

**RESOLVING
PSYCHOTROPIC
MEDICATION DILEMMAS**

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**Helping Clients Overcome
Resistance to Psychotropics**

- The Shame Factor
- Family Interference
- Ambivalence
- Fear

- How You Can Help

**Families and Psychotropic
Medication**

- Family members are our de-facto healthcare specialists
- Family members are seldom consulted about medication or educated about the ill client's condition
- Roadblocks: Time consuming; getting informed consent; scheduling
- Offer family members resources ; answer questions straightforwardly

Tips for Improved Relationships with Physicians

- ❑ Approach physicians in an assertive, confident manner
- ❑ If you work in an on-site system, greet physicians with a smile or handshake. This build good will
- ❑ Establish your competence; become the "go-to" person
- ❑ Speak the doctor language. Focus on patient symptoms, not theory jargon
- ❑ Respect time constraints; medicine is fast-paced

Polypharmacy

- ❑ Key question: Does the use of multiple medications improve the patient's condition manifested by discernable symptom improvement
- ❑ There must be a clear rationale for each drug choice
- ❑ Polypharmacy can be beneficial by providing more options to achieve better outcomes
- ❑ Multiple medications may be necessary to manage mental health disorders in those with physical health issues and other co-morbidities

When To Refer a Client for Medication

- ❑ The client is not responding to counseling after an adequate trial period
- ❑ The client has a complicated medical history and is taking multiple medications
- ❑ The client hasn't had a thorough physical exam in years
- ❑ The client initially presents with prominent mood and behavior instabilities
- ❑ There is an active and identifiable presence of psychotic features
- ❑ There is a prolonged personal or family history of mental disturbance
- ❑ Substance abuse

Medication Non-Compliance

- ❑ Side Effects
- ❑ Cost
- ❑ Forgetfulness
- ❑ The "I'm Cured" Syndrome
- ❑ Frequency of Use

- ❑ How You Can Help

Brand-Name vs. Generic Medications

- ❑ Whom you ask
- ❑ Comparative Studies
- ❑ Biases
- ❑ Personal experience

- ❑ The bottom line: The FDA is satisfied with the overall performance of generic drugs

The Placebo Effect

- ❑ The placebo effect is as old as the healing professions themselves
- ❑ In the classic placebo effect, a person consciously believes that a substance is therapeutic, and this belief generates a positive effect on medical or psychological symptom improvement
- ❑ Placebos have been found to have a positive response when the person knows they are taking a placebo

The Placebo Effect

- Placebo effects can also arise from subconscious associations. Any stimuli that a patient may link with symptom improvement – a physician’s white lab coat, the touch of a stethoscope , even the smell of rubbing alcohol in the examining room – may induce positive physiological responses

Using The Placebo Effect

- Inspire patient confidence by acting and dressing appropriately
- Display symbols of comfort in your office – soothing artwork, positive affirmations, a “mini-fountain” with trickling water
- Discreetly take notes during sessions
- Lean slightly forward when addressing the client and asking questions
- Solicit the patient’s beliefs and input when choosing treatment interventions
- Most important, instill hope and optimism

Frequently Asked Questions

A Gaze Into The Future of Psychopharmacology

- ❑ Corticotropin-releasing factor (CRF)
- ❑ Substance P
- ❑ Cortisol
- ❑ The role of testosterone in male depression
- ❑ Gene expression
- ❑ RNA fingerprint
- ❑ Brain mapping
- ❑ Brain imaging

Thanks for Listening!
