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# Computer Based Training: Understanding Schizophrenia

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### BACKGROUND

- ❖ Mental health disorders are common in the United States, as an estimated 26.2% of Americans ages 18 and older experience a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year (NIMH, 2008).
- ❖ Approximately 2.4 million American adults or about 1.1% of the population age 18 and older have schizophrenia (NIMH, 2008).

### PURPOSE

- ❖ The purpose of this capstone project was to research, design and implement a computer based training module for staff who work with individuals experiencing mental illness.
- ❖ This training focused directly on schizophrenia, which is the most common mental health disorder treated at the Community Behavioral Health Hospital in St. Peter.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

- ❖ Schizophrenia is a serious, chronic, severe and disabling brain disorder that has affected many people throughout history.
- ❖ A diagnosis of schizophrenia requires symptoms to be present for at least 6 months.
  - > Two or more of the following symptoms must be present for at least one month: hallucinations, delusions, thought disorders, or negative symptoms.
- ❖ Hallucinations are positive symptoms and occur when an individual sees people or objects that do not exist, smells odors that do not exist, or feels objects that are not present.
- ❖ Delusions are positive symptoms that occur when a person believes something that is not true.
- ❖ Thought disorders are positive symptoms that are unusual or dysfunctional ways of thinking.
- ❖ Negative symptoms refer to the absence of behaviors found in individuals such as: lack of eye contact, unawareness of one's environment, loss of motivation & unnecessary body movement.
- ❖ Individuals with schizophrenia may hear voices other people do not hear, believe other people are reading their minds, controlling their thoughts, or planning to harm them (NIMH, 2008).
- ❖ The paranoia that an individual with schizophrenia may experience can cause one to become withdrawn or extremely agitated, and he/she may even lose touch with reality.
- ❖ While there is no cure for schizophrenia there are two types of treatment that can help control symptoms:
  - > Antipsychotic medication: delivered by pill, liquid, or shot
  - > Psychosocial treatment, which is a process of working through one's problems with the help of a therapist.
- ❖ An individual may need to be hospitalized if their mental health symptoms become unmanageable.

### METHODOLOGY

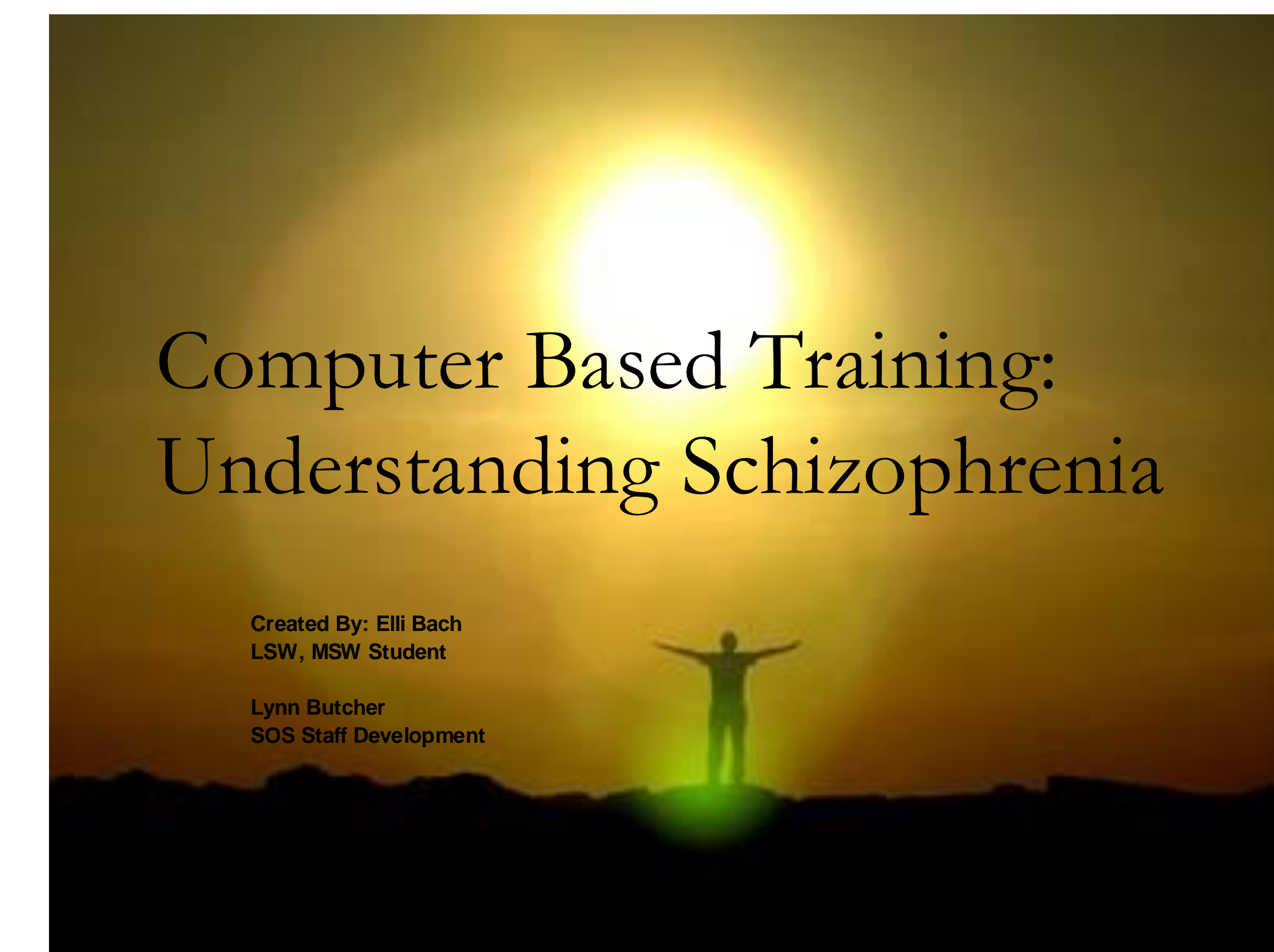
- Step One: Interviewed six staff members at the CBHH-St. Peter
- ❖ It was concluded that approximately forty-five percent of the staff members felt unprepared and inexperienced as they began employment with the mental health population.
  - ❖ Staff stated that more information and training of the various diagnoses would have been helpful in the preparation of employment.
- Step Two: Conducted an extensive review of the literature with particular interest in schizophrenia.
- ❖ The review included the implementation of the mental health training, perceptions, knowledge, attitudes, and the benefits of ethical and legal considerations.
  - ❖ The computer based training was developed to educate all state employees, specifically the front line staff who have constant and direct interaction with the patients.
- Step Three: Compiled information into the power point slides
- ❖ Organization of the literature
  - ❖ Addition of visual detail, interactive components, and web links
- Step Four: Met with staff education to finalize the development of the computer based training.
- ❖ The training module addresses factual information about the mental health condition such as the symptoms, causes, treatment, stigma and issues from a culturally competent evidence-based practice perspective.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- As a result of the training, participants will:
- ❖ Have a basic understanding of mental disorders in America
  - ❖ Have the ability to define Schizophrenia
  - ❖ Understand the basic concepts of Schizophrenia, specifically the causes, signs, symptoms, and treatment
  - ❖ Improve one's attitude about individuals with Schizophrenia



### EXAMPLES FROM THE TRAINING MODULE



<p>Mental disorders are common in the United States where an estimated ___ of American adults experience a mental disorder in a given year.</p> <p>A. 6.2% B. 12.2% C. 26.2% D. 54.2%</p>	<p>Fill in the blank: The three most common reasons for a relapse include: lack of sleep, substance abuse &amp; _____.</p> <p>A. Stress B. Divorce C. Death in the family D. Discontinuation of medication without doctor approval</p>
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### IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE

- ❖ An ethical implication for this project is the likelihood of enhancement in mental health technology and advancement in the knowledge of schizophrenia. The computer based training will eventually be outdated and will require updates periodically.
- ❖ A future recommendation would be to develop a pre and post test to measure one's knowledge before and after the training session.

### CONCLUSION

- ❖ This computer based training will be available in all state facilities, where it will be utilized as a long term resource to educate staff with reference to schizophrenia.
- ❖ The training is easy to use with minimal cost and maintenance.

### REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST