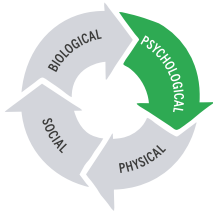


Self-management



The main focus of this approach is psychological.



Remember, one thumbs up means that enough people have done research to show that this approach does work.

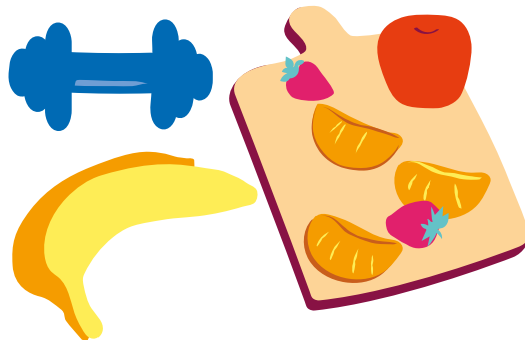
What is it?

Self-management means your ability to manage the symptoms, treatments, physical, psychological, social and life style effects of living with unusual distressing experiences such as psychosis.

The main way of training in self-management skills is through teaching, learning, and actively doing things.

What does it aim to do?

Central to this approach is the development of your own personal ways of doing things. Self-management activities are rooted in your own personal experiences of what works for you, and you take your own approach to each topic.



likemind.nhs.uk

The main topics that self-management works on include:

- Having information about mental health difficulties, treatments and services.
- Developing ways to notice early warning signs that things are going less well so that you can reduce the chances of your problems coming back or getting worse (relapse prevention).
- Managing your experiences of medication, so that you can tell your psychiatrist, pharmacist or care coordinator about side-effects and can agree a medication plan that is best for you.
- Having ways to manage your unusual distressing experiences, anxiety or low mood.
- Setting individual recovery goals and developing ways to achieve them.
- Developing life skills important for wellbeing, self-care, productivity and leisure. For example, a healthy diet, exercise, smoking cessation, finance management, positive relationships, organisation, home making and communication.

Does it work?

A number of studies (25 randomised controlled trials) have been run across the world for adults with unusual distressing experiences like psychosis, to find out what the benefits or potential harms are of self-management approaches compared with other treatments.

These studies found that self-management can help to reduce unusual distressing experiences such as psychosis. It was less clear whether it reduced the chances of hospitalisation.

Self-management helped to improve quality of life immediately after using the approach, but the long-term benefit was less clear. Self-management was also found to aid recovery, and this effect continued in the longer term.

There was no definite evidence that self-management helps day-to-day function.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

NICE said that overall, self-management and peer support are likely to be helpful for people with psychosis, but they should not be provided as treatments on their own because they were not designed as sole treatments.

Self-management should be provided as additional support for people at all stages to instill hope; improve self-management of distressing experiences; provide information about the nature of experiences and treatments; develop self-monitoring skills; improve coping; and develop skills to manage life changes.

How do I get this treatment?

Training in self-management may come from mental health professionals, peer support workers, through a local recovery college, or it may be provided partly or completely through a computer package.

It is important that whoever you are working with believes that you can contribute to your own health management, and that you can work together to strengthen your own personal skills.

It may be harder to actively form your own self-management approaches and keep these going when you're working with a mental health professional who might be seen as the 'expert'.

So, a recent UK trend is the setting up of peer support groups and recovery colleges, where other people with experiences like your own, carers and mental health professionals work together to support you to learn about mental health and recovery.

Recovery colleges provide a chance to learn more about your experiences, as well as learning life skills and abilities. The way recovery colleges are set up and run encourages you to take responsibility and gives you confidence to go on to further education and employment.

✓ Main pro

Overall, the evidence suggests that self-management can help to reduce unusual upsetting experiences like psychosis and can improve your quality of life at the end of training, and can aid recovery over the longer term.

✗ Main con

Self-management approaches rely on you taking responsibility for managing your mental health and some people find this difficult. It is unclear whether these approaches help with day to day function or stop you from going to hospital, and they are best done in combination with other treatments.

💬 This is the best thing to happen in mental health. It puts a person's recovery back in the service user's control. Recovery College can offer a new strand to what is available on mental health to assist people with hope, choice and learning opportunities to develop self-help and self-management skills and explore vocational and personal development. 💬

Hastings Peer Trainer