

PRRC COURSE CATALOG

SUMMER 2023

ADDICTIONS 101

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by working on being comfortable making wise decisions about use/non-use while in the community, as well as gaining new refusal skills for dealing with others, and building your recovery community outside of the PRRC.

This class is offered on Monday morning at 9:00 a.m. for a reason. It is designed for *any* Veteran who is looking to make positive changes to their ‘relationship’ with drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or other addictions. We like to start the week off with a reminder that we are whole people, with strengths, and interesting personal histories, *and* we are dealing with issues related to substance use and mental health square on. You will learn more about addiction, relapse prevention, and how to make the changes you see fit. Most importantly hear from other Veterans and know you are not alone. We welcome people wanting abstinence as well as those practicing harm reduction.

BLUEPRINT FOR RECOVERY (WRAP)

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by helping you to build self-esteem, increase self-awareness, and learn how to be well through developing a plan that empowers you to take charge of your wellness, work on recovery, and accomplish goals to engage in the community as a whole.

This class is designed to guide you through the development of a Wellness Recovery Action Plan, or WRAP. This is a plan that assists in your mental health recovery, helps you get well and stay well, and identifies the life you want. It can also be useful when you are confronted with other stressful situations as well. You may not complete the entire plan in these sessions, and you will be encouraged to work on it at home, with other staff, and/or natural supports.

BUILDING A MEANINGFUL LIFE

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by helping you get clear about what matters most to you and identifying actions you can take right away toward having meaningful roles in your community.

Sometimes, our thoughts and emotions seem so powerful or painful that we do whatever we can think of to avoid them. Then, before we know it, our lives have become much smaller and less satisfying. This class, based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), teaches us how to change our relationship to our thoughts and emotions so that we can get back in touch with our sense of purpose and once again engage in the things that make life meaningful.

CBT FOR INSOMNIA

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by addressing sleep hygiene and teaching tools to better manage sleep, so that you feel more energetic to pursue the activities that are important to you.

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This class is based on cognitive behavioral principles to explore how our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors impact sleep. The class provides a structured approach to changing sleep habits, tracking changes, and assessing progress. Sleep can have a profound impact on our mental health and we will explore ways to prioritize improvements to this critical component of daily life. Support your health goals by taking care of your sleep and gaining freedom from the challenges of insomnia.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by exploring your beliefs on political engagement, share in diverse points-of-view, and participate in a civics project at the end of the quarter.

This class will use elements of positive psychology, WRAP, and other techniques to focus on opportunities to have a political voice. Instruction and discussion of civics, media literacy and critical thinking will be included. All political points of view will be respected. The object is to be clear and effective in presenting your views to others. Benefits and challenges of political empowerment and acting as a group will be discussed, as will implications for Veterans as a group and the differences between political expression in military and civilian contexts.

COPING WITH VOICES & WORRIES

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by offering tools and techniques to cope with the experience of hearing voices and heightened worry so that you can reengage with your life and be more effective in your community of choice.

Do you struggle with hearing voices, feeling suspicious or paranoid, or having unusual, distressing thoughts? In this class, we will learn a variety of tools that may help you reduce these types of stressful experiences and improve your life satisfaction. This class is based on cognitive behavioral therapy, or CBT, which has been shown to be effective in overcoming many types of problems, including those related to hearing voices and feeling suspicious or paranoid. CBT can help you achieve your goals by looking at relationships between what you think, how you feel, and what you do. You can expect to take an active role in this class, and to practice the new skills you learn between sessions.

DISTRESS TOLERANCE

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by teaching you how to tolerate distress, so you can be effective and get your needs met while thoughtfully considering your priorities in your relationships with others.

This is a two-part class and BOTH groups are required. Do you have difficulty managing intense emotions and tolerating distressing situations? You may respond with behaviors that are not aligned with your values or your goals. These circumstances may feel unpredictable or out of control, and they may affect your ability to form meaningful connections. This class will cover these concepts and introduce coping skills and approaches to better manage our distress tolerance using Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT). Using real life examples related to

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your goals and behaviors, we will work to apply mindfulness and related skills more effectively. Active participation in and outside of class will be essential to help feel more skillful, confident, and effective.

ENDING SELF-STIGMA

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by exploring how we internalize stigma related to mental health conditions, the ways in which it gets in the way of your goals, and how you can reclaim your lives and find a sense of pride in your experiences.

This class uses a structured approach to help you stamp out the effects of stigma and reclaim your life story. Sometimes we can hold ourselves back from working toward the life we want. Self-stigma is when we start to believe the unfair negative myths about people who live with mental health challenges. Left unchallenged, self-stigma can be harmful. We will fight it together in this class with facts, skills, and the power of re-narrating our own life stories.

FOOD & FITNESS

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by becoming a healthier you, physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally, and building habits and routines to function better in the community (including shopping, laundry, and other heavier tasks).

This program will provide you with information, skills, and motivation so you can be successful in creating a healthier life. You will learn the effects of being overweight on both physical and mental health; some you may be aware of and others you may not know. This is a chance not only to learn why and how to get healthy, but to actually *DO IT!* People who have taken this class lose an average of 8 pounds! So, come join us in developing healthful habits while having fun.

HAPPINESS BOOT CAMP

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by supporting your efforts to identify what brings happiness into your life and how to implement changes so that you feel empowered to be your happiest self.

This class is designed specifically for Veterans wanting to increase their levels of happiness derived from internal sources. It is based on the recovery model's core concepts of hope, healing, empowerment, and connection. Participants will learn strategies and approaches to build inner peace and challenge stigma in an effort to gain a sense of happiness and define what this means in your life.

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HEALTH FORUM

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by teaching Veterans how to establish and maintain healthy practices, identifying reputable resources for accurate health information, and providing guidance for how to engage with people and events in the community amidst communicable illness outbreaks.

Do you want to feel better and be in control of your health? Then this forum is for you! Registration is not required, attend when we are discussing a topic you find important to your health! Topics include heart health, diabetes, obesity, cancer (colorectal, lung, prostate, skin), prevention and treatment of common infectious diseases, how to make the most of doctor visits, and any other topics that participants feel would be important to explore and discuss. Calendar of topics will be available in advance.

RECOVERY IN YOUNG ADULTHOOD

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by connecting to other Veterans who are in a similar stage of life - building skills to deal with stress, learning about community resources, and getting support to make progress on your goals – like going to school, working, socializing, making transitions, and figuring out what a meaningful life looks like for you.

This class will address common issues among young adult Veterans (approximately 21-40 years old), such as readjusting to civilian life, going to school, getting a job, managing family/relationships, and pursuing life goals. It will introduce coping strategies for managing obstacles to goals, including psychosis and other mental health problems (like depression, PTSD, and substance use). This class will help you learn tools to understand and overcome these challenges, while you move forward with your life and pursue your recovery goals. This group will be open to all young adult Veterans (including those not enrolled in the PRRC program). We will sometimes meet at various destinations in the community, as agreed upon by class members, to encourage social connection and community integration. Please join us!

SEEKING SANCTUARY

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by encouraging you to develop a faith community and/or find a like-minded group of people to support your spiritual journey, which, in turn, supports your overall mental health.

When a person experiences trauma and losses in their life, often the foundations of their beliefs and values are shattered. This can result in 'moral injury or distress' in the inner being or soul. This class deals with such issues such as the difference between spirituality and religion, and such emotions as guilt, shame, anger, resentment, pain and suffering, loneliness, and despair. Practical tools are presented and discussed to deal and cope with these emotions, to facilitate renewal and healing.

SELF-COMPASSION

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by learning skills and tools to promote self-compassion, which helps us manage unhelpful thinking patterns, reduce anxiety, and encouraging ways of being kinder and more understanding with ourselves.

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Are you hard on yourself when you make a mistake or struggle in life? Do you beat yourself up when things don't go the way you'd hoped? Most of us feel compassion when a close friend is having a hard time. What would it be like to offer that same caring attention to yourself, especially when you are struggling? To have the strength to stand up to harm, including the harm that we cause to ourselves through self-criticism and self-judgment? Research shows that self-compassion is associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression, stronger coping with life challenges, emotional well-being, healthy habits like diet and exercise, and more satisfying personal relationships. In the *Self-Compassion* class, you will learn how to understand the benefits of self-compassion, practice self-compassion in daily life, motivate yourself with kindness rather than criticism, handle difficult emotions with greater ease, and identify obstacles to self-compassion and strategies for overcoming them.

SOUNDS OF RECOVERY

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by connecting with a cohort of your peers to engage with music and identify opportunities in the community to pursue musical interests.

This class, related to the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), focuses on developing the use of music as a coping skill and daily maintenance tool. Specifically, by including music in your WRAP Wellness Toolkit and Daily Maintenance Plan, you will practice ways to use music as a recovery tool in your everyday life.

STORY CORPS

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by providing you with a space to explore your voice and build confidence in the telling of your own unique recovery story.

Writers of all levels are welcome to attend the Veterans Story Corps. In this class, you will work on a variety of recovery-oriented writing exercises to increase self-awareness and reduce tension while also increasing language arts and communication skills. There will be opportunities to explore prompts including journaling, expressive writing, poetry, non-fiction, playwriting, and short stories about real topics relevant to your current challenges or personal goals. You are invited to practice storytelling skills and share writing with peers to gain support and further reflection. Anyone -- from beginner to expert -- is welcome to come and try their hand at *Story Corps*!

VISUAL JOURNALING

This class helps you build a stronger bridge between yourself and community by teaching you how to use observation, creative self-expression, and reflection to communicate with yourself and others, and to find meaning and new perspectives. It supports you in asking your own questions and listening with discernment.

Using a journal assists you in slowing down, 'looking' and discovering. Drawing on the healing power of creative self-expression, visual journaling combines images and words to foster greater connection with yourself and the world, improve memory, reduce stress, and release difficult emotions. Creative, artistic activity can help clarify what matters most to you, help you get in touch with your feelings and give voice to your soul through the universal language of images. Materials will be provided.

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WOMEN CREATE

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by connecting you to a network of your peers for resource-sharing, community development opportunities, and the tools to express your voice and coping strategies for managing the stressors of being a woman Veteran.

Women-identified Veterans will be invited to discuss, share, visualize and actualize recovery goals through discussion of recovery concepts and through active creative expression. This class will encourage you to share aspirations and unique methods of creativity such as visual art, writing, and performing. As well as encourage mindfulness and support healthy social involvement through the discussion of shared interests.

WORKPLACE SKILLS

This class helps you build a stronger bridge to the community by teaching skills for finding and getting a job, and also helping you build skills for managing your mental health in the workplace to support you in keeping a job.

This class is designed to help you build two main sets of skills related to employment and is designed to offer skills that are useful to everyone, whether you are considering work or already working. First, we will help you figure out how work fits into your personal recovery vision, and you will learn strategies for navigating and managing your mental health in the workplace. Second, you will learn practical strategies for finding and getting a job. For example, strategies covered in class may include how to look for a job, how to write a resume, and interview skills.