Adults
Specifically for young adults under 30. Understand your diagnosis and symptoms, and learn practical information on recovery and prevention. Interact with peers and create familiarity with common stressors faced by young adults, including the challenges of pursuing life goals while dealing with mental illness. Be assured that you can achieve anything you set out to do by learning how to overcome mental health barriers.

Health and Wellness for the Mature Adult
Specifically for adult participants in late-middle and senior years. Explore health and wellness as a personal life goal. Learn to achieve the best possible mental and physical condition in order to improve functioning in all areas of life and extend life expectancy.

Health and Wellness for Men
Learn to understand and manage your mental health symptoms. Learn about the different life stages men go through and what to expect medically and emotionally. Learn to celebrate and make the best use of the positive aspects of each stage.
Health and Wellness for Women
Learn to understand and manage your mental health symptoms. Learn about the different life stages women go through and what to expect medically and emotionally. Learn to celebrate and make the best use of the positive aspects of each stage.

Managing Emotions
Develop confidence in your ability to manage your emotions, while learning how to get what you want from others in effective non-damaging ways.

Managing Stress
Learn strategies to identify triggers, address symptoms, and reduce effects of environmental stressors. Increase your knowledge of coping skills, and learn to manage everyday stress as well as stress from major difficulties. Handling stress effectively can reduce relapse and need for emergency and inpatient services.

Challenging Negative Thoughts
Understand the destructive impact of negative thoughts and beliefs and learn to combat them through alternative, positive thought. Use affirmations, breathing and meditation techniques, discussions of distorted thinking, and movement exercises.

Anger Management
Learn to identify the various forms of anger and to develop effective techniques and strategies for productive and healthy anger management in yourself and others. Overcome barriers such as fear of reprisal, rejection and abandonment. Strengthen self-care and assertiveness through role playing, discussion, effective self-talk, breathing and meditation exercises and relevant homework.

Music and the Mind
Learn the various effects music has on the body and mind. Through listening, exploring, sharing, creating and more, develop an understanding and mindfulness of the power of music and its influence on coping with mental illness. Learn about different genres of music and the cultures they are associated with, through the use of musical sounds and discussion.

Grief, Loss and Forgiveness
Discussion about “living with loss” whether of a loved one, loss opportunities or a loss of a piece of yourself. Sharing one’s thoughts, feelings and experiences with other’s in similar situations is one of the best ways to make the journey to healing. Participants will increase their
feeling of well-being, supports, symptom management, relapse prevention, self-esteem and empowerment.

**Overcoming Depression**
Learn to recognize the signs of depression such as isolation and irritability. Develop strategies to manage and alleviate depressive symptoms. Learn healthy coping mechanisms to prevent relapse, isolation, and suicidal thoughts.

**Symptom Self-Management in the Workplace**
Prepare for work by learning to identify and control mental illness symptoms that may arise during the work day, such as auditory hallucinations, suspiciousness, anger and fatigue, difficulty concentrating, etc. Better understand disability disclosure and requesting work accommodations.

**Getting Motivated for Better Health**
Break out of the cycle of the unhealthy choices and habits that lead to poor mental outlook, decreased physical health, and low motivation to change. Learn to use problem-solving and motivational strategies to break the cycle and start an upward path toward improved mental and physical health.

**Practical Fitness**
Maintain and potentially increase independence, through exercise. Develop a personalized plan for fitness to achieve your goal(s). This group will accommodate participants with limited mobility by scaling any workout/exercise to fit the needs and abilities of the participant. Participants will be expected to practice techniques learned, as homework.

**Conflict Resolution**
Learn how to approach arguments and conflicts in a positive way. Discuss and practice using strategies to diffuse the situation, advocate for yourself, and learn to see things in a different perspective.

**Yoga for Stress Management**
Learn Hatha yoga practice including asana (ie, yoga poses), pranayama (breathing practices), and deep relaxation (often with guided meditation) to help deepen awareness of your breath and body in a supportive, noncompetitive atmosphere. Breath and movement are linked to mobilize joints and build strength safely. With regular practice, you will be able to use your knowledge of yoga tools to help reduce stress, calm the mind, improve focus, and increase self-confidence and body awareness.
Building Confidence and Self-Esteem
Improve your feelings of self-worth and confidence through reflection and positive self-esteem building activities. Identify personal strengths and develop goals related to improving self-esteem. Establish and implement various methods to uncover and eliminate the negative beliefs and thoughts that impede recovery. Develop positive self-talk skills, cognitive reframing, guided visualizations and affirmations, open discussion, and review printed material.

Understanding Mental Illness & Recovery
Gain a better understanding of your diagnosis, symptoms, medication, and treatment options. Develop a positive outlook for a meaningful, productive life using your strengths, supports, and skills for overcoming mental health barriers.

Wellness Recovery Action Plan - WRAP
Develop an action plan to help reduce hospitalizations and setup a post-crisis plan for your supporters and other healthcare providers in case of hospitalization (similar to an advance directive). Learn to monitor uncomfortable and distressing feelings and behaviors, and reduce or eliminate them (through planned responses).

Health and Medication Education
Take an active role in managing your health. Learn about medications, including effects on your mental and physical health, the importance of taking medications as prescribed, how to manage side effects through healthy lifestyle changes such as smoking cessation, nutrition and weight loss. Other health topics such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, asthma, and chronic diseases will be covered. Expect to achieve improved health outcomes.

Break the Violence and Abuse Cycle
This course is designed to provide education and support to help participants navigate healthy, unhealthy and abusive behaviors as well as break the cycle of violence. This course will define all types of violence including emotional, physical, sexual, mental, and economic abuse. This class will encourage participants to create safe environments for themselves as well as their children and families. Discussions will revolve around past or present emotional, physical, sexual, mental, economic abuse from an intimate partner or family member. We will navigate through the warning signs and symptoms of an abusive relationship and encourage building new and positive relationships for the future.
Living with Chronic Medical Conditions
Learn effective and appropriate ways of dealing with the challenges associated with having a chronic disease and gain a better understanding of how to manage your daily life. Learn to develop a positive outlook by building from personal strengths and other supports.

Mindfulness
Learn to overcome fear, anxiety, depression, anger, negative thinking, and other mental health symptoms. Learn the concepts of responding to, rather than reacting to, life with openness, compassion, and patience and without judgment, preconception or distraction. Guided imagery, breathing, concentration exercise, progressive muscle relaxation exercises, etc. will be used. “The Mindfulness Workbook” and online handouts will structure the content and flow of sessions.

Managing Diabetes
Learn to take an active role in managing your Type2 Diabetes. Education will be provided on the types of medications used to treat Type2 Diabetes, and how a healthy lifestyle such as good nutrition, physical activity and weight loss can improve diabetes management and health outcomes. Other related health topics such as preventative exams, tests, vaccinations, blood pressure, cholesterol, and triglycerides will be covered as well. By the end of the course you will have a greater understanding and improved management of your Type2 Diabetes.

Spirituality in Recovery
Rediscover a forgotten spiritual path, reinforce your commitment to an already well-established one, or simply find interesting food for thought that can all encourage your well-being. Use spirituality and religious activity as a way to find comfort and relief from stress, cope with life, and improve physical and mental health.

Embracing Unity as Women in Recovery
Learn to recognize and appreciate the personal strengths and external supports available to help you achieve your life goals and objectives. Develop a plan to use these strengths and supports as key elements in your ability to reduce barriers, solve problems, manage symptoms, and travel the “road to recovery.” Discuss topics relevant to women including relationships, self-esteem, boundaries and stigma in an environment of mutual support. Become empowered, build self-esteem as well as communication skills and build close relationships with female peers.

Write Your Way to Recovery
Explore writing (poetry, essays, stories, etc.) as a way to express and cope with trauma and other difficult life experiences in the context of mental
illness. Learn from one another and develop greater understanding of struggles and potential for recovery by sharing your work.

Making Positive Changes
Develop a positive approach to overcoming any and all obstacles. Often, in spite of a willingness to make positive changes, we sabotage our own efforts. Participants will increase self-awareness and self-esteem and actively work towards a desired goal. Each week participants will learn different techniques they can use to make effective decisions and will be asked to focus on positive aspects of their lives.

Overcoming Depression Through Art
Understanding how art can help alleviate depression. Learn about famous artists of past and present who have suffered with depression. See how they have used art to express themselves and cope with their symptoms and how art can help you find greater peace of mind. Create art in the styles of the different artists.

Cultural Diversity in Recovery
Develop an understanding of culture and its impact on the recovery process. Learn about varying cultures and their views on recovery from mental illness and addiction, as well as what factors are important to different cultures' treatment of mental illness. Topics such as stigma, racism, discrimination, etc., will be discussed and participants will have the opportunity to share experiences from their culture and how it relates to the process of recovery from mental illness and addiction. A better understanding of the effects of culture on the recovery process will help expand participant's views of others and encourage acceptance and a sense of connectedness to others, which could produce therapeutic effects, improve awareness, and reduce barriers and create more opportunities for success in recovery. Methods used will be handouts, pens, pencils, erasers, video instruction, and lecture.

Art, Mindfulness, and Inner Peace
Learn art and mindfulness techniques to develop and practice inner peace. View different types of art, such as abstract, still-life, photography and illustration, and have an opportunity to create your own art and simply be in the moment. Mindfulness techniques will be presented and participants will develop an understanding of how to incorporate these techniques into creating art.

Men’s Issues in Recovery
Develop an understanding of issues specific to men in recovery, and identify risks and barriers specific to men. Topics such as aging, fatherhood, work and friendship will be explored. Through discussion of
these topics, participants will develop better understanding of the specific risks, barriers and issues that men face in recovery from mental illness and addiction. In developing better understanding of issues, participants will be better equipped to manage and overcome barriers and complications from mental illness and addiction. Methods used will be handouts, pens, pencils, erasers, whiteboard, videos, and discussion.

Saying “No” to Negativity
Explore different ways to reduce negativity in your life and replace it with more positivity. Different impacts of negativity on our lives, from negative thinking, negative people, and negative styles of communication will be examined. Effects of reducing negativity are improvement in our physical and psychological health, relationships, and coping styles.

Keeping Feeling/Art Journal
EXPRESS yourself through a personalized weekly journaling and Creative projects with different materials of your choice. This will include 3D models, drawing, painting, poetry, and collages to give your feelings life and substance. By expressing feelings of all kinds you will be able to release anxiety, depression, anger, fear, and other feelings that have become obstacles in your life. Everyone is an expert of their own history, feelings, both past and present.

Your Life on Paper
Explore journal writing as a way to express and cope with trauma and other difficult life experiences in the context of mental illness. Learn from one another and develop greater understanding of struggles and potential for recovery by sharing work. The use of narrative conversations will assist participants in evaluating alternative directions in life.

Building Self Confidence & Self-Esteem
Learn how to improve your feelings of self-worth and confidence through reflection and positive self-esteem building activities. Identify personal strengths and develop goals related to improving. Develop positive self-talk and eliminate negative beliefs and thoughts that are barriers to recovery.

Keep Calm & Carry On
Claim you independence and gain control over your life. Identify Riggers, address symptoms, and reduce effects of environmental stressors. Increase your knowledge of coping skills, and learn to manage everyday stress as well as stress from major difficulties. Handling stress effectively can reduce relapse and need for emergency and inpatient settings.
Mindfulness for Stress Reduction
Explore how stress and anxiety become obstacles in life, and how to effectively cope with these issues through the practice of mindfulness and other strategies. Learn about the topics around the fight or flight response, social anxiety, generalized anxiety, and mindfulness will be examined in order to provide a basis for the development of understanding into what causes stress and anxiety and how we can effectively manage this in real life situations such as relationships, work, school, and in the community.

Music to our Ears
Explore music and lyrics, sound and syllables, through the singing and the playing of instruments to learn how the music makes you feel. Use music as a coping strategy to increase happiness, reduce anxiety, increase energy, reduce stress, and help you be the person that you want to be.

Crotchet & knit for Relaxation
Learn the basics of crocheting and knitting as you learn different stitches we will talk about your goals and what steps you are taking toward your goals. Topics will include positive self-talk, and combat negative thinking by developing positive affirmations that are tailored to each individual. The use of crocheting and knitting will create a relaxed and comfortable setting to reduce anxiety, teach simple stitches that one can achieve and feel rewarded while having important life changing conversations and planning.

What’s News Got to Do with you?
Extra! Extra! Read all about this exciting class that focuses on the affects that the news has on your day to day life. Do you find yourself worrying about what’s going on in the news? Are you seeing any positives in the news that are affecting you? Is there mental health stigma in the news? Join this class to uncover your feelings and expand your knowledge about current events in the world. Learn to understand mental illness by reading newspaper impact mental health issues.

Coping Through Comedy
HA, HA, HA…! Laughter is the best medicine. Increase your happiness by using humor in your journey of managing depression, trauma, anxiety, and other symptoms of mental illness and medical conditions. Gain an understanding of how humor has been used towards discussing societal issues such as racism, sexism, homophobia and more…

Resolving Anger & Conflict
Gain control over everyday life situations by learning how to approach conflicts in a positive way that diffuses the situation, changes your perspective, and get the results that you desire.

**Write Your Way to recovery**
Use informal and free flowing writing to express your feelings, reduce stress, anger, anxiety and other feelings that cause distress by exploring various topics to inspire positive thoughts. There is a personal journal that you will utilize in a way that works for you. You will have be given a weekly topic but you will have the freedom of free write, create poems, songs, lists, schedules, and narrative stories when exploring the topic while strengthening your skills to overcoming barriers and moving forward in the recovery process.

**Resilience following Loss**
Learn How to work through traumatic events and loss while improving daily functioning. Explore different and unexpected pathways toward building personal strength following various forms of loss.

**Stress Free Problem Solving**
Identify and Solve problems of daily living without unnecessary stress and anxiety. Use the techniques learned in class in your everyday life and FEEL GREAT!

**Clinical Counseling and Therapy**
**Change Your Thoughts, Change Your Life**
Use Cognitive Behavioral Therapy principles to change long standing negative beliefs, identify new positive beliefs, and eliminate obstacles to your recovery by putting into practice the CBT model to change thoughts, feelings and behaviors that are undesirable and implementing strategies of positive living.

**Basic Living Skills Training**

**Whole Health Action Management (WHAM)**
Achieve *Whole Health*, by developing a healthy mind and body. Learn about resiliency and the 5 keys to success. Understand the Science of stress and how physical exercise can help. The WHAM workbook will be used.

**Building Healthy Personal Relationships**
Learn and understand the elements of healthy relationships. Develop skills and apply them to make connections with others. Examine the barriers that interfere with this goal and create strategies to reduce and eliminate interferences. Use role-playing, effective self-talk, relevant written material, discussions, and peer support.
Social Skills for Making Friends
Conversation skills to help make friends and speak with those you meet every day.

Assertiveness Training
Identify your own personal communication style and ways to improve appropriate assertiveness for everyday social interactions. Participants will learn how to ask for what they need without becoming angry or too emotional. The group will explore and identify the difference between being assertive and being aggressive. The facilitator will provide opportunities to practice new skills. Group members will develop an understanding of how being assertive can help them be better understood by people and provide them with the ability to be more of their “authentic self.”

Getting Along in the Workplace
Develop skills to overcome such barriers as lack of confidence, anxiety when addressing supervisors/co-workers, appropriate responses to feedback, explaining absences and lateness, disclosing personal and health problems.

Independent Living Skills
Prepare for living independently or just becoming more self-sufficient. Learn the basics of appropriate community behavior, with a focus on homemaking, use of community resources, and self-care.

Healthy Social Boundaries
Explore appropriate behavior in various social settings and interactions. Each week a different social situation will be presented along with ways to respond. Role-play, discussion, and media presentations will be used.

Internet and Social Media Basics
Learn how the internet and social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) can help you achieve your goals and overcome barriers. Explore the web safely and efficiently as you research housing, education, employment, and anything that may assist you in achieving your goals. Beginners welcome! Computers will be used.

What’s News Got to Do With You?
Extra! Extra! Read all about this exciting class that focuses on the affects the news has on your day to day life. Do you find yourself worrying about what’s going on in the news? Are you seeing any positives in the news that are affecting you? Is there mental health stigma in the news? Join this class
to uncover your feelings and expand your knowledge about current events in the world. Learn to understand mental illness by reading newspaper articles, blogs and viewing and or listening to videos about various types of current events that directly relate and impact mental health issues. Participants will discuss issues raised in the media with a focus on handling challenges, coping with stigma, and understanding potential for achievement. Participants will also be asked to watch a news program or bring in a news article each week and discuss how it has positively or negatively affected you.

**Nutrition and Weight Control**
Lose weight in an effective and healthy manner. Learn appropriate eating plans, physical activity plans and develop positive attitudes to achieve this goal.

**Family Ties that Bind**
Identify close personal or family relationships that need strengthening and made more functional in order to help you with goal achievement. Develop an action plan for improving the dynamic and bring one or more supporters in to the PROS recovery process.

**Benefits and Financial Management**

**Benefits Education and Money Management**
Learn money management basics to help gain more independence and self-sufficiency. Topics include budgeting, saving and spending habits, and banking basics. Find out about resources for obtaining and maintaining eligibility for Medicaid, Medicaid Buy-in, Food Stamps, and work incentives.

**Community Living Exploration**

**Career Planning**
Learn more about your talents, skills, and interests in order to identify an employment goal. Explore different occupations through visits to various organizations as well as online.

**What to do This Weekend**
This course is designed to help the participants plan and utilize their weekend based on their goals and objectives. This class will navigate each weekend (September – December) local events, activities, and community services the participants can enjoy as they look forward to their weekend. Other skills that will be explored throughout this course are social and communication skills, relationship building and problem solving.
Out and About!
Exploring our communities by researching different locations and learn how to plan affordable and accessible trips, under the guidance of the recovery counselor, and go off site for multiple Field Trips throughout the semester. You will be encouraged to continue using the trip planning skills that you have gained in this course in your everyday life.

Exploring Education and Work
WORK, SCHOOL, TRAINING, and VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!!!
Not sure what you want to do with your life? Explore personal interests, Community opportunities both in the classroom and in the community. Learn first-hand about the different types of employment, school, training and volunteer opportunities in your community by visiting various locations, asking questions and researching options on the internet.

Information and Education on Self-Help

Peer Self-Help
Learn the benefits and ways of participating in peer self-help and mutual aid groups. Understand what resources are available in your community and share common experiences with peers as you advocate for and support one another in and out of PROS.

Individualized Recovery Planning

Mental Health Relapse Prevention
Develop a toolbox of portable skills to use throughout your life to prevent mental illness relapse. Identify triggers and signals that you may be getting sick. Handouts will be provided that give a physical representation of the tools you learned and implemented during the course.

CLINICAL TREATMENT (CT)
The Guidance Center of Westchester PROS provides a full range of clinical treatment services. In addition to individual services in medication management, symptom monitoring, health assessment, psychiatric assessment, and clinical counseling and therapy, we offer several goal-oriented clinical counseling and therapy groups as described below.

In order to participate in therapy groups participants must be enrolled in our PROS clinical treatment and not receiving treatment elsewhere.
Clinical Counseling and Therapy

Change Your Thoughts, Change Your Life
IDENTIFY Your Thinking Style! Thought and create obstacles to living an enjoyable life. Make changes to the thoughts that are not helping you to succeed. Create positive and flexible thoughts through Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Techniques and take control over your life.

Principles of positive Living
Use Cognitive Behavioral Therapy principles to change long standing negative beliefs, identify new positive beliefs, and eliminate obstacles to your recovery by putting into practice the CBT model to change thoughts, feelings and behaviors that are undesirable and implementing strategies of positive living.

CBT for Depression and Anxiety
Only for participants enrolled in Guidance Center PROS Clinical Treatment. Learn the ways in which Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) can help you manage your depressive symptoms. Learn the ways in which our social networks, daily activities and thoughts can affect our mood. Gain self-awareness and a variety of coping skills to manage symptoms of depression.

Anger Management – Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
Only for participants enrolled in Guidance Center PROS Clinical Treatment. Learn to manage anger, stop violence or the threat of violence, develop self-control over thoughts and actions, and receive support and feedback from others. Learn how to overcome barriers of negative thoughts by gaining awareness of negative thinking, feelings, and reactions and learn strategies to dispute negative thoughts and change behavioral outcomes by utilizing CBT techniques. CBT Anger management for Substance abuse and mental health participant workbook, homework, role plays, and handouts will be used as teaching tools.

INTENSIVE REHABILITATION (IR)
IR services help participants reach, within a certain time frame, specific goals for employment, housing, education, or relationships. IR services may also be used to help reduce the risk of hospitalization or relapse, loss of housing or employment, or to avoid involvement with the criminal justice system. There is urgency for goal attainment associated with IR services. Four types of services make up the IR component: Intensive Rehabilitation Goal Acquisition, Family Psycho-education, Integrated Co-occurring Disorder Treatment, and Intensive Relapse Prevention (generally provided as an individual service).
Intensive Rehabilitation Goal Acquisition

**Job Hunt Club**
Ready to look for employment and start to work? Learn how to overcome barriers—poor communication, anxiety, negative thinking and others—in order to accomplish the tasks required for success in the search for employment. Identify a suitable job objective and/or career goal and develop a plan to achieve it. Vocational interest and values assessments will be used and barriers to goal acquisition addressed.

**Education Goal Support Club**
Gain practical tips and support for overcoming barriers to achieving your education or training goal. Learn how to stay motivated, manage interfering symptoms, improve concentration and learning skills, ask for help, find study partners, and solve time management and organization problems.

**Integrated Co-Occurring/Dual Disorder Treatment**

**Tobacco Dependence Treatment/ Stop Smoking**
Want to quit smoking now or soon? The class will use a behavioral approach combined with medication guidance and support to help participants quit smoking.

**Co-Occurring/ Dual Disorder Treatment**
Learn to deal with co-occurring mental illness and chemical dependency disorders. Motivational, cognitive-behavioral, and harm reduction approaches will be used to address both disorders in an integrated way.
Main Telephone (914) 613-0700

www.TheGuidanceCenter.org