HARLEM BAY NETWORK PROS
Class Synopsis/Descriptions

Introductory Classes:

1. Welcome to PROS
Designed for individuals whom have recently joined the PROS program. This class allows individuals to better understand the specific services available in the Harlem Bay Network PROS including program schedules, policies, expectations and participant’s rights. Newly enrolled participants attend this class once for 45 minutes.

2. Positive Life Changes for Older Adults
The purpose of this class is to aid older adults with recognizing the meaning and purpose in their lives. Using concepts and practices from the Lifestory Workshops and Visible Lives interventions, this class utilizes displayed storytelling to help participants identify areas of satisfaction with their lives, and areas in which they would like to find increased meaning. Overall aim is to help older adults identify meaningful, personal goals. This class meets once a week for 12 weeks.

3. Positive Life Changes for Younger Adults
Young adults are empowered to recognize their strengths, identify challenges, overcome obstacles, and make life choices that have positive outcomes. Topics covered include: a sense of self, impulse control, friendships, relationships, peer pressure, empathy, evaluating consequences, and most of all-goal setting. This class meets once a week for 12 weeks.
Full Cycle Classes:
***Unless otherwise stated, all Non-Introductory classes meet once a week for 45 minutes and run for 12 weeks.

1. Mental Health Recovery:

1. Acceptance and Change
This class utilizes Dialectical Behavior Therapy – which includes techniques to increase mindfulness, emotional regulation and distress tolerance, to assist people in management of mood swings and unpleasant emotional states. Ideal for people whom have frequent and sudden mood swings as well as unstable relationships.

2. Anxiety Coping Class
Grounded in cognitive behavioral therapy, this class helps people use practical strategies for identifying their anxiety triggers, challenge the thoughts and beliefs that lead to distress, and safely face the situations they fear.

3. Beating the Blues
This course looks closely at managing the symptoms of depression in a holistic way – combining medication interventions, with cognitive behavioral approaches.

4. Buried in Treasure
Class designed to aid in discovering the reasons for one’s problems with acquiring/saving, and learn new ways of thinking about one’s possessions. Tools for organizing one’s possessions and filing paperwork are also explored.

5. Cinema and Disability Education
Videowork or cinematherapy is the therapeutic process in which therapists assign popular films that relate to core issues of ongoing therapy. This class takes a twist on this process, and utilizes 5-10 minute “video shorts” to explore issues of mental health symptoms, coping mechanisms and treatment. Some discussion is also given to the stigmatization of mental illness in the media, and how this can be internalized by those dealing with such disorders.

6. Expression in Recovery
Class that explores the issues and struggles involved in recovery, specifically utilizing the modality of Art Therapy. Assists participants with identifying the specific symptoms of their mental illness, and develop coping strategies for managing these symptoms. Best for individuals whom have difficulty verbally expressing themselves.
7. Gone But Not Forgotten
Handling the loss of a loved one can be especially difficult when one is already dealing with mental health issues. This class looks at the nature of grief, self-nurturing strategies, and handling “special occasions” that arise.

8. Letting Go (Stress Management)
Class designed to help people identify their own specific stress triggers, and exploration of various strategies to managing stress.

9. LGBT and Emotional Stability
This class, designed for individuals that identify as LGBT, class explores issues specific to this group that may impact on one’s emotional well-being. Related issues reviewed include - conflicts in self-perceptions, obstacles to the growth of a healthy GLB identity, dealing with the trauma and anxiety that result from discrimination, using semi-hypnotic visualization to treat internalized homophobia, etc.

10. Taking Control of My Meds
Class designed to teach 4 main skill areas when it comes to psychiatric medications: Obtaining information about medications, correct self-administration of medications, identifying side effects, and negotiating medication issues with health care providers.

11. PhotoVoice Empowerment
This class explores the stigma surrounding mental illness and the prejudice and discrimination people living with mental illness have experienced. However, this class serves to ultimately refocus the individual to empower them to combat this stigma. Using the art of photography, this class is specifically designed for those individual whom have internalized stigma and are attempting to work through self-shame in order to better move forward in their goals.

12. Recovery and Spirituality
Class explores spirituality as a coping mechanism. Looks extensively at individuals’ spiritual beliefs, and practices, and explores some additional practices that can be considered spiritual in nature – such as meditation, journaling, and the practice of forgiveness.

13. Recovery in Real Life
Through the use of documentaries and personal stories of recovery from mental health issues, this class looks at the value of sharing with others whom have had a common experience. The class also assists individuals with accessing the self-help options of his/her choice outside of the PROS program.
14. Supporting Self-Esteem
Class designed to assist individuals struggling with self-esteem issues. The class reviews the concept of self-esteem, and the impact of negative self-evaluation. Assists people with developing positive thoughts about themselves, and explores the meaning of self-acceptance. Presently this class can be taken in a women only, men only, or joint group section).

15. The Brain Explained
Class provides an overview of the brain and its many complexities. Specifically looks at what happens in the brain that is believed to cause mental illnesses. Also, looks at how medications work to correct these issues.

16. The Exercise and Happiness Connection
Designed to aid people in utilizing exercise as an additional tool/strategy for improving and maintaining positive mental health. The class explores how exercise impacts mood, develops an individual plan for participants to incorporate exercise into their daily life, and focuses on increasing motivation through the use of a diversified and healthy reward system.

17. The Tao of Music
Just about everyone likes to listen to music to put them "in the mood". This class is designed to show people how to use the technique of music therapy get you "out" of a mood! The "Tao" part is about accepting what you're feeling, and dealing with it.

18. Trauma Recovery
Class designed specifically for individuals whom have experienced extensive trauma and which is presently impacting their ability to move forward in their life goals. The class extensively discusses how trauma is experienced, including its impact on one’s sense of self, relationship to one’s own body, and perceptions of the abuser. Additionally, coping mechanisms are explored including creating interpersonal safety and managing extreme states of emotional arousal. Classes are currently subdivided into a Trauma Group integrated with on-site psychiatric services, and a Trauma Group for individuals that may be engaged in psychiatry services off-site.

189 Understanding and Managing Mood Disorders
Class that takes an extensive look at symptoms such as mania, depression, and anxiety. Aids people with identifying triggers to symptom development and learn coping mechanisms. Extensively looks at relapse patterns and potential need for life style changes.

20. Understanding and Managing Schizophrenia
Class takes an extensive look at Schizophrenia and the symptoms of psychosis – including disorganized thoughts, paranoia, though blocking, hallucinations, etc. Aids people with identifying triggers to increased symptom development and learn successful coping mechanisms. Extensively looks at relapse patterns and potential need for life style changes.
21. Understanding Borderline Personality
Class provides a general overview of borderline personality disorder, including common symptoms, treatment options, and beginning exploration of coping skills.

22-24. Wellness Self-Management Classes: Overall Wellness Self-Management Classes are designed to assist people with overcoming personal disappointments in order to improve their success and satisfaction in a variety of life areas.

22. Your Culture, Your Community, Your Recovery (WSM I)
This class reviews people’s personal vision of recovery, how one’s cultural background impacts the decisions people make about their mental health treatment. Also looks at evaluating and using one’s personal strengths and one’s cultural and community resources.

23. Understanding and Maintaining Mental Health (WSM II)
Class provides an overview of mental illness, it’s causes, how it’s diagnosed and common symptoms. Also reviews how stress and mental health symptoms interact, and how to select a particular mental health symptom to focus on improving. (This class also offered for in Spanish)

24. Empowering Yourself in Treatment (WSM III)
Class reviews different mental health services, and guides people through choosing what services best work for him/her. Reviews using medication effectively and discusses side effects and coping with such effects in depth. Also gives detailed information about how to work with one’s doctor. (This class also offered in Spanish)

25. What’s Your Story?
Using narrative therapy, this class explores how mental health issues have affected a person’s life, so as to evaluate the problem’s influences. The use of narrative conversations help people clarify for themselves an alternate direction in life, taking into consideration a person’s values, hopes, and life commitments.

26. You Are Not Alone
This class is designed to assist participants to explore how isolation affects the various areas of their lives. They will explore the possible reasons that individuals isolate, what behaviors may be indicative of isolation and provide coping skills and techniques to overcome the tendency to isolate.
II. Dual Diagnosis – Integrated Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery

1. Dual Relapse Prevention
For those dually diagnosed who have had, or are concerned about having, a relapse with substances. The class particularly focuses on participants identifying what are specific high risk situations for them. Planning and practice for actions to take when these situations arise are also explored. This class currently meets TWICE weekly.

2. Emotional Awareness and the 12 Steps
Class designed for those in dual recovery and attending self-help groups in the community. Utilizing DBT therapy techniques, this class looks at common emotional experiences people have while participating in these groups. Assists the individual in development of DBT skills, such as distress tolerance, to help decrease the intensity and frequency of self-destructive behaviors and improve participant’s use of self-help groups.

3. Harm Reduction
Class that explores individual’s behaviors in a non-coercive, non-judgmental way. Without minimizing or ignoring the real potential harm of behaviors - such as active drug use, unprotected sex, etc., this class delves into why a person is ambivalent about changing their behavior. Motivational interviewing is a modality heavily used in this class.

4. Kick the Butt!
For those contemplating or actively trying to quit smoking, this class takes people through the decision making process, how to seek support and deal with setbacks. Also addresses issues specific to psychiatric medications and smoking cessation.

5. Starting Dual Recovery
For those individuals dual diagnosed who have just recently become drug/alcohol free, OR individuals whom have indicated they wish to become drug and alcohol free. This class looks at Stages of Recovery, common roadblocks, building emotional strength and supportive relationships, and making lifestyle changes.

6. Middle Earth in Dual Recovery
For those dually diagnosed with 3-6 months of sobriety. This class takes a look at common thoughts and behaviors people experience in early recovery that can sabotage their sobriety. Ways to recognize and overcome these thoughts and behaviors are explored.

7. Motivated and Maintaining
For those dually diagnosed who have more than 6 months of sobriety. Specifically looks at the role emotions play in recovery from substance use and positive things people can do to help thwart off relapse.
8. Other Addictions
Class designed to assist those struggling with compulsive behaviors/addictions that, while not illegal, interfere with a person’s quality of life. These include addressing such issues as compulsive spending, eating, gambling, and hoarding behaviors. Utilizes the art of narrative storytelling to look at the consequences of such behavior and to develop a plan for re-gaining behavioral control.

III. Employment

1. Acing the Interview
Class that intensely focuses on interview/presentation skills. Reviews some of the difficulty interview questions (such as explaining gaps in work history) and looks at various ways to address these questions. Modalities of role playing and peer feedback used extensively.

2. Careers in the Helping Professions
People in recovery often become motivated to join the “helping professions” and assist others on their road to recovery. This class reviews important aspects to consider in pursuit of this type of career including development of empathy, issues around self-disclosure and maintaining boundaries, as well as how to care for yourself while caring for others.

3. Exploring Employment
This class is designed to help individuals take the first steps in the job search process. The first part of the class will involve researching and learning about various careers and what job would be a good match for the individual. The class will then cover understanding networking, gathering references, beginning resume building, discussing how working impacts benefits, exploring what resources are out there such as WorkForce 1, etc.

4. Job Search
Assists individuals with developing a job search plan, and reviews the important areas of networking and resume/cover letter writing. All Job Search classes held in the computer lab for hands on assistance with utilizing technology to aid in the job search process. The Job Search classes are divided into 2 sub sections – for individuals with minimal computer experience and those with more advanced computer knowledge.

5. Symptom Management on the Job
Class designed to assist people with development of coping strategies for managing symptoms while at work. Symptoms of anxiety, depression and hallucinations are specifically addressed.
6. Work Success!
This class is ideal for those soon to be employed and/or those already employed who could benefit from additional vocational support beyond 1 to 1 individual counseling sessions. This class looks at common workplace stressors, including overbearing co-workers, meeting demands and deadlines etc. Focuses on problem solving around these and other issues commonly experienced in the workplace to aid in improving job retention.

IV. Education

1. Exploring our Community – The World of Education
Class designed for those considering re-entering and/or completing their education. Participants are taking through the steps of picking the right school for him/her, options in paying for school, Things to consider in making the decision to return to school, and managing one’s disability in the school environment.

2. Back to School
Class designed for those who have made the decision to return to school. Focuses on specific habits and skills - such as time management, organization, and support systems that exist to assist a person with being successful in school.

V. Housing:

1. The Housing Search
Overview of the process of locating housing – whether an individual is homeless and/or wants to improve their current living situation. Not designed for those specifically pursuing supportive housing options – see course below. The class reviews standard housing applications, leases, negotiations with landlords, and your rights as a tenant, etc.

2. Moving On
Provides an overview of the process for applying for and acceptance into supportive housing. Includes information on the different types of supportive housing, review of the housing application and its completion, and understanding determination letters. Also utilizes “mock housing interviews” to aid individuals in gaining offers of housing from providers.
VI. Re-Entry (Post Incarceration):

1. **Coming Home**
Designed for individuals recently released from incarceration, this class works with participants to identify key struggles they are/have experienced since their release, and develop strategies to overcome barriers specifically related to their legal history. Resources for services and assistance is also explored.

2. **Released and at Peace**
Class focused on assisting those recently released from incarceration with evaluating their thought patterns, reviewing distorted and extreme thinking patterns, and how to identify and stop old pattern of behavior.

VII. Interpersonal Relationships

1. **A Date on the Weekend**
Class that focuses on development of social skills, specifically for those seeking a romantic relationship. Addresses such topics as flirting, body and verbal language, social connectedness and resources in the community to meet people.

2. **Building Personal and Intimate Relationships**
For those individuals who struggle to have healthy romantic/intimate relationships, this class focuses extensively on communication skills. Evaluation one’s own communication style as well as one’s partner. And problem solves around stumbling blocks that often occur in relationships include arguing, jumping to conclusions, and mastering the art of negotiation.

3. **Interpersonal Relationships**
Reviews important components of relationships that impact one’s emotional health. The class includes discussion around types fo relationships, intimacy and vulnerability, open communication and honesty, attachment styles, problem solving etc. Presently this class is available to participants involved in our psychiatric clinic services only.

4. **Let’s Talk About Sex**
Among topics covered in this class are physical versus emotional intimacy, sexual response, contraception, reproduction, and sexually transmitted disease, communication and relationships. Presently this class is divided into differing sections for men and women.
5. **Life with Kids**  
Based on the Nurturing Program for Families, this class specifically looks at the impact of mental illness, trauma, and substance abuse has on the parent-child relationship. The program explores the physical and/or emotional absences participants have had from their children and how to begin restoring the parent-child bond. Skill building and coping strategies are the primary focus in this class to support parents in recovery.

5. **Family Ties**  
Evaluates the extent to which personal distresses and conflicts can be traced back to one's family of origin. Looks at one's own family experiences and aids with evaluation of family dynamics. Assists people with recognizing familial patterns and how to effectively break those patterns that are unhealthy.

6. **Forming Friendships**  
Course designed to aid people in recognizing the need for and value of positive relationships. Teaches skills to start friendships, make choices about what one wants and does not want in a friend, and looks at the role respect, support and encouragement play in developing lasting 6.

7. **Relationships and Recovery**  
Class explores what makes a relationship “healthy”, how/why people develop unhealthy relationship patterns, different relationship styles and important development issues in a relationship including: favorite fights and fighting fair, sex, spirituality, and satisfaction. This class utilizes music therapy modality to help people connect and break through discomfort often experienced when discussing these issues.

8. **Talking with Family About Mental Health**  
Examines the difficulty sometimes faced by individuals in obtaining familial support when it comes to one’s mental health issues. This class looks at the genetic and generational mental health component that can exists within families. Also looks at societal and cultural beliefs about mental illness. Mock role playing used aid people in beginning conversations with family members about their mental health concerns and how to ask for their involvement in a relapse prevention plan.
Other Life Skills:

1. Anger Management
   Assists class members with identifying events and cues that trigger anger, reviews the cycle of aggression, how anger management issues are learned and developed, and aids participants in the development and use of an anger control plan.

2. Minding Your Money
   Looks at different forms of benefits, developing a monthly budget of expenses, basics of opening and managing a bank account, and options to save money for long-term needs.

3. Boost Your Brain Power
   This class is designed for individuals whom have experienced some decline in their thinking skills. This class assists people with beginning to rebuild these skills through modules focused on increasing concentration, comprehension, memory, organization, sequencing and logic.

4. Boundary Management and Assertiveness Training
   For individuals that experience difficulty setting boundaries with others and “saying no”. Specifically works on building self-esteem and assertiveness skills through the use of Drama Therapy.

5. Communication 101
   For those whom have difficulty communicating effectively, this class looks at giving and receiving effective messages, and communicating effectively in different environment with different groups - including with friends, family, roommates, and in the general community.

6. Conflict Resolution
   Looks at crisis/conflict and the different styles of managing these events. Also explores styles of communication, values and the role power plays in conflict resolution. Drama therapy and role playing modalities are used extensively in this class.

7. Earning Your Own Respect
   For individuals seeking guidance in learning to take on personal responsibility and to rely on and trust themselves. Also explores the role self-forgiveness and love for oneself plays in one taking control of one’s own life.

8. Finding My Mojo
   Mojo – or finding one’s motivation and joy in life can be difficult task. This class assists with establishing what is truly important to oneself. Additionally, strategies for combating mojo sabotagers, and moving beyond short-term happiness to sustained long-term happiness are explored.
9. Get Your Swag Back!
Class designed to evaluate and promote good self-care. The role physical presentation plays in interpersonal relationships and achieving goals is also explored and some time is spent on review and learning of basic self-care skills.

10. Goodbye Sugar High
For those individuals dealing with both diabetes and mental health issues, this class assists with coping with common psychological issues that develop when diagnosed with diabetes – such as obsessive thinking, fear, and depression, and re-framing those thoughts towards a positive and hopeful outcome. Some basics of diabetes self-management education are also reviewed.

11. Healthy Living
Class that assists people with evaluating their personal disposition towards illness and injury, their personal relationships, and their general level of happiness. Utilizes extensive exercises to help people take control over their health and stay in balance.

12. Nutrition
Specifically focused on nutrition obstacles faced by individuals with psychiatric illness and/or on psychotropic medication. Reviews the impact of metabolic syndrome, among other health concerns and discusses how to utilize good nutrition as a way to combat this issue. Also explores the link between good nutrition and good mental health.

13. NYC Travel Guide
Utilizing curriculum developed and used throughout the country, this class assists people in development of independent travel skills. It includes in depth focus on reading maps, time tables, following directions/instructions, and developing a “safety” plan to assist a person with returning to familiar surroundings. Some anxiety relief techniques are also reviewed.

14. Special Event Workgroup
This class is designed to assist participants with working on a particular barrier or issue in a “normative” setting. In this class, participants work on development of a special event while at the same time focusing on improving a specific skill – such as team work, self-confidence/leadership, organization and memory, social anxiety etc. Formal evaluation of progress on skill development is done at regular intervals during each class meeting.

15. Theater for Community
In this class, drama therapy assists people to open up and explore their feelings through theatre, offering a safe place for them to air their views with dignity, respect, and freedom. Beginning with warm-up exercises and bridging activities, the process moves forward to improvisational scenework, where students actually replace characters in the stories. It is at this point that people engage in their own mini-theatre and look at choices, strategies, and communication.

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16. **Tick-Tock (Time Management)**
Guides participants in examining the amount of time they spend on specific activities with the goal of helping participants more effectively meet life’s commitments. Planning, setting goals, scheduling and prioritizing are skills specifically focused on in this class.

17. **Video Newsletter**
This class is designed to assist participants with working on a particular barrier or issue in a “normative” setting. In this class, participants work on development of a video newsletter while at the same time focusing on improving a specific skill – such as team work, self-confidence/leadership, organization and memory, social anxiety etc. Formal evaluation of progress on skill development is done at regular intervals during each class meeting.

18. **What Does it Mean?**
This class is designed for individuals that have difficulty recognizing both verbal and non-verbal social cues. It begins with an exploration of one’s own body language and other communication. It then assists with learning to identify welcoming vs unwelcoming cues, sarcasm vs genuine expression, and respecting personal space, etc.