



Mid-America (HHS Region 7)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# Family Peer Support: An Emerging Profession

## Session 5: How to Orient Families and Their Loved One Toward Recovery

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The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED  
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND  
ACCEPTING OF  
DIVERSE CULTURES,  
GENDERS,  
PERSPECTIVES,  
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED/  
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS  
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR  
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND  
FREE OF LABELS

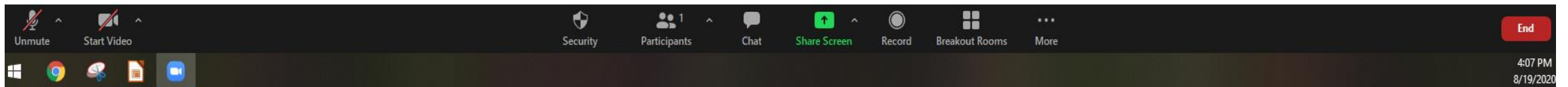
NON-JUDGMENTAL AND  
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR  
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH  
OUR ACTIONS,  
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

# Announcements

- All attendees are automatically muted.
- Submit questions via the chat box at any time during the webinar.
- The slides are available in the chat box.



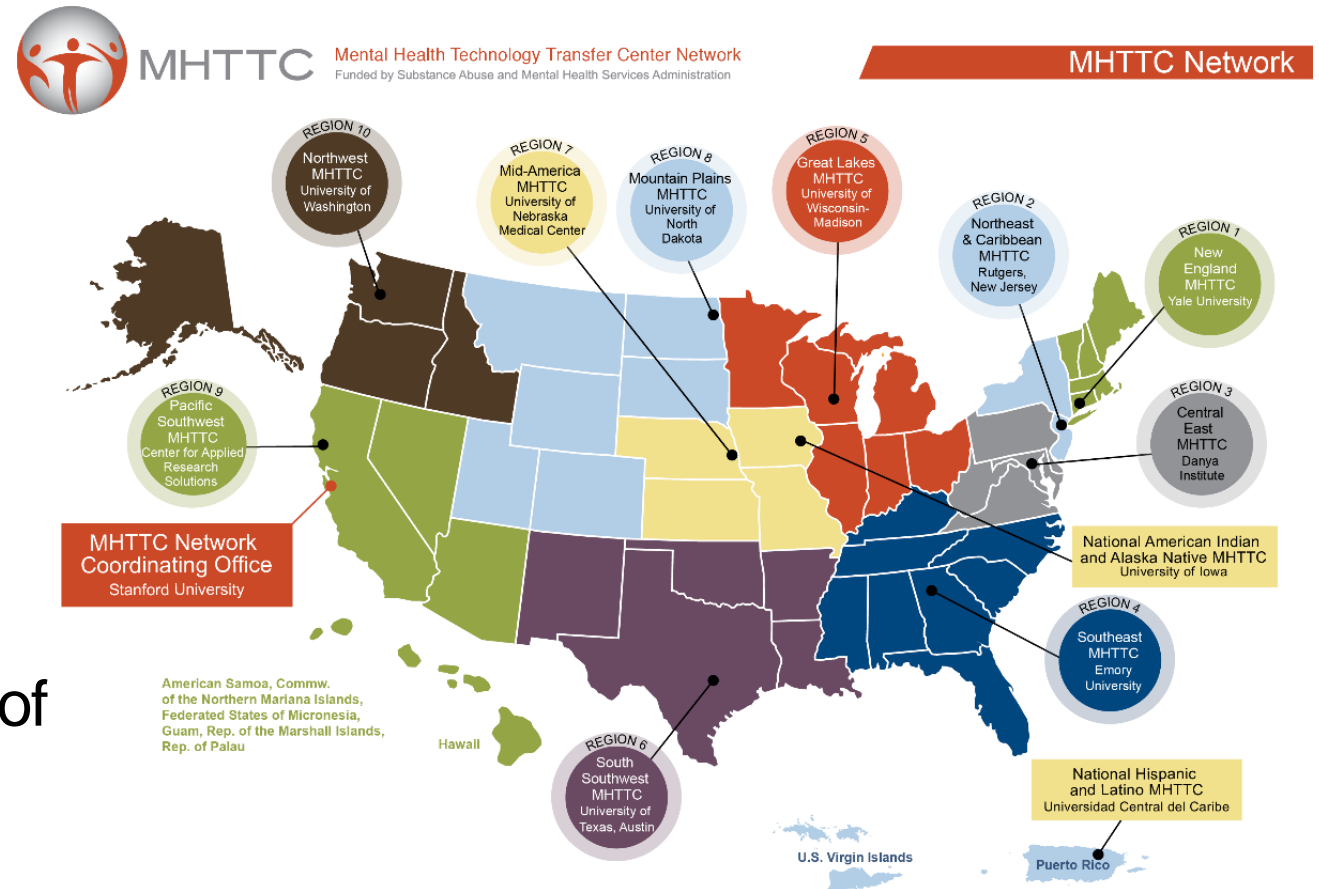
# Evaluation

- At the end of this session, you will be asked to complete a brief evaluation.
- Because this event is federally funded, we are required to ask about participants' satisfaction with our services.
- To maintain our funding, we are required to get 80% participation.
- We greatly value your feedback and participation in the survey!!

# Mid-America Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

Established to increase utilization of evidence-based mental health practices.

- Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas.
- Free training and technical assistance.
- SAMHSA grant awarded to the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska at University of Nebraska Medical Center. (5 years, \$3.7 million, grant number: H79SM081769)



# Objectives

In this presentation, Mid-America MHTTC specialists and partners with Omaha-based Community Alliance will demonstrate ways in which family peer support empowers families to support their loved one's path towards recovery. In particular, participants will learn how recipients of family peer support:

- Learn the definition of recovery;
- Learn to motivate their loved one to engage in recovery and rehabilitation oriented activities;
- Learn to develop and implement a recovery plan for their loved one.

# Recovery, 1/3

Historically, mental illnesses was believed to be caused by societal stressors. Consequently, family was often blamed for the ill of their loved once and excluded from any treatment process and care (Corrigan, 2016).

Contemporary mental healthcare is founded on beliefs that biological, psychological and social factors all contribute to a person's mental illness. Also, and more importantly, the same factors contribute to their well being and recovery. Consequently, families are more likely to be viewed as a resource to include in the treatment process (Alverson, Alverson & Drake, 2000; Hatfield, 1994).



# Recovery, 2/3

Since the deinstitutionalization we have been concerned about helping persons with a serious mental illness live meaningful lives (Gudeman, Miles, & Shore, 1984).

There is a positive correlation between independence and quality of life.

- In a study that compared the quality of life among people in hospital settings and different levels of independent living, quality of life increased as independence increased (Anderson & Lewis, 2000).
- Several studies have found that the quality of life for persons with serious mental illness is higher in community-based housing compared to hospital settings (Barry & Crosby, 1996; Lehman, Possidente, & Hawker, 1986; Shepard, Muijen, Dean, & Cooney, 1996).

# Recovery, 3/3

We know how to better help persons:

- **find employment** (Bond, Drake, & Becker, 2008),
- **be stable in housing** (Blanch, Carling, & Ridgway, 1988; Culhane, Metraux, and Hadley, 2002),
- **form meaningful social relationships** (Bellack, Mueser, Gingerich, & Agresta, 2004).

Similarly, our understanding of how to help persons with serious mental illness with their symptoms has steadily increased (Bandelow et al., 2011; Goodwin, 2009; Komossa et al., 2010).



# Family Peer Support and Recovery

Helping families tap into their inherent strengths:

## **Emotional Support.**

The expression of love, caring and beliefs that a loved one can live a meaningful inclusive life.

## **Instrumental Support.**

The provision of aid and services to a loved one; such as financial, transportation, health practices and time management.

## **Informational Support.**

The advice and information provided to a loved one to help with independent living, illness management and social inclusion.

# Speaker: Dr. Lilchandra Sookram

Dr. Sookram graduated from University of Nebraska with a PhD in Psychology. At the Nebraska State Hospital, Dr. Sookram provided psychological services to persons with serious mental illness and to their family members, and he directed clinical services including psychology, nursing, social work, therapeutic recreation, education and return-to-work programs. He is the former director of mental health services in Kansas and clinical director of a juvenile correctional facility. Currently he is manager of family and peer services at Community Alliance. Dr. Sookram is a person with lived experience as a family member to a person with a serious mental illness and supports 100's of families every year. This support includes a 12-week group educational program, and individual family support. Dr Sookram has developed a peer support training program for persons with serious mental health issues since 2007 and adapted that to a family peer support training program.

# FAMILY PEER SUPPORT: ORIENTING FAMILIES AND FM TOWARDS RECOVERY

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L. SOOKRAM, PHD

FEBRUARY 18, 2021



# RECOVERY:WHAT IS IT?

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Means that a healthy lifestyle is achieved.The person

- Is Self directed and self regulated and autonomous in their care and behavior
- Has a safe and stable place to live.
- Is connected to stable community supports like family, friends, employers, educational institutions, church.
- Follows a health routine of medicine as needed, exercise, nutrition, hydration, sleep and
- Has a lifestyle that supports work or volunteering, recreation, community engagement and other fulfilling life purposes.
- The challenges of life are met daily with a sense of resilience and hope

In relapse prevention it is this lifestyle that is protected and enhanced.



# SAMHSA :DEFINITION

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A process of change through which a person improves their health and wellness, lead a self-directed life and strive to reach their full potential. (2011).

## Dimensions

- Health
- Home
- Community Connections
- Purpose

# RECOVERY IS OUR NATIONAL POLICY AND IS DRIVEN BY THESE PRINCIPLES

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- Hope
- Person driven
- Via many pathways
- Supported by peers and allies
- Supported through relationships and networks
- Culturally based and influenced
- Is supported by addressing trauma, involves individual, family and community strengths and responsibility.
- Is based on Respect



# IT IS AN EXPECTATION THAT IS WORLDWIDE

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- Recovery-oriented practice is understood in this framework as encapsulating mental health care that:
- Embraces the possibility of recovery and wellbeing created by the inherent strength and capacity of all people who experience mental health issues
- Maximizes self-determination and self-management of mental health and wellbeing and involves person-first, person-centered, strengths-based and evidence-informed treatment, rehabilitation and support
- Acknowledges the diversity of peoples' values and is responsive to people's gender, age and developmental stage, culture and families as well as people's unique strengths, circumstances, needs, preferences and beliefs

Australian National policy: ([Victorian Department of Health 2011a](#); [Slade 2009a](#); [New Zealand Mental Health Commission 2011](#); [Queensland Health 2005](#))



# IT IS AN EXPECTATION THAT IS WORLDWIDE

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- Addresses a range of factors, including social determinants, that impact on the wellbeing and social inclusion of people experiencing mental health issues and their families, including housing, education, employment, income geography, relationships, social connectedness, personal safety, trauma, stigma, discrimination and socioeconomic hardship
- Helps families or support people to understand their family member's experiences and recovery processes and how they can assist in their recovery while also helping them with their own needs for counselling, therapy, education, training, guidance, support services, peer support and advocacy
- Understands that people who have lived experience of unresolved trauma struggle to feel safe, considers the possibility of unresolved trauma in all service settings, and incorporates the core principles of trauma-informed care into service provision.

Australian National policy: ([Victorian Department of Health 2011a](#); [Slade 2009a](#); [New Zealand Mental Health Commission 2011](#); [Queensland Health 2005](#))



# FAMILY PEER SUPPORT :VALUES, BELIEFS AND PRACTICES THAT HELP.

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- Collaboration, partnerships, inclusion and shared decision making are key achievements in the recovery journey.
- FPS Mental Health Education: Genetics and the brain, no fault position, survey of mental health issues, medications, empathy, autonomy, problem solving and communication skills and connecting with families through their shared experiences.
- FPS work to reduce parenting that is judgmental and authoritarian. Stifling Family Member **autonomy** can have a negative impact on treatment and Recovery.
- FPS work through public education offerings to help providers and practitioners embrace inclusion and shared decision.
- FPS believe all persons are capable of recovery and can thrive beyond illness.



# THE RECOVERY TEAM AND FAMILY PEER SUPPORT

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- Family and friends
- Health providers and practitioners
- The justice system
- Employers
- Housing authorities
- Benefits authorities
- Our community

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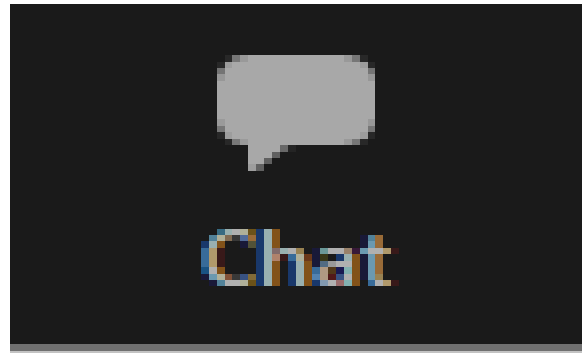
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Questions?







# Thank you very much

Please do not hesitate to contact me regarding family peer support services

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# Family Peer Support: An Emerging Profession

A webinar series to introduce Family Peer Support to the mental health community

Register for upcoming events:

- <https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mid-america-mhttc/family-peer-support-emerging-workforce>
- March 18th 2021, Family Peer Support: How Families Can Help the Team Become Oriented Toward Recovery