**How Families Can Help Recovery**

Everyday families- and especially mothers- have opportunities to improve the strength of their ill relatives recovery. It’s not complicated. Just be aware of the messages you are sending by what you say and do.

A recent research study set out to better understand the trajectory of recovery. The authors believed that that the attitudes of family members would have an impact on their ill relatives’ self-image. Their view was based on the well-known fact that a positive self-image is vital to recovery. Those who see themselves as less competent, able or successful tend to behave in a like manner. This internalized stigma can diminish the quality of life and increase the risk of illness symptoms.

Result’s confirmed the author’s instincts’: there is indeed a connection between how families perceive their ill relatives, how the relatives think others perceive them and how they perceive themselves. The study also indicated that mother’s perceptions were particularly relevant to their relative’s level of symptoms, self-efficacy and quality of life.

The esteem of those near and dear can exert an effect similar to social supports and may predict the reduction of symptoms. Negative feedback may facilitate just the opposite. The connection holds true despite the fact that a family’s harmful behavior often stems from the best intentions and only reflects their awkward attempts to cope with the demands of a serious mental illness.

Some see recovery from mental illness as more than symptom control (often posited by a narrow medical model). This 2011 study reinforces that opinion and concludes that, in part, recovery is a social-psychological process: the way people regard those with with mental-illness affects the beliefs and actions of the latter and strongly influences the trajectory of their illness and recovery.