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## Strengths-based assessments and recovery in mental health: reflections from practice

Francis, Abraham (2014) *Strengths-based assessments and recovery in mental health: reflections from practice*. International Journal of Social Work and Human Services Practice, 2 (6). pp. 264-271.



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### Abstract

Social workers in the mental health sector are required to undertake assessments to determine the needs of their clients and to use appropriate strategies of interventions in a very demanding and compelling environment. One of the critical questions being asked in this context is- What do social workers really do in an assessment? And how do they do the assessment? Is a strengths based assessment model feasible in a predominantly biomedical model of practice? What is recovery? How can these concepts be applied in practice? How can the invisible nature of social work intervention be made more explicit and thus develop a sense of professional leadership? These are some of the questions that prompted this paper. Hence, in this paper the author discusses the relevance of strengths based philosophy and addresses how these ideas can be employed in adopting strengths- based assessment practice, and a recovery practice frame work in the mental health field with a special focus on social work. This is further illustrated with two case studies, which helps the readers to form questions and provides some practice tips for social workers to become an effective recovery oriented practitioner in the field.

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Strengths-based practice is a collaborative process between the person supported by services and those supporting them, allowing them to work together to determine an outcome that draws on the person's strengths and assets. For example, in mental health there is a strong focus on recovery and positive psychology - an inherently strengths-based perspective (Petersen and Seligman, 2004). Strengths assessment: The primary focus is not on problems or deficits, and the individual is supported to recognise the inherent resources they have at their disposal which they can use to counteract any difficulty or condition. Francis, Abraham (2014) Strengths-based assessments and recovery in mental health: reflections from practice. *International Journal of Social Work and Human Services Practice*, 2 (6). pp. 264-271. Social workers in the mental health sector are required to undertake assessments to determine the needs of their clients and to use appropriate strategies of interventions in a very demanding and compelling environment. One of the critical questions being asked in this context is- What do social workers really do in an assessment? And how do they do the assessment? Is a strengths based assessment model feasible in a predominantly biomedical model of practice? What is recovery? How can these concepts be applied in practice? strength-based approach to mental health. recovery and present supporting evidence. from the literature. Strengths-based approach in mental health. practice. Mental health care approaches in the. Using strength-based assessment in. transition planning. Teaching Exceptional.