TREATMENT CHOICES

PART I: Understanding Your Options

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Understanding Your Options

WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE THEY’RE LIMITED
Potential Wellness Plan Components

- Medical or Biological Treatments
- Talk Therapy
- Support Options
- Lifestyle & Personal Strategies
Creating a Plan as Unique as You Are

Together, the choices you make regarding these treatment components form a wellness plan bouquet unique to you.
Choices: Medical or Biological Treatments

- Prescribed medications
  - “Antidepressants”
  - “Mood stabilizers”
  - “Atypical or 2nd-generation antipsychotics”
- Complementary and alternative treatments
  - Nutritional supplements
  - Somatic or “body” therapies
- Neuro-modulation treatments

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Prescribed Medication: When is it worth it?

- Your doctor is the expert on:
  - Is this the type of problem that a specific kind of medication will help with?
  - What is the chance that a specific kind of medication will help?
  - What are the likely side effects and possible risks of specific medications?

- And you are the expert on:
  - How much does this problem interfere with my life?
  - How important are specific risk or side effects to me?
  - How do I weigh the balance of possible benefits and risks or side effects?

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Prescribed Medication: Which one is best for me?

- There are averages and individuals
  - Within most groups of medication, average effectiveness is similar
  - But effectiveness varies widely between individuals

- For now, individual variation is mostly unpredictable
  - Research mostly shows us how little we know
  - Side effects are probably more predictable than benefits

- So, persistence is more important than genius

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Questions to Ask When Starting Medication

- What problems is this medication supposed to help with?
- How will we measure whether it is helping?
- When could we know whether it is helping?
- What side effects or problems should we watch for?
- When would those side effects or problems appear (or improve)?

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Different Kinds of Side Effects

❖ “Ordinary” or expected side effects
  • Common and unpleasant, but not dangerous
  • The question is: How bad is it and will it get better?

❖ Unexpected side effects
  • Uncommon and potentially dangerous
  • Know what to look for

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Nutritional Supplements

- What is the evidence for effectiveness for this specific problem?
  - SAMe effective for depression (and with antidepressants)
  - Hypericum effective for depression and can even cause mania
  - Omega-3 possibly effective for unipolar and bipolar depression

- What are the potential side effects or risks?
- What are the potential interaction with other medications?

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Somatic or “Body” Therapies

- No clear evidence for effectiveness in treatment of mood disorders
  - But might help with associated anxiety
- But no significant risks or adverse effects
- “Complementary” but not “Alternative”

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Range of Neuromodulation Treatments

- Transcranial magnetic stimulation
- Direct current stimulation
- Vagus nerve stimulation
- Direct brain stimulation
- ECT

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
When to Consider Neuromodulation Treatments

- None are initial or first-line treatments for depression
- Like medication, none have a permanent benefit
- We hope for a treatment with the power of ECT and without the risks and negative effects – but we don’t have that yet.

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
How do you decide if any treatment is helping?

Sometimes it’s more like Marco Polo than GPS

- What direction is my goal?
- Am I getting closer or farther away?

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
TREATMENT CHOICES: PART I

DBSA Wellness Tracker Online & App

Not quite GPS... But better than Marco Polo!

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!

App currently available for iPhone® and iTouch®. Coming November 1, 2014 for Android™ phones!
Does psychotherapy really work?

- For depression:
  - As effective as antidepressants for moderate depression
  - Always recommended for more severe or chronic depression
- For bipolar disorder:
  - Clearly effective for treatment of depression
  - Helps prevent recurrences of mania

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
The ABCs of Effective Psychotherapy

- CBT – Cognitive / Behavioral Therapy
- BA – Behavioral Activation
- MBCT – Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy
- PST – Problem-Solving Therapy
- DBT – Dialectical Behavior Therapy
- IPT – Interpersonal Therapy
- IPSRT – Interpersonal and Social Rhythm Therapy

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Treatments and Therapists

❖ The right therapy:
  • Focused on the problems that matter to you
  • Takes advantage of your strengths
  • Fits with your values

❖ The right therapist:
  • A style that’s comfortable for you
  • A schedule that’s workable for you
  • A price that’s possible for you (covered by your insurance)

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Psychotherapy: What to look for . . .

- Agreement about what you are working on
- An explanation that makes sense to you
- A plan for when and how you’ll decide if it’s helping
- Specific things to work on between visits

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Psychotherapy: What to look out for . . .

- Endless listening and “Uh huh”
- Advice-giving
- Blame-dealing

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Building a Diverse Support System

- Family and friends
- Peers
- Faith and spirituality
- Other communities of interest

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Different Kinds of Support

- Instrumental support (e.g. give me a ride to get groceries)
- Emotional support (listening, empathizing, encouraging)
- Companionship (just being with and spending time)
- Respite (a temporary break from something stressful)

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Getting the Support You Need

- Identify what kind(s) of support you need now
- Think about who can (or cannot) provide that
- Make a specific request (specific doesn’t mean bossy)
- And say thanks

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Tell your providers about your support system.

- Who can they call if they can’t reach you?
- What information can they share with whom?
- Who can speak for you if you’re not able?

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Personal Wellness Strategies

- What do to more of
- What to do less of
- What to do when you need more help

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
The bad news is ... your grandmother was right.

More of this:
- Exercise
- Eat your fruits and vegetables
- Keep a regular sleep schedule

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
The bad news is ... your grandmother was right.

And less of this:
- Alcohol
- Marijuana and other drugs
- Calorie-dense and fatty foods
- Sleeping during the day

In other words – all the things you feel like doing when you’re stressed or depressed

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Add the things that are specific for you.

- Things you should schedule every day
- People you should try to spend more time with
- Spiritual practice or restorative time

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
A Booster Plan When You Need More Help

- Warning signs to look for
- Specific activities that help when you feel specific ways
  - When you need more energy and activation
  - And when you need less
- People you should try to spend more time with
- When and how to contact your health care providers

Work towards a solution that fits your unique goals for wellness!
Your Unique Bouquet of Choices

Everyone’s needs and goals are different. Everyone’s wellness plan bouquet will be different too. None is better than another as long as it works for the person.
Finding Your Voice in Your Choice

WORKING WITH YOUR TEAM
Who’s the boss?

- Your providers are working for you – so they should act like it!
- But, you should expect them to
  - Tell the truth, even if it’s now what you wanted to hear
  - Not encourage or participate in things that hurt you
Who’s the expert?

- Your providers are supposed to be experts about averages
  - What treatments might work for what problems
  - What side effects or risks to look out for
- But you are the expert about you
  - The problems or symptoms that matter to you
  - Your personal history
  - Your values and preferences
But you can make it easy for them.

- What kind of a visit is this?
  - A crisis, a check-up, or somewhere in between?
- What decision(s) are we making?
  - Is this treatment working? Is this treatment necessary?
- What information do we need?
  - And who’s the expert on that information?
About Truth and Blame

- A provocative question: Is it ever a good idea to lie to your doctor?
- My answer: Only once (because a doctor you have to lie to is a doctor you shouldn’t see again)
Resources

From DBSA
www.DBSAlliance.org

From Others
www.DBSAlliance.org/Resources
Archived Webinar & PPT

www.DBSAlliance.org/Webinars
Post Webinar Survey

- Please provide us feedback about today’s webinar. A link to the post-webinar survey will be emailed to you shortly.
- In the survey, you’ll also be able to submit topics/critical treatment choice points that you’d like to see covered in the following upcoming October webinars:
  - Treatment Choices for Depression
  - Treatment Choices for Bipolar Disorder
Part II: Treatment Choices for Depression

OR

Part III: Treatment Choices for Bipolar Disorder
Thank You!

- DBSA is very grateful to for the time and expertise provided by our esteemed presenter, Dr. Greg Simon.
- DBSA would also like to thank Sunovion for their generous support for the production of this webinar.
- And, DBSA would like to thank you, our peers and partners, for joining us today. We hope you found the webinar informative and helpful and hope you’ll provide us feedback about the webinar via the survey link that will be emailed to you following today’s webinar.
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