

Recovery

The Journey to Wellbeing

Our Conversation

- The concept of recovery: beyond symptom remission
- The important role providers play
- Understanding the role and value of peer support in mental and emotional health:
 - The models in practice today
 - What we know about outcomes
- Looking ahead to the future

Ask Ourselves **Two** Questions:

1. How many of us have ever experienced:
 - The loss of a loved one
 - A broken relationship
 - A traumatic event
 - Severe anxiety or stress
 - A family member in crisis

2. How many of us moved through that experience entirely on our own?
 - Without friends
 - Without anyone's help or advice
 - Without the benefit of others who had similar experience
 - Without resources of any kind





Yet, this is exactly what many people with **mental** and **emotional** disorders experience

The stigma of being “different” by a society that does not understand their fear and confusion

The loss of identity that results from being unable to live independently or pursue a career

The hopelessness and social isolation that come from giving up on one’s life dreams

Recovery is Possible

- Having a system of health care providers that believe in recovery.
- Having access to peer support and advocacy.
- Having a system of natural supports.

The Concept of Recovery

To move on with one's life after getting a diagnosis of mental illness is strengthened when a person has a means of -

- has a means of controlling the intensity of the symptoms (**SYMPTOM CONTROL**)
- has a good understanding of the illness (**KNOWLEDGE**)
- has a plan for managing his/her wellness (**WELLNESS PLAN**)
- has a belief that recovery is possible (**HOPE**)
- has a sense of meaning, purpose and connection in his/her life (**SPIRITUALITY**)

The Concept of Recovery

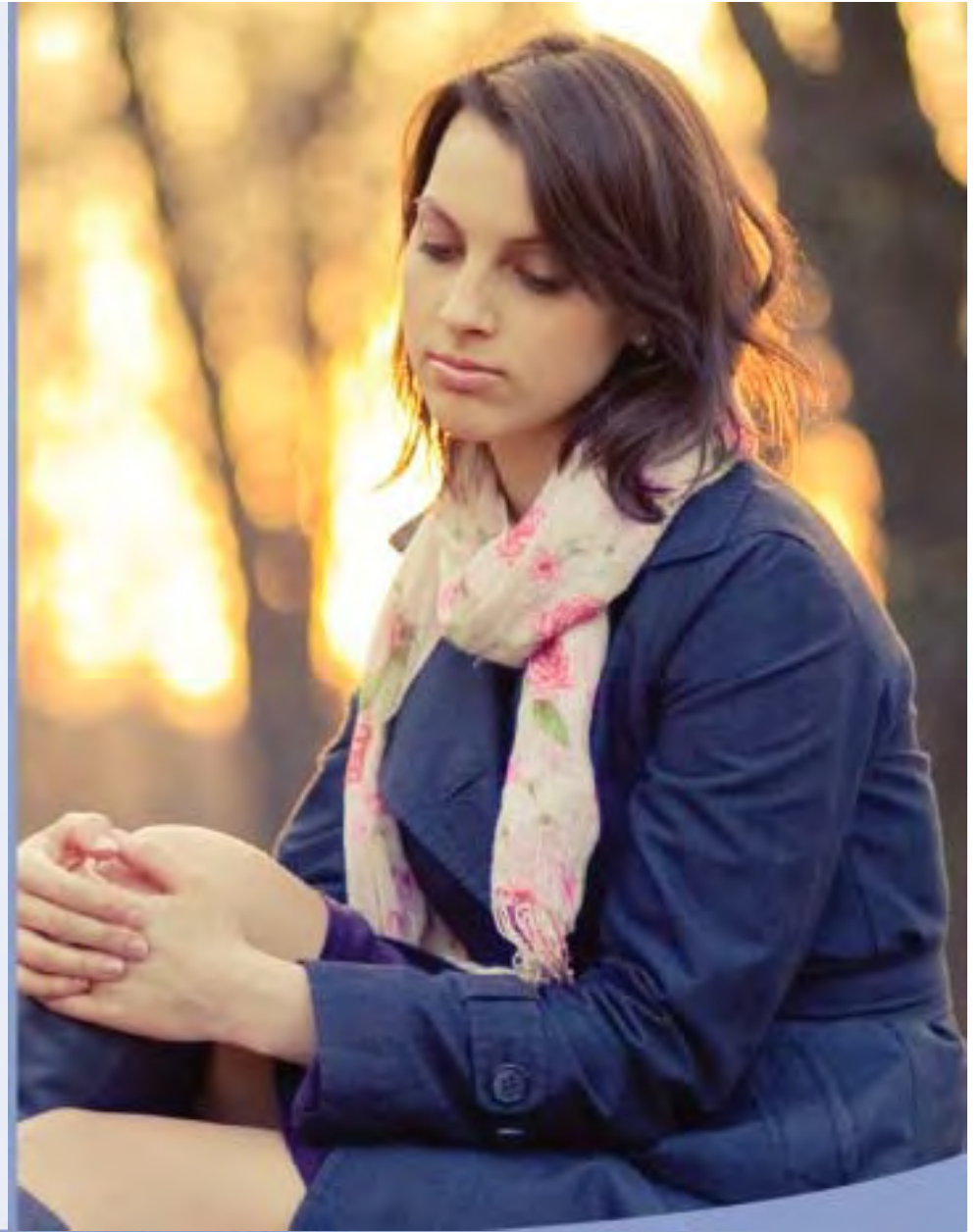
- sees him/herself as more than the illness (**POSITIVE SELF-IMAGE**)
- has a strong network of support (**SUPPORT NETWORK**)
- is in touch with his/her hopes and dreams (**PERSONAL GOALS**)
- has his/her basic needs met (**ECONOMIC STABILITY**)
- takes personal responsibility of his/her situation (**PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**)

Eight Dimensions of Recovery



Challenges to Recovery

- have no way to control the intensity of their symptoms and are at the mercy of those experiences.
- ...do not have a good understanding of their illness and where to get the help that they need.
- ...are continually focused on their illness and have no sense of what it would be like to be well.
- ...do not have a sense of meaning, purpose and connection with something more expansive than themselves.
- ...do not believe that they can move on with their lives – believe that they are 'stuck' forever in a place – in a life that they really don't like.
- ...view and interpret all of their life experiences through the eyes of their illness.



- ...do not have many close friends or a strong network of support.
- ...are not in touch with their hopes and dreams – have no sense of personal goals.
- ...are not able to meet their basic needs of food, housing, clothes, medications, transportation, etc.
- ...are not able/willing to take personal responsibility for their life.
- ...has a physical illness that is exacerbating the mental illness.
- ...is in a situation where almost everything is decided for him, and he has limited opportunities to make choices.



Beyond the Clinical Model



Helping Patients Achieve Their **Best** Possible Health

Symptom remission is only the beginning:

- Work in partnership to gain control over symptoms.
- Help educate them about their illness.
- Provide hope and visualization of what it would be like to be well.
- Work with them to determine what would give them meaning and purpose.
- Help them set goals beyond their illness.

Hope, empowerment, healing, connection

Helping Patients Achieve Their **Best** Possible Health

- Connect them with peers to begin to make friends.
- Work with them to identify their goal and dreams for the future.
- Connect them with case management to help them get benefits, find housing and transportation.
- Help them learn to accept responsibility for their situation
- Connect them with the health care system to get their health needs met.

Helping Patients Achieve Their **Best** Possible Health

- Allow them to make their own decisions – allow them to fail.

Hope, empowerment, healing, connection

In summary -

- Encourage personal responsibility
- Offer hope for the future
- Build a partnership
- Be an Educator
- Health promoter
- Be an Advocate
- Connection with natural resources (family, faith community)
- Promote peer support



What else can providers do to
promote recovery

The Concept of Peer Support

- Persons with **mental health** and **substance abuse** conditions benefit enormously from a relationship with someone who has:
 - Lived experience that is similar
 - A significant level of personal recovery
 - The insight and maturity to be a guide and mentor
 - A passion for advocacy and empowerment
 - The formal training to:
 - work collaboratively with professional clinicians
 - connect the patient with resources
 - encourage a **whole-person approach to wellbeing**

Extending the Limits of Clinical Care

Peer Roles

- Guide, mentor, coach
- Advocate, resource connector, educator
- Clinical team adjunct
- Role model – uses their own story to help people recovery.

Dimensions of Wellbeing





“My **diagnosis** was one thing. **Recovering my dreams** for the life I thought I’d lost was something much bigger.”

Someone to help me develop my own personal Wellness and Recovery Action Plan

Someone I can trust to help me ask the right questions and find the answers

Someone I can look up to in my darkest hours and say, “I can be that person.”

Who Becomes a Peer Specialist

We start with the right people:

- Lived experience
- Significant level of personal recovery
- Strong sense of personal awareness, aspiration, and self-monitoring
- Experience with advocacy
- Effective voice within the community

Then, we train and prepare them extensively:

- Mental health first aid
- Motivational interviewing
- Medicine-assisted recovery
- Secondary trauma
- Mental health system navigation
- Wellness and Recovery Action Planning
- Intervention protocols
- Working as part of a clinical team

What We Know About Results

Significant Evidence That Peers Have Beneficial Impact

Satisfaction:

- Almost universal satisfaction and appreciation by patients and families

Outcomes:

- Decrease in symptoms
- Increased coping skills and awareness of early warning signs
- Fewer hospitalizations, shorter lengths of stay
- Improved social functioning
- Increased feelings of hopefulness, self-advocacy, empowerment

Peer specialists say: *"We are the evidence."*

Thank You

