PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS

Course Title: Help Yourself: Strategies for Making Positive Changes in Your Life

Course Code: WSP 260

Instructor Names: Anna Ranieri and Joe Gurkoff

Course Summary & a Note from the Instructors:

Help Yourself is an experiential workshop for people who want to make positive changes in their personal or professional lives. The workshop will cover topics that include: recognizing and valuing one's own needs, applying counseling theory and practice to helping oneself, distinguishing self-care from professional care and maintaining self-care when one has obligations to others. Participants will learn and practice techniques for self-understanding; clarifying feelings, thoughts and desires; setting goals; making plans and staying on track; using social support and assessing the need for professional help.

The workshop is not equivalent to a professional training course and is not a substitute for personal counseling or psychotherapy. The workshop cannot be taken for a letter grade.

Grade Options and Requirements:

No Grade Requested (NGR): This is the default option. Just show up for class!

Credit: Class attendance and participation/ No letter grade will be given

First meeting:

Introductions: Anna and Joe, Class members

Course overview and process including confidentiality and other issues

Exercise: Types of problems and how we react to them

Understanding yourself: Personality type and temperament

How to maximize strengths and minimize weaknesses to make positive changes

---'Automatic' thought patterns that cause problems and make them worse

---Exercise: Generating change by identifying, challenging and changing 'automatic' thoughts

Assignment: Applying today's discussions to a problem you seek to solve

Second Meeting:

Review and questions
Discussion of assignment

Elements of growth: Openness to new information; committing to change

Exercise: Sifting through information and ideas

Steps in the problem solving process: clarifying the problem, setting a goal; making a plan

The role and importance of confrontation

---The role and importance of setting limits

Exercise: Template for change

---Assessing the need for professional help

Course wrap-up and final questions