



Doors to Wellbeing Quarterly

Newsletter

MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH TAKING ACTION FOR SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT

Meaningful employment is foundational to my own recovery journey and current whole health and well-being. When I was providing supported employment services in the public health system, I would invite people to share their story about employment and their recovery. Many people shared a similar story that when they received a diagnosis from their medical providers, they were told not to work because “work is stress and stress can exasperate their symptoms.” However, many of us, myself included, find that the pursuit of meaningful work is not just an outcome of recovery, but a means to our wellness and recovery. It is not the goal of recovery to avoid stress. Rather it is to develop resiliency skills and individualized approaches that allow us to experience the ‘normal’ stress of community participation like everyone else and stay well in the process.

We can't wait to meet a system's definition of wellness and readiness to participate in the community. We get wellness and support our wellness through our participation in the community.

Taking action for supporting employment for me is an individualized and systematic approach that we can develop through a process of mutual sharing with others and create action plans despite our unique triggers and early warning signs. When our triggers and signs are left unattended, it can disrupt any of our lives and especially our employment. But we can, we have, and we will find individualized, simple, and practical approaches to stay well despite our life and health challenges. We can also enhance our wellness to levels others may have caused us to doubt in the past; I have. The level of wellness we can achieve in our careers when we keep taking action is undefined and unlimited.



Personal experience written by Matthew Federici, CEO

Supporting Employment

This comes directly from SAMHSA's new Taking Action Implementation Guide! You can access this document on the next page.

Taking Action to support employment and wellness through work is an important part of recovery. **Taking Action** can complement the evidence-based practice of [supported employment](#), which has values and ethics similar to **Taking Action**. For example, common values include empowerment, self-determination, exploring choices and options, and focusing on strengths instead of disability or illness.

Supported employment approaches also align with community inclusion principles.³⁷ This means that participation in employment should be available to people with mental health or substance use conditions, like anyone else, regardless of disability. The support for employment focuses on individualized approaches.³⁸ Individuals are empowered to seek and keep employment of their choice.

Taking Action can be applied to one's goals of seeking and keeping employment and staying well while employed. Through the facilitated group peer support process, individuals are supported to mutually explore, identify, and develop action plans related to employment goals. In addition to finding jobs, this action could include a focus on making career changes, improving job performance, or transitioning back to work after a crisis.

In a **Taking Action** group, participants can start to explore how each concept in **Taking Action** applies to recovery and wellness related to employment. For example, this could be exploring how self-esteem may be affected by the process of seeking employment and coping with rejection. Likewise, participants can discuss how to boost self-esteem in order to prepare for a job interview with confidence and intention.

As with any topic, **Taking Action** to support employment works best when facilitators have used the program to support their own employment goals.

The Role of Employment

Employment is a key domain of community inclusion. Mark Salzer, PhD, Director of The Temple Collaborative on Community Inclusion, has conducted research that demonstrated having opportunities to participate in employment is a medical necessity.³⁹ Dr. Salzer's research has also demonstrated there are many obstacles to employment for people with mental health conditions.

You can also learn more about Supported Employment from these webinars!

Reclaiming Employment:
Self-Employment and
Entrepreneurship for Peers

Certified Peer Specialist (CPS)
Career Outcomes Study

By: Laysha Ostrow, Ph.D.



Belong to Yourself @
Work: Re-establishing
Your Relationship to
Employment

By: Lynnae Brown



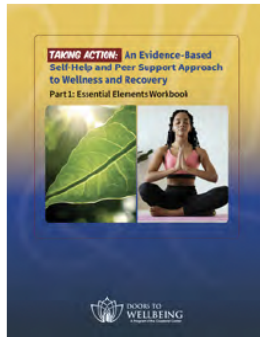
NEW TAKING ACTION MATERIAL!

These updated workbooks provide additional tools, structured exercises, and practical applications that you can immediately integrate into your work with individuals and groups. Designed to strengthen self-awareness, daily wellness practices, and action planning, the materials build on the core values of hope, self-determination, personal responsibility, and mutual learning.

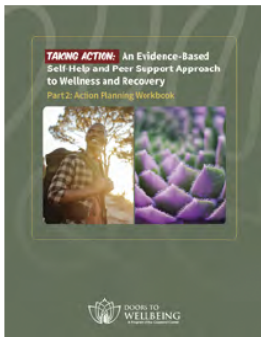
YOU ARE
HERE

Taking Action resources now feature these recently updated and improved materials:

Part 1: Essential Elements Workbook. This workbook reviews key concepts and essential elements for **Taking Action** and invites participants to develop their own Wellness Toolbox.



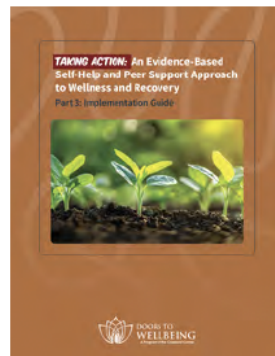
Best of all, the new workbooks are in the public domain and available for download at no cost, making them accessible to communities everywhere.



Part 2: Action Planning Workbook. This workbook includes information and prompts to guide you in developing a personal Action Plan to support your recovery and wellness. You'll also be able to plan for times when you may need additional support. The planning process includes these steps: creating a daily maintenance plan, forming action plans for difficult times, and preparing for crisis and post-crisis.

Check out our new Taking Action website page here!

Part 3: Implementation Guide. This guide helps **Taking Action** planners, facilitators, and supporters to successfully plan and implement **Taking Action**, while ensuring fidelity to best practices proven to produce superior results.



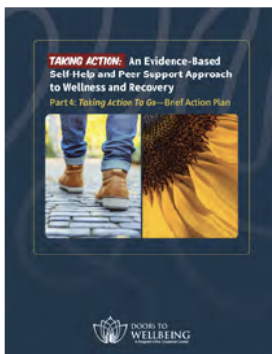
Click here to view each part here!

Part 1: Essential Elements Workbook

Part 2: Action Planning Workbook

Part 3: Implementation Guide

Part 4: Taking Action To Go: Brief Action Plan



Part 4: Taking Action To Go— Brief Action Plan. This concise planning tool is for use by those of us who may be unable to participate in a full **Taking Action** group support process. It features key information and prompts for basic **Taking Action** planning.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR PEER SUPPORT IS HERE!

The Association for Peer Support (APS) is a membership-driven organization rooted in a simple but powerful belief: *people with lived experience are uniquely positioned to help one another heal, grow, and thrive.*

Supports, Events, and Resources in Development and/or Coming Soon for Members!

- ▶ Conferences and Summits
- ▶ Databases (State by State PS)
- ▶ Peer Support Café: Peer Support and Networking for Peer Supporters
- ▶ National Continued Education: webinars, online courses and e-courses
- ▶ Resources: National Surveys and Evaluation Reports; Fidelity Guide for Systems
- ▶ Pillars of Peer Support
- ▶ and more!



**The Association for
Peer Support**

**Learn more about
organizational
membership here**

**Join individual
membership here**

Peer Specialist Webinar Series

**Join us for our monthly
webinars - last Tuesday of each
month!**

Click here to view our webinars

*Doors to To Wellbeing is a Program
of the Copeland Center*



**DOORS TO
WELLBEING**



Copeland Center
FOR WELLNESS AND RECOVERY

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