

Remember Your Family Member...

- Brings his/her own unique expertise living with an illness.
- Has the right to make choices, develop interest and grow as he/she sees fit.
- Benefits from taking an active part in improving his/her life and personal health, even when the steps are small.

The Just Right Challenge!

If you are setting goals and/or expectations with your family member it's important that the goal is not too hard or too easy. If it's too easy, it can diminish meaning and increase boredom. If it's too hard, it can overwhelm and lower confidence and motivation.

About this Project:

Families are an important part of a person's recovery and well-being. The Schizophrenia & Community Integration Service (SCIS) are committed to strengthening the role of families at each step of a person's recovery. This brochure was developed by family members and healthcare professionals and is one in a series of six including:

1. Caregivers – How Are You?
2. Managing Relapse
3. Communicating with Health Care Professionals
4. Encouraging Medication Adherence
5. Fostering Independence
6. Goal Setting – How To Help?

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Healthcare Hamilton | Integration Service

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Supporting the Supporters

Schizophrenia & Community
Integration Service



Fostering Independence

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Tips for Fostering Independence

- **Convey Hope:** Even during difficult times having someone who believes in you can make a big difference. Say, “I believe in you” or “You can do it”.
- **Recognize Successes:** Remember that a simple compliment can go a long way. Say, “You did well”.
- **Avoid “Nagging”:** Try to be non-judgmental and open to understanding his/her perspective on why they do or do not want certain things. Say, “I hear you”.
- **Healthy Living:** Basic day-to-day activities that we all know can improve our health, such as regular exercise, healthy eating, getting outside and regular sleep can go a long way to supporting recovery. Say, “Let’s go for a short walk”.
- **Normalize Struggles and Stressors:** Regardless of mental illness, life can be challenging for us all. For example, anybody going back to work or starting school will feel anxious about starting. Say, “It’s normal to feel the way that you do right now”.
- **We All Make Mistakes:** Mistakes are opportunities to reflect and problem solve. Say, “It’s OK to make mistakes; we learn from them”.
- **Routine:** Routines can often help to establish healthy living activities that will build on recovery. Say, “ Let’s work on writing down a schedule. What do you think”?
- **Time Management:** Structuring strategies can help build routine. For example, using alarms or apps on his/her phone to cue certain behaviours such as waking up, taking medication and getting exercise can be helpful.
- **Sleep Habits:** Try to support healthy sleep habits (for example, not sleeping too much or too little). It can be helpful to speak with the healthcare team about establishing a sleep routine and how you might be able to adjust medication and activities to support regular sleep.
- **Prioritize Tasks:** Having too many things on your plate can be a big stressor. Focus on one task at a time. Helping your family member prioritize what is important to focus on can be a way for you to help. It is also helpful to break large goals into smaller tasks and help problem solve through anticipated challenges.
- **Balance Activities:** Doing too much of any one activity can be a hindrance to recovery such as spending all day watching TV or working all the time. Try to encourage balance, mixing productive, leisure and self-care activities.
- **Safe, Supportive and Predictable Environments** are vital to helping people get and stay well.