

# Recovery International Group Meeting Evaluation Update

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# Today's Presentation

- Evaluation Team
- Evaluation Overview
- Current Results
- Next Steps

# RI Group Meeting Evaluation Team

- UIC
  - Sue Pickett, Ph.D., Evaluation Director
  - Pam Steigman, M.A., Evaluation Coordinator
  - Dana Kraus, M.S.W., Evaluation Assistant
- RI
  - Joan Nobiling
  - Mary Gillen
  - Celinda Jungheim
  - Nancy Carstedt
  - Area and Group Leaders
- Kathy Garcia made all of this possible!

# RI Group Evaluation: Overview

- How does RI help people cope with daily life challenges?
- Collect data on RI group participation and participation benefits
  - Who attends RI groups?
  - Why do they go to RI groups?
  - What do they find helpful about RI groups?
- Enroll and interview 120 newcomers in the U.S.
- Conduct 4 telephone interviews with all study participants to see how participation in RI and participation benefits change over time
  - Time 1: 2-4 weeks after enrolling in the study
  - Time 2: 3 months after the first interview
  - Time 3: 6 months after the first interview
  - Time 4: 12 months after the first interview

# Why Newcomers?

## How Will You Find Them and Tell Them About the Study?

- We need “fresh faces” who haven’t been exposed to RI. This will help us learn why people decide to go to an RI group and how RI first helps them with their problems.
- We ask group leaders to give study welcome packets to all newcomers. Welcome packets include a flyer, a study fact sheet, and instructions on what to do if the newcomer wants to enroll in the study.
- We also ask group leaders to hand out flyers at group meetings.
- All group leaders who are helping with the evaluation participate in a conference call to learn more about the study, the welcome packets, and how to give packets to newcomers.

# How Do Newcomers Enroll in the Evaluation?

- Group leaders give a welcome packet to newcomers
- Newcomers who want to learn more about and/or enroll in the study call our 800#.
  - A UIC evaluation team member asks the newcomer a few questions and determine if he/she is eligible to participate
  - Eligibility criteria include:
    - 18 years or older
    - Attended 1-5 RI group meetings
    - Express interest in the study and provide informed consent

# Interview Procedures

- Newcomers who meet eligibility criteria and who agree to be in the study are sent an informed consent document. They must sign and return the document to us before we can do their first interview.
- All interviews are done over the phone using computer-assisted personal interview technology (CAPI).
  - Interviews are conducted by UIC study staff
  - Interviews take place at times that are good for participants
  - Participants receive a \$15 money order for each interview they complete

# What Questions Are You Asking?

- We ask newcomers questions about the following topic areas (outcomes):
  - RI Group Meeting Attendance, Participation and Satisfaction
    - Includes questions on how they first heard about RI and why they decided to go to an RI group
    - Includes questions about why they may no longer be attending RI
    - Includes questions about the support they may receive from other group members
    - Includes questions about what they like and don't like about RI groups
  - Recovery Knowledge and Use of Recovery Tools

# What Questions Are You Asking?

- Empowerment
- Emotional well-being
- Hope and recovery
- Self-stigma
- Service need and use
- Social support/connectedness
- Interview questions have been reviewed by and pilot-tested with RI Executive Director, Board members and staff

# Who Is Participating in the Evaluation?

- Enrollment officially began in August 2008
- 84 RI groups across the country currently are participating in the evaluation
- As of May 28, 2009, 73 newcomers have enrolled in the evaluation
  - These newcomers are attending RI groups in California, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Texas

# How Many Time 1 Interviews Have Been Completed?

- Time 1 interviews began in September 2008
  - 60 initial or Time 1 interviews have been completed as of May 28, 2009
  - 8 newly enrolled participants are scheduled to do their Time 1 interviews within the next 2-3 weeks
  - 3 newcomers changed their minds and dropped out of the study before doing their Time 1 interview
  - During their Time 1 interviews, we learned that 2 newcomers really did not meet eligibility criteria (went to more than 5 RI meetings when they called to enroll in the study) and we withdrew them from the evaluation

# How Many Time 2 Interviews Have Been Completed?

- As of May 28, 2009, Time 2 interviews (3 month follow-up interviews) were due to be completed with 30 participants
  - 25 Time 2 interviews (83%) have been completed
  - 3 participants changed their minds and dropped out of the study before doing their Time 2 interviews
  - 4 participants could not be located and did not complete their Time 2 interviews

## How Many Time 3 Interviews Have Been Completed?

- As of May 28, 2009, Time 3 interviews (6 month follow-up interviews) were due to be completed with 12 participants
  - 10 Time 3 interviews (83%) have been completed
  - 2 participants could not be located and did not complete their Time 3 interviews

# Evaluation Participant Demographic Characteristics

- Time 1 interview data currently are available for 57 participants
- Participants range in age from 25-71, with an average age of 50 years
- Gender
  - 72% female; 28% male
- Race
  - 87% Caucasian
  - 7% African American
  - 2% Asian
  - 4% Hispanic/Latino
- On average, participants have completed 15 years of education
- Participants have an annual income range of \$20,001-\$30,000
  - 59% report annual incomes of \$20,000 or less
- Employment status
  - 33% currently employed
  - 25% disabled/unable to work
  - 19% looking for work
  - 7% retired

# Evaluation Participant Mental Health Characteristics

- 98% of participants have seen a professional about a mental health problem; 88% have been formally diagnosed
- Primary diagnosis
  - 50% depression
  - 20% bipolar disorder
  - 10% anxiety disorder
  - 8% schizophrenia spectrum disorder
  - 6% obsessive-compulsive disorder
  - 4% other (e.g., personality disorder)
  - 2% post-traumatic stress disorder
- Only 8% report a problem with drugs and/or alcohol
- Participants report experiencing mental health problems from 1 month – 49 years, with an average illness length of 24 years
- 58% have been hospitalized for a mental health problem. These participants report an average of 4 psychiatric hospitalizations
- 33% report that they also have physical health problems that limit their daily activities

# RI Group Meeting Referral Sources

- How did newcomers first hear about RI?
  - 47% Friend or family member
  - 26% Mental health professional
  - 19% RI group member
  - 10% RI website
  - 10% Another advocacy organization's website or support group
- 65% went to their first RI meeting for help with a specific problem

# RI Group Meeting Participation: Time 1 Results

- At Time 1, participants have attended 4 RI meetings
- 68% attend meetings once a week; 16% attend meetings several times a week; and another 16% attend meetings several times a month
- RI group size ranges from 3-25 members, with an average of 11 group members per meeting
- 2 participants had stopped going to RI group meetings

# RI Group Meeting Participation: Time 2 Results

- Participants have attended 3-36 RI meetings in the 3 months since their first interview.
  - On average, participants have attended 13 RI meetings between their Time 1 and Time 2 interviews.
- 43% attend meetings once a week; 31% attend meetings several times a week; 19% attend meetings once a month; and 6% attend meetings several times a month
- RI group size ranges from 5-18 members, with an average of 11 group members per meeting
- Two participants are attending phone meetings as well as in-person RI meetings
- To date, at Time 2, 4 participants had stopped going to RI meetings since their last interview

# Why Did You Stop Going to RI?

	Time 1	Time 2
Schedule conflicts	1	3
Transportation problems	2	2
Family problems		1
Mental health problems	1	1
Vacation/business trip		1
RI meetings too boring		2
Problems with group members		1
Group members/leaders don't understand my situation		1
Limited opportunities to participate		2
Didn't like group materials		2
Materials too hard to understand		1
Didn't like meeting format		3
Didn't like being asked for voluntary \$ contribution		1

# RI Group Meeting Satisfaction

- At both Time 1 and Time 2, on average, participants
  - Report moderate levels of overall satisfaction with RI group meetings
  - Receive the information they wanted at RI meetings
  - Feel that RI meets their needs
  - Feel that the information they receive at RI meetings helps them deal with their problems
  - Receive moderate to high levels of support from other RI group members
  - Provide moderate levels of support to other RI group members
  - Feel that there is not much friendship between RI group members
  - Feel that the group is somewhat to moderately effective
- What they like most about RI
  - RI tools
  - Peer support
  - Group structure
- What they like least about RI
  - Language is hard to understand and outdated
  - Not enough groups are offered at convenient times
  - Some RI group members are not very warm or social

# RI Knowledge and Example of Recovery Practice

- We use a 17 item multiple choice survey to assess participants' knowledge of RI tools and terms.
  - At Time 1, scores range from 0–17 correct responses, with an average score of 13 correct responses
  - At Time 2, scores range from 4-17 correct responses, with an average score of 14 correct responses
- When asked to give an example of Recovery practice:
  - At Time 1, 42% of newcomers correctly followed all 4 steps
  - At Time 2, 57% of newcomers correctly followed all 4 steps

# Other Outcomes: Time 1 Results

- On average, participants report
  - High levels of hopefulness
  - Moderate levels of self-esteem, coping mastery ability, and social connectedness
  - Low levels of empowerment, self-stigma, and personal recovery (beliefs that one can cope with mental health symptoms and achieve personal goals)
  - Few mental health symptoms, such as feeling anxious or depressed, in the week prior to their first interview
  - Use of few mental health and social services

# What Do We Know So Far?

- Newcomers who choose to enroll in the evaluation are primarily middle-aged, Caucasian females who have been coping with mental health symptoms—primarily depressive symptoms—for many years.
- Most newcomers hear about RI from friend, family member or mental health professional.
- Newcomers are moderately satisfied with RI and feel that the groups meet their needs. Dissatisfaction results suggest that some newcomers may want or need a more “traditional” mutual support group.
- Most reasons for leaving RI are personal and not RI-related.
- Newcomers are quick learners of RI tools and practice.

# Next Steps

- Continue to enroll newcomers until we reach our goal of 120 evaluation participants
  - Your group can join us!
- Continue to conduct follow-up interviews
- Next report (August 2009) will contain Time 3 results, and change-over-time results

# Evaluation Team Contact Information

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