

Key Elements of Empowerment

Having decision-making power

Having access to information and resources

Having a range of options to choose from

Assertiveness

A feeling that you can make a difference (being hopeful)

Learning to think critically, seeing things differently

(redefining who we are, what we can do, and our

relationships to those who have power)

Learning about and expressing anger

Not feeling alone; feeling part of a group

Understanding that people have rights

Effecting change in your life and community

Key Elements of Empowerment

Learning skills that you believe are important (like communication skills)

Changing your perceptions of your competency and ability to act

“Coming out of the closet”

Growth and change that is never ending and is started by you

Increase your positive self-image and overcome stigma

Modified from Chamberlin, J. (1997). Working definition of empowerment. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*. 20(4) excerpts in:

WI Dept. of Health and Family Services. (2001). Recovery and the Mental Health Consumer Movement in Wisconsin booklet published by Bureau of Community Mental Health Division of Supportive Living, Madison, WI.