

NATIONAL  
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Wellbeing

# The Role of Peer Support in Mental Health Service Delivery

Series on Establishing Strong Peer Support Programs and Practices in CCBHCs



Recovery  
Options  
Made Easy

Session 2  
January 4, 2024



**The Alliance  
for Rights  
and Recovery**  
Formerly NYAPRS

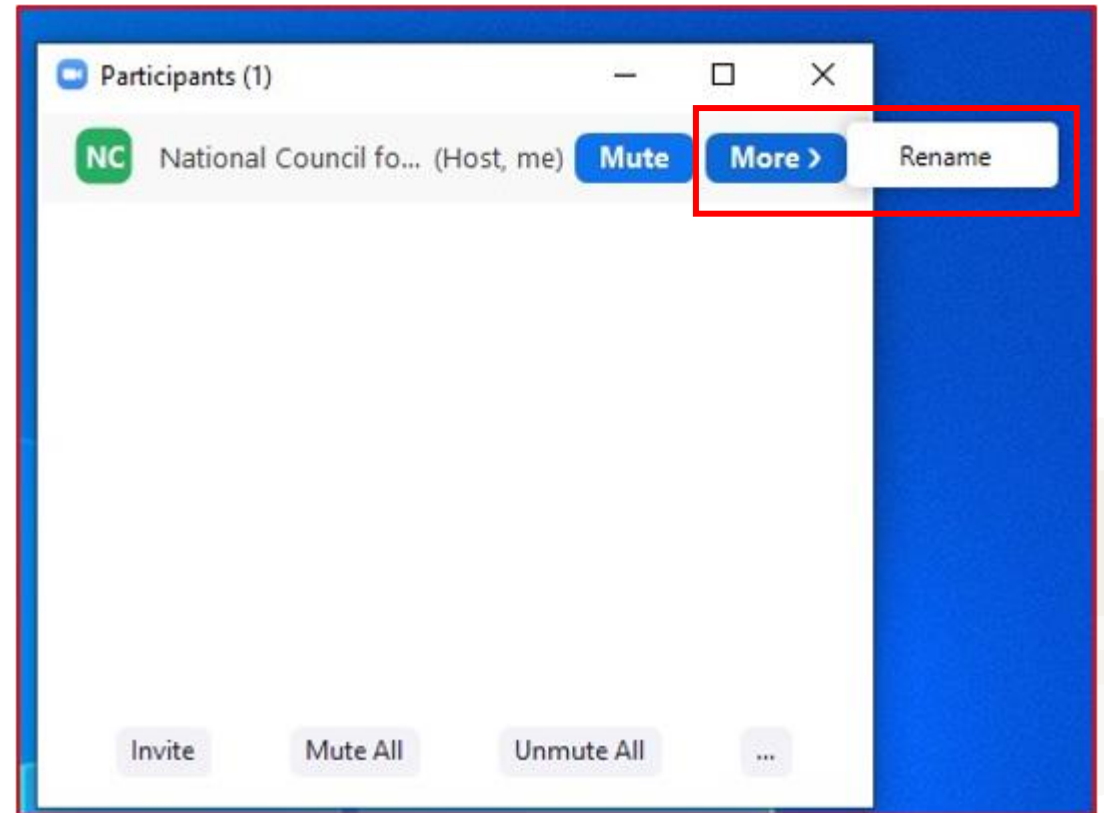
**CCBHC-E National Training and Technical Assistance Center**

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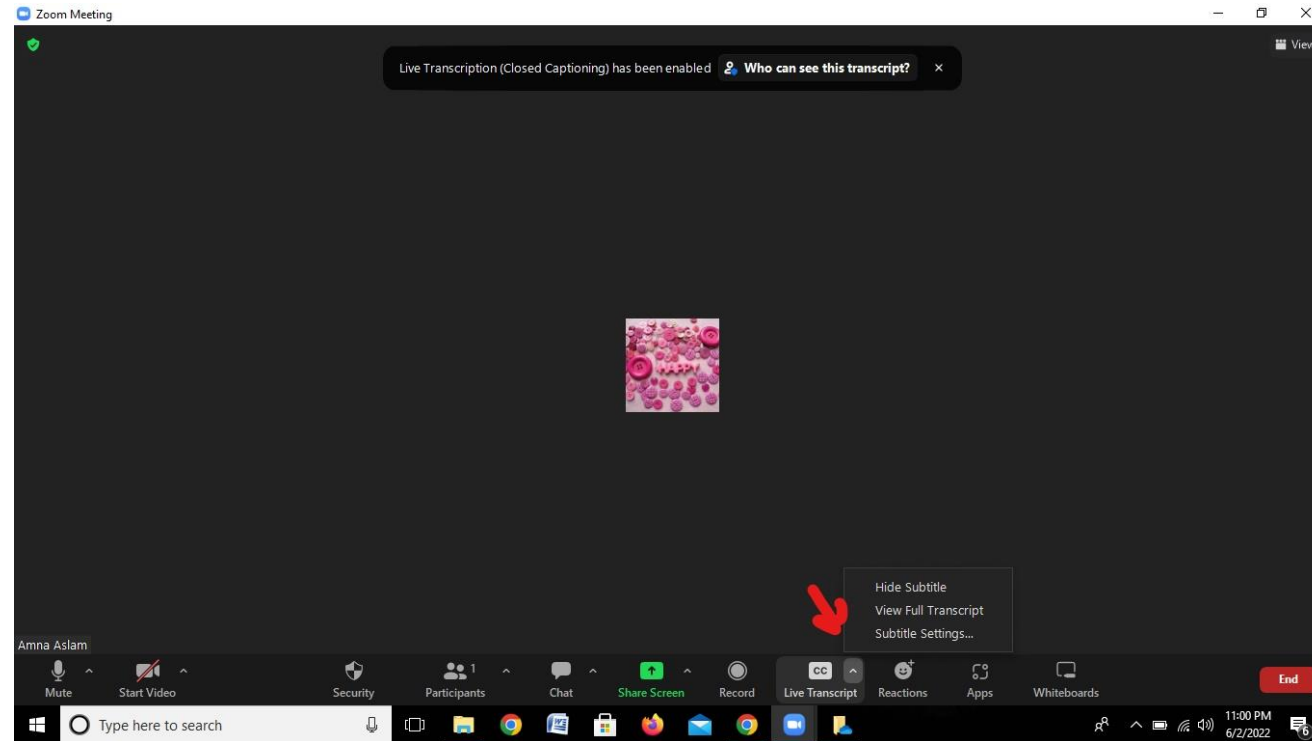


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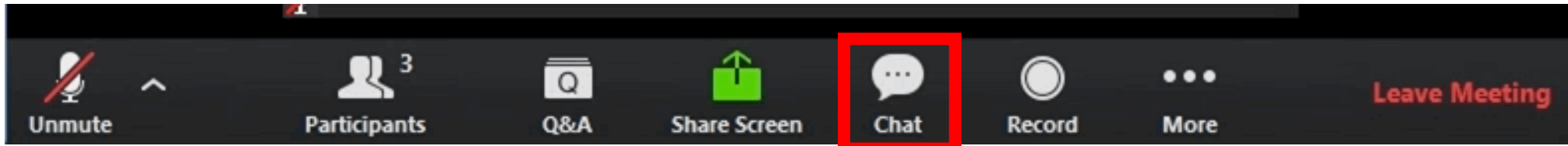


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Please share questions throughout today's session using the **Chat Feature** on your Zoom toolbar.  
We'll answer as many questions as we can throughout today's session.

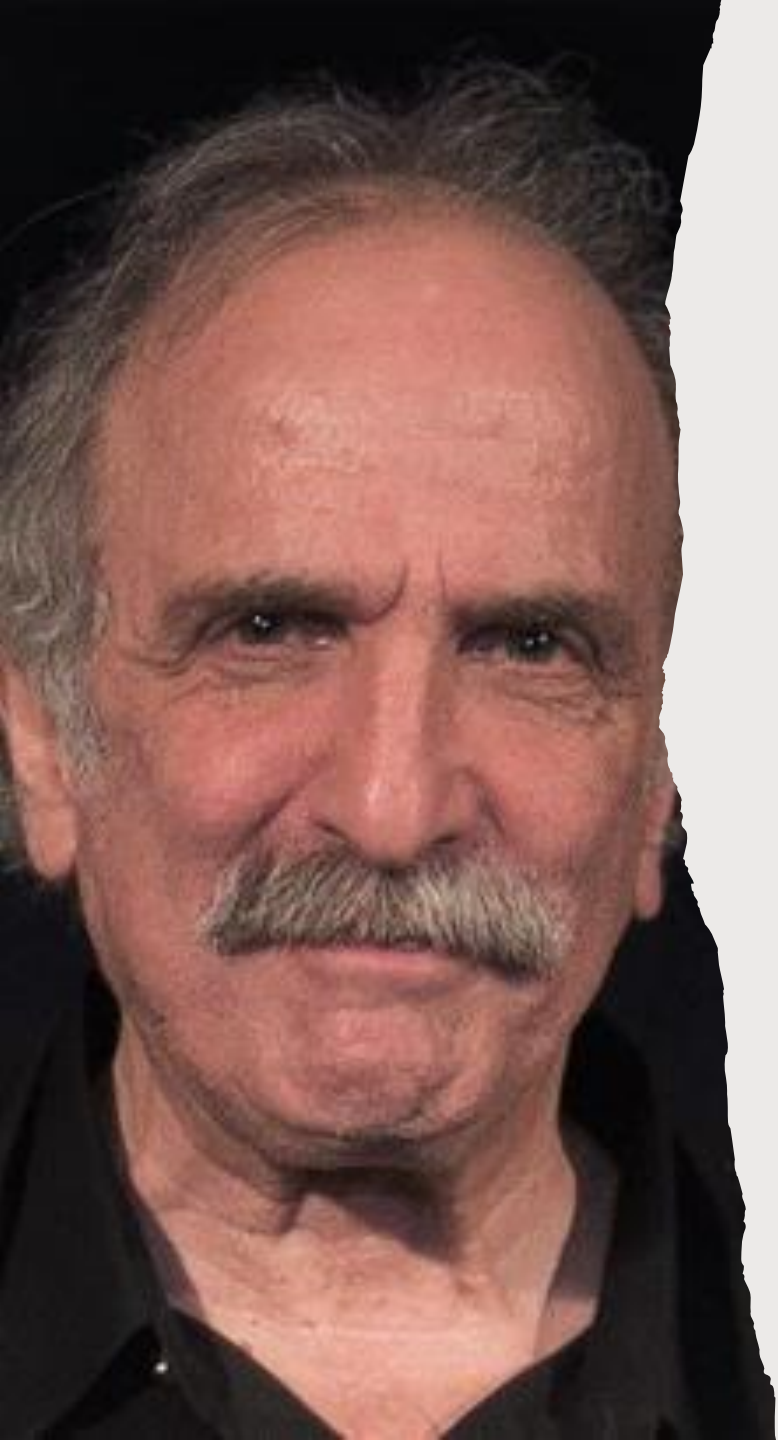
# Learning Objectives

- Differentiate peer support from clinical professionals
- Identify the role of lived experience in peer support and responsibilities of peer support staff
- Explore ethical considerations and core principles of the peer model
- Identify challenges and strategies for maintaining fidelity to the peer model
- Reinforce the importance of ongoing training, supervision, and professional development



# Agenda

- Understanding Peer Support
- Peer Support Scope of Practice
- Fidelity to the Principles of Peer Support
- Case Study
- Q & A



# Introductions

- Shannon Higbee, CEO  
Recovery Options Made Easy
  
- Harvey Rosenthal, CEO  
Alliance for Rights and Recovery





# Peer Support

Peer support is a collaborative relationship between individuals with lived experience of a mental health, substance use and trauma-related challenge and trained peer support specialists with similar lived experience. It is based on shared understanding, empathy, and mutual support, with the goal of promoting recovery and resilience.

# Principles of Peer Support

Recovery-  
Oriented

Person-  
Centered

Voluntary

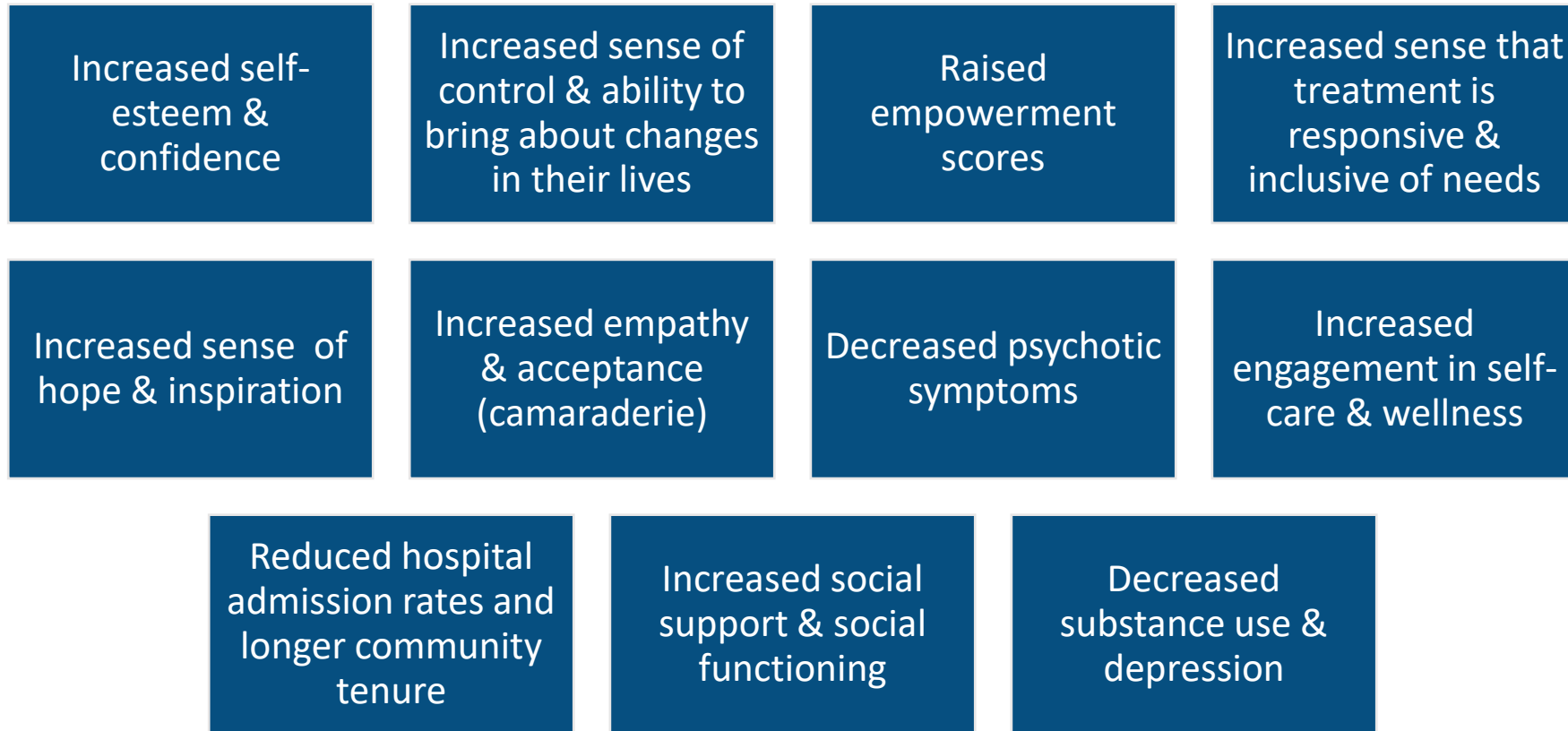
Relationship-  
Focused

Trauma-  
Informed

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# Evidence of the Benefits of Peer Support in Community Behavioral Health Settings



[https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs\\_campaigns/brss\\_tacs/peer-support-2017.pdf](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/peer-support-2017.pdf)



# Differentiating Peer Support Specialists from Clinical Professionals

Peer Support Specialists offer valuable services and perspectives backed by research, but they differ from clinical professionals in several important ways:

- Foundation of Shared Experience and Lived Expertise
- Focus on the Healing Potential of Personal Connection
- Fosters Hope by Modeling Recovery
- Features a Non-clinical Approach

# Role of Lived/Living Experience in Peer Support

Peers utilize their lived/living experience in unique ways as part of their scope of practice. This willingness to utilize shared experiences is important because it:

- Creates Authenticity
- Builds a Foundation of Trust
- Provides a Relatable Perspective
- Fosters Genuine Connection
- Reduces Stigma

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# Responsibilities of Peer Support Specialists

Although Peer Support Specialists are not clinical professionals, they are a recognized discipline with professional standards & responsibilities:

- Maintain boundaries and confidentiality
- Utilize collaborative approaches
- Advocate for/with individuals
- Promote and support self-determination and self-empowerment
- Model recovery
- Engage in professional development
- Adhere to a code of ethics

# Boundaries in Peer Support

As a professional discipline, peers maintain appropriate professional boundaries:

- Consent & Confidentiality
- Empathy without Enmeshment
- Mutual Respect & Equality
- Non-judgmental Atmosphere
- Acknowledge Limitations

# Poll

- Does your organization currently have Peer Support Specialists working on teams with other clinical or medical specialties? (Select Yes/No)
- Waterfall in chat: If yes, what strategies have you utilized to build strong teams?





# Teams Are More Effective Than Individuals Alone

Peer support specialists regularly collaborate with other disciplines and are often members of multi-disciplinary teams.

What is required to build strong interdisciplinary teams?

- Belief in a Teamwork Approach
- Clear Communication
- Defined Roles & Responsibilities
- Respect for Diverse Experience
- Shared Goals & Vision

# Maintaining Fidelity to the Peer Model

Commitment to the core values and principles of the peer model is essential to maintaining the fidelity of Peer Support Services in your organization. This includes:

- Valuing Lived/Living experience
- Emphasizing Hope & Recovery
- Embracing Mutuality & Reciprocity
- Utilizing Non-Clinical & Voluntary Approaches
- Recognizing Boundaries & Limitations
- Providing Quality Training & Supervision

# Challenges and Barriers to Maintaining Fidelity

When implementing Peer Support Services, it is essential to recognize potential barriers to maintaining fidelity to the Peer Support Model. These include:

- Organizational Lack of Knowledge about Peer Support Specialists/Services
- Individual Peer Drift
- Organizational Peer Drift
- Disconnection from the Larger Peer Community
- Lack of Clearly Defined Job Roles
- Lack of Appropriate Peer Supervision



# Poll

In your experience what is the largest challenge to maintaining fidelity in peer services?  
(Select all that apply)

- Organizational Lack of Knowledge about Peer Support Specialists/Services
- Individual Peer Drift
- Organizational Peer Drift
- Disconnection from the Larger Peer Community
- Lack of Clearly Defined Job Roles
- Lack of Appropriate Peer Supervision



# Strategies to Addressing & Overcoming Barriers to Maintaining Fidelity

An organizational focus on creating a culture that understands and respects peer support services can help to overcome barriers to maintaining fidelity to the Peer Support Model. Some strategies include:

- Organization-wide Training on Peer Scope of Practice
- Well-defined Peer Roles
- Quality Peer Supervision
- Strong Peer Networks
- Continuing Education Opportunities
- Vicarious Trauma & Compassion Fatigue Training

# Professional Development for Peers

As with any professional discipline, continued opportunities for professional development are essential for Peer Support Specialists. These opportunities should include:

- Training/Continuing Education
- Peer Supervision
- Growth Opportunities/Career Ladders



# Case Study

## An Interview with Deb Carlson

**Deb Carlson**

**Coordinator of Peer Services and Peer Support Supervisor**

**Newport Mental Health Center**

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# Join Us Next Time

## **The Importance of Quality Supervision and Continuing Education for Peer Support Staff**

Gain a deep understanding of the crucial role supervision and ongoing education play in enhancing the skills, knowledge and wellbeing of peer specialists, ensuring optimal support for individuals on their recovery journeys. Don't miss this opportunity to strengthen your peer specialist workforce and make a lasting impact on the lives of those you serve.

**February 8, 2024**

[Register here](#)





# Citations

- [https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs\\_campaigns/brss\\_tacs/peer-support-2017.pdf](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/peer-support-2017.pdf)