

## Recovery and Peer Support:

Recovery is **REAL** and begins with **HOPE**



*“When I saw that other people recovered, it gave me hope that I could too.” —Corinna*

**Learn** how recovery-oriented care and peer support help people with mental and/or substance use challenges learn to manage their conditions successfully and improve their quality of their lives.



## What is Recovery?

*Today, when individuals with mental and/or substance use disorders seek help, they are met with the knowledge and belief that **anyone** can recover and/or manage their conditions successfully.*

**Recovery** is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential.

There are four major dimensions that support a person in recovery:

**Health**—overcoming or managing one's symptoms in order to make informed, healthy choices that support physical and emotional well-being.

**Home**—having a stable and safe place to live

**Purpose**—conducting meaningful daily activities, such as a job, school, volunteerism, family caretaking, or creative endeavors, and the independence, income, and resources to participate in society.

**Community**—having relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope



# Does Peer Support Make A Difference?

Emerging research shows that peer support is effective for supporting recovery from behavioral health conditions. Benefits of peer support may include:



**Decreased psychotic symptoms**

(Davidson, et al., 2012)



**Reduced hospital admission rates and longer community tenure**

(Chinman, Weingarten, Stayner, & Davidson, 2001; Davidson, et al., 2012; Forchuk, Martin, Chan, & Jenson, 2005; Min, Whitecra>, Rothbard, Salzer, 2007)



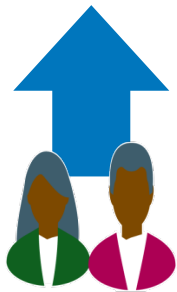
**Decreased substance use and depression**

(Davidson, et al., 2012)

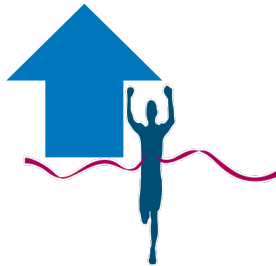
## Does Peer Support Make A Difference?

Emerging research shows that peer support is effective for supporting recovery from behavioral health conditions.

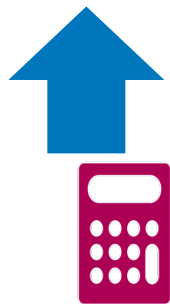
Benefits of peer support may include:



**Increased self-esteem and confidence**  
(Davidson, et al., 1999; Salzer, 2002)



**Increased sense of control and ability to bring about changes in their lives**  
(Davidson, et al., 2012)



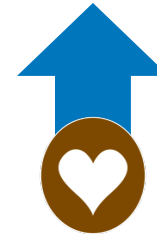
**Raised empowerment scores**  
(Davidson, et al., 1999; Dumont & Jones, 2002; Ochocka, Nelson, Janzen, & Trainor, 2006; Resnick & Rosenheck, 2008)



**Increased sense that treatment is responsive; and inclusive of needs**  
(Davidson, et al., 2012)



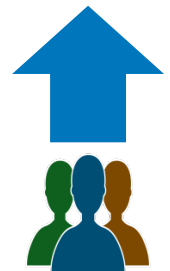
**Increased sense of hope and inspiration**  
(Davidson, et al., 2006; Ratzlaff, McDiarmid, Marty, & Rapp, 2006)



**Increased empathy and acceptance (camaraderie)**  
(Coatswortha Puspokey, Forchuk, & Warda Griffin, 2006; Davidson, et al., 1999)



**Increased engagement in self-care and wellness**  
(Davidson, et al., 2012)



**Increased social support and social functioning**  
(Kurtz, 1990; Nelson, Ochocka, Janzen, & Trainor, 2006; Ochocka et al., 2006; Trainor, Shepherd, Boydell, Leff, & Crawford, 1997; Yanos, Primavera, & Knight, 2001)

## Peer Support

**Recovery support for people of all ages** is provided through treatment services by behavioral health care providers, and community-based programs utilizing peer support workers with personal experience in recovery.

**Peer support services** are a key component of recovery. Peer support services are delivered by individuals who have shared behavioral health experiences with the people they are serving. This mutuality between a peer support worker and a person in recovery (or seeking recovery) promotes connection and inspires hope.

Peer support offers a level of acceptance, understanding, and validation not found in many other professional relationships (Mead & McNeil, 2006). By sharing their own lived experience and practical guidance, peer support workers help people to develop their own goals, create strategies for self-empowerment, and take concrete steps towards building fulfilling self-determined lives.

The role of a peer support worker complements, but does not duplicate or replace, the roles of therapists, case managers, and other members of a treatment team.

**Peer support workers** inspire hope that people can and do recover; walk with people on their recovery journeys; dispel myths about what it means to have a mental health or substance use challenge; link people to tools and resources; and support people in identifying their goals and creating a roadmap for getting there.

***“Because of Peer Support I am alive!”***

***---Melodie***

*“Peer support has been excellent. Helping us along the way, being there whenever you need people to talk to. I don't know where to begin. They're always there... no matter what it is.*

*---Mika*

*“Because of peer support, I can stand on my own today.”*

*---John*

*“Peer support has been there for me no matter what, and now I am able to help others...”*

*---Liza*



## **Local information:**

Washington Peer Advancement Coalition  
A program of Consumer Voices Are Born

PO Box 1707  
Vancouver, WA 98668

Contact:

Diana Porter  
360-787-8406

This booklet is part of a series compiled by the Washington Peer Advancement Coalition (WaPAC). The information in this booklet was taken from the great work of BRSS TACS and can be found at:

[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)

And here:

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

