



FRED'S STORY

Transitions-Mental Health Association

When Fred first came to the Supported Employment Program, he had the desire to return to work but had some reservations regarding benefits and lack of confidence from not having worked in a few years. Fred decided to start his journey toward employment by attending the Program's Employment Preparation Classes where he learned job search activities, explored his career interests and re-discovered his skills and strengths.



Following this 8-week series, Fred began his job search with the assistance of a vocational specialist. The specialist worked with Fred in finding job openings that corresponded to his interests and abilities. They also discussed how to best manage his symptoms at work, whether or not to disclose his mental illness to a new employer and how working will affect his benefits.

Fred has now been working as a courtesy clerk in a large-chain grocery store for seven months. His earnings and hours of work are within the range that will not affect his benefits. When asked about his job, Fred said, "It feels like it was designed for me." He

continued, "I have regained upper body strength, my tremors have reduced and my self-esteem is back to where it was a long time ago."

Fred and his vocational specialist stay in regular contact to ensure success and satisfaction in his new job. The services of the Supported Employment Program are available to Fred as long as he desires the support.

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