



P.N.A.
CHANGE CONSULTANTS
MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN

MOTIVATED
CAPABLE
COMMITTED

Ready
Set
GO

MOVING TOWARD
EMPLOYMENT

Ready, Set, Go! Moving Towards Employment

Helping individuals with mental illness
develop the skills to sustain
long-term employment

Introduction:

Employment has been shown to be a key marker in recovery for people struggling with mental illness. Regular work helps people to better engage with their communities, provides structure, and is an overall normalizing experience. In fact, research indicates that 70-90% of individuals with mental illness want to pursue competitive employment.

For some individuals with mental illness, however, long-term work can sometimes be out of reach. They may hold beliefs that keep them from reaching their full potential as employees, or may lack the intrinsic motivation skills they need to keep working – and when things go wrong, may externalize blame. At the same time, employers may unfairly see employees with mental illness as having a lack of motivation, reliability or dependency.

At the same time, many job-training programs can be resource-intensive and ineffective in meeting the needs of clients with mental illness.

How ‘Ready, Set, Go!’ helps:

- **RSG** is a unique, group-based intervention program that adopts a radically different approach in assisting individuals with mental move towards employment.
- The program is based on developing the intrinsic motivation skills critical to making long-term change.
- **RSG** helps clients become “ready, willing and able” to tackle the core issues holding them back.

Why 'Ready, Set, Go!' is different:

While many vocational rehabilitation programs focus on teaching cognitive behavioral skills or emphasize support and encouragement for coping with existing problems and obstacles, the 3-stage '**Ready, Set, Go!**' program takes a different approach. Instead, **RSG** hones in on developing intrinsic motivation, a critical component for making a personal commitment to change and for garnering the insight required for individuals to want to move their lives in a new direction..

Motivational practice helps individuals become "**ready, willing and able**" to tackle some core issues in their lives. At the same time, commitment to change is a prerequisite for the effort required to realize it. That commitment arises, fundamentally, out of an understanding of the need to change, the individual's capacity to begin effecting this change, and the importance one attaches for this change to begin with some sense of urgency.

“Ready, Set, Go!” is designed to:

- assist participants in evaluating and committing to goals for self-sufficient living
- help them understand their own self-sabotaging thinking
- teach essential problem-solving and coping skills
- help build the intrinsic motivation to seek and retain employment
- change lives!

How it works:

The **RSG program** takes a three-stage approach to vocational rehabilitation designed to move participants through a series of steps:

- Acceptance of the need to change
- Problem recognition
- Problem definition
- Setting a plan for change
- Reviewing and practicing efforts to change in order to control the risks for relapse (failing to keep or maintain employment)

The program incorporates about 27 3-hour group sessions, interspersed with one-on-one work.

The program is structured and organized so that clients heighten self-awareness, learn new skills, and build on existing strengths and competencies as they move from one session to the next.

As a cognitive motivational program, **“Ready, Set, Go!”** fits within the Psychosocial Rehabilitation Principles already in use within many organizations that support individuals with mental health needs. The **“Ready, Set, Go!”** program demonstrates respect for clients’ past experiences and belief that individuals have the capacity to change and grow beyond their current situation.

“ We feel that we now have more tools in our toolkit -- tools for both working with clients and for areas of personal growth.”

“Due to increased motivation, problem awareness and enhanced communication skills, individuals with mental illness are not as stigmatized in the work place as frequently after participating in the Ready, Set, Go! program”

The Thee Phases of Ready, Set, Go!

Phase 1: Becoming “Ready”... Motivated!

In the first phase of the program, clients work on structured self-reflection and consider how their own negative thinking and behavior may be holding them back. They also work at articulating their desires and dreams for their own lives, and are subtly encouraged to begin seeing unemployment as incompatible with achieving their own goals. Participants then begin more precisely articulating the goals they would like to pursue and learn to conceptualize the relationships between them. After ensuring they are achievable and that there is a commitment on the part of the participant, the sessions then focus on assessing actions or strategies to pursue defined goals.

Phase 2: Becoming Capable

In the program’s second phase, participants learn key problem solving, communication (including verbal and non-verbal) and social skills. As well as developing a ‘personal change plan’, individuals learn three further skill sets for dealing with the work context: dealing with pressure, expectations, and managing emotions.

Phase 3: Becoming Committed

By the time participants reach the program’s third phase, the focus shifts to getting, keeping and maintaining a job, as well as what it takes to appear **motivated, reliable and dependable** to an employer. This phase is immediately followed by a **job trial** process delivered in a unique, three-stage process: a session preparing for work before the job trial, a period of actual work experience that can last from half a day up to two full days, and then another session after the work experience to focus on feedback and review.

This three-step process of preparing for work can be repeated for more than one cycle, especially in cases where individuals have never worked or who may need additional support due to disabilities, mental health needs, or cognitive, social or environmental disadvantages in order to prevent employment failures.

Meeting Challenges:

The **'Ready, Set, Go!' program** offers proven techniques for tackling the issues that can keep individuals with mental illness from fulfilling their potential in long-term employment.

1

“Ready, Set, Go!” helps individuals with mental illness take control of the self-doubt and negative self-talk that may keep them from sustaining long-term employment by:

- helping individuals learn critical intrinsic motivation skills that support long-term change.
- teaching essential problem solving and coping skills, while helping to tackle the negative thinking that holds people back.
- teaching participants to learn to accept themselves and their own limitations while understanding they do not have to be defined by their mental illness.
- reinforcing skills that help individuals not only keep employment but improve their lives and their recovery journey.

2

“Ready, Set, Go!” helps dispel the belief that individuals with mental illness are unmotivated, unreliable and not dependable as employees by:

- only sending individuals into the work force when they are motivated and capable
- ensuring participants have built the skills they need to be more prepared as employees and to deal more effectively with obstacles.
- building a job trial component right into the program, allowing participants to build confidence and work through problems in a real work setting.
- making sure individuals get the training to be motivated, reliable and dependable employees who are prepared for work and better equipped to stay working for longer periods and with fewer accommodations.

Meeting Challenges:

3

“Ready, Set, Go!” makes vocational training more effective and less resource-intensive in meeting the needs of individuals with mental illness by:

- working with clients in groups --improving results, providing valuable peer support, and saving organizations time and money.
- moving individuals through vocational rehabilitation to job development more quickly and with greater rates of success.
- helping clients recognize when they are not ready to proceed to employment and would rather leave the program, freeing up resources and increasing client flow.
- helping staff implement a consistent approach that ensures each client is supported in the same manner.

4

“Ready, Set, Go!” helps individuals with mental illness sustain long-term employment by:

- helping clients build the intrinsic motivation and personal insight they need to make a long-term commitment to change.
- teaching participants to spot potential problems and helping them devise strategies to resolve them.

- using a workshop-style format to teach, layer and repeat new competencies.

- not moving program participants into the job trial phase until they are ready, resulting in more satisfied employees and more willing and capable employees who have been empowered to help themselves.

5

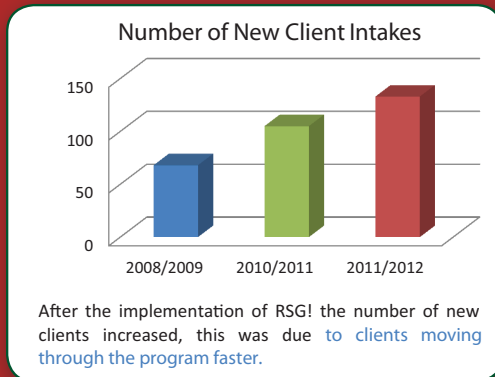
“Ready, Set, Go!” teaches participants not to externalize blame for their challenges, including the inability to sustain employment by:

- helping participants recognize when they are acting out of feelings of obligation or duty, rather than as a result of intrinsic motivation.
- helping them develop the skills to tackle all kinds of obstacles, including employment.
- Teaching participants to reason, recognize and solve problems, and take responsibility for their own actions, while learning to deal with others – skills that will serve them at work and beyond.
- allowing participants to feel more in control of their own lives while building a greater sense of autonomy.

Focus on Success:

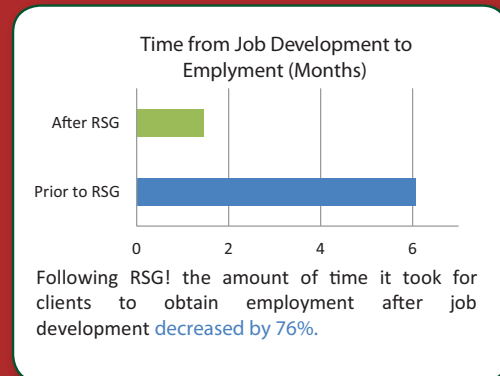
'Ready, Set, Go!' helps organizations streamline their vocational rehabilitation programs and better meet the needs of their clients. A recent implementation of the program at **Frontenac Community Mental Health and Addiction Services (FCMHAS)**, a non-profit organization providing services to individuals with mental health and addiction issues in Kingston, Ontario, led improvements in client success.

- Intakes to the vocational rehabilitation program increased, on average, from 68 to 247 after the implementation of the RSG program.



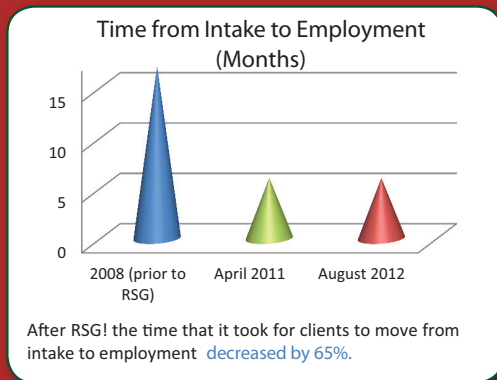
- The average length of time from intake to employment decreased from 17 to 6 months.

- The length of time required for individuals to find work upon completion of training decreased from 6.5 months to 1.5 months.

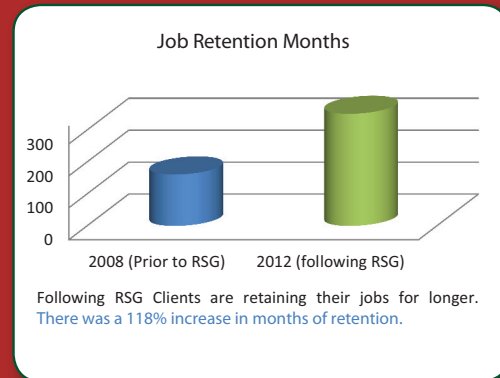


Focus on Success:

■ **Within 30 days** of completing the RSG program, 70 per cent of participants are employed, and **within 90 days**, every participant has work.



■ average job retention among participants increased from 161 months to 351 months.



“The outcomes have been many: we are moving clients through the process more quickly and are therefore able to see more clients – they do not get “stuck” in the process.”

What Staff Had To Say:

Program facilitators, Vocational Counselors and Job Developers have said the following about their experiences with 'Ready, Set, Go!':

“Since RSG, clients have demonstrated the capacity to work and meet employers’ expectations, such as hours of work and work duties, and are thus requiring fewer accommodations.”

“There is more clarity in the rehabilitation process, which allows the client to take control of his or her own progress and to reach independence.”

“We have found that RSG and its training have provided professional growth for both our staff and clients.”

What program participants had to say:

“The course for me was a complete mental overhaul – kind of like an oil change on a car to run smooth and healthy.” *(Barry, aged 51)*

“I am as different as night and day compared to a year ago. I will be able to use the job I have now as a stepping-stone to an even better job. I have more stability and now I can see owning a home and having a family as real possibilities in my life.” *(Natalie, college graduate)*

“Ever since “Ready, Set, Go!”, I have taken the skills it taught me and used them in my daily life. I feel like I can take the bull by the horns and move forward with my life. I am now able to recognize and challenge my negative self-talk with more positive thoughts. This leaves me feeling like I am an optimist now. There are no problems because I can only see opportunities to meet my next goal in life.” *(-Mitch, aged 28).*



Contact info:

MOTIVATED
CAPABLE
COMMITTED



Find out how the **“Ready, Set, Go! Program”**
could benefit your organization:



Elizabeth Fabiano
Executive Director /Owner
PNA Change Consultants
E: lizfabiano@pnachange.com
T: 1-613-240-7223
W: www.pnachange.com