

You are in the Right Place:

Introduction to Recovery Community Organizations

Fletcher Group Rural Recovery Center of Excellence Webinar Series

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Recovery

Celebrate ALL Pathways



There are many pathways to addiction recovery—and ALL are cause for celebration.

- Bill White



Definitions of Recovery



Find Your People



SAMHSA (2011)

A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

CHICAGO RECOVERY ALLIANCE (1991)

Any positive change.



CCAR (1999)

You are in recovery if you say you are.



12-STEP (1935 -)*

- Abstaining from alcohol & other non-prescribed drugs. ** ***
- Attending mutual aid meetings with frequency & working with a sponsor/sponsee.
- Committing to work the 12-steps & practice their underlying moral principles in all aspects of life.

* Unofficial.

** Not to be confused with Tradition 3, in which the only requirement to identify as a member of these societies is a desire to abstain.

*** Using prescribed opioid agonists (methadone & buprenorphine) is not considered abstinent in Narcotics Anonymous.

@DMcDRecovery



21 Million Diverse Faces and Voices

- Among adults ages 18 or older in 2020, 11.6 percent (or 29.2 million people) perceived that they ever had a problem with their use of alcohol or other drugs.
- Among the 29.2 million adults in 2020 who perceived that they ever had a substance use problem, **72.5 percent (or 21.0 million people) considered themselves to be in recovery** or to have recovered from their alcohol or other drug use problem.

Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States:
Results from the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health



NO THANKS BUT YES

CHILL CONVERSATIONS WITH SPLENDID PEOPLE



Hosted by Donald McDonald, MSW



Eric Jennings



Roxanne McDonald



Kateri Coyhis



Chris Marshall



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Jennifer Nicolaisen



Sazha Ramos



Meghan Hetfield



Joseph Sanchez



Brian Cuban



Maia Szalavitz



Kaya Littleturtle

Season 1 | Episodes 1-12
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Mutual Aid Meetings

Peer Recovery Mutual Aid

Mutual aid organizations provide peer-based, non-clinical, non-professional support meetings to people in recovery from SUD. They focus on socially-supportive communication and the exchange of skills through shared experience.

Mutual aid meetings based on the 12-steps such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) are some of the most widely available mutual aid meetings for people seeking recovery from SUD.



Multiple Paths of Recovery

12-Step Mutual Aid

- Several types (Drug Specific, Process Specific) (AA, NA, CA, DAA, OA, SAA, etc.)
- Follows a specific framework (e.g., the steps), worked with a sponsor
- Often requires acceptance of a "higher power"
- Most widely available in the United States

Non-Secular Mutual Aid

- Several types, most often broad focus in meetings on individual concerns or problems (Celebrate Recovery, Recovery Dharma / Refuge Recovery, etc.)
- Religious or spiritual framework, may contain formal process (i.e., step work) or be more informal
- May be specific to a particular religion or more holistic and non-denominational
- May be harder to find, though available in many areas

Secular Mutual Aid

- Several types (Drug & Process Specific) (SMART, SOS, LifeRing, etc.)
- Clear separation from religious or spiritual framework, largely based on self-awareness and thoughts, actions, and behaviors
- Progress completed individually or with "mentors" with experience in program
- May be harder to find, though available in many areas (especially large cities)

All Recovery Mutual Aid

- A specific meeting type that allows individuals using any pathway to connect and support each other
- Does not use any formal framework, can be viewed as "non-denominational" recovery meetings
- Available at many RCOs or RCCs, CRPs, or in communities with an active recovery advocacy group

Physical Activity Mutual Aid

- Often used in combination with another recovery pathway, though can also be engaged with by itself (Recovery CrossFit, Recovery Yoga, etc.)
- Support is received through connection to others with lived experience and using physical activity to improve health
- No formal framework in most, though some types such as recovery yoga, may involve sharing and processing
- Not available in many areas, most often found in larger cities

Medication Supported

- Several types that may use another pathway framework (i.e., 12-steps), but focus on support for individuals using medication (e.g., MARA, MARS, etc.)
- Often not its own "program", but meetings and networks that offer support peer to peer from others using medication
- May be harder to find, though often available in larger cities

Harm Reduction Mutual Aid

- Mutual aid for individuals with or without a desire for complete abstinence (Harm Reduction Works, Moderation Management, HAMS, etc.)
- Formal framework for most types dependent on the individual program chosen
- Not available in many areas

Natural Recovery

- A recovery path that does not involve formal support, but may rely on informal support
- Many individuals do not engage in a formal recovery path, but naturally recover
- Natural recovery may be associated with higher intrinsic and external recovery capital from other non-recovery specific sources

**Recovery is the expectation,
not the exception.**

UNITY RECOVERY
RECOVERY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION



Research

- The 2020 Cochrane review shows AA produces comparable results to first-line, clinical treatments in the short-term, and outperforms these treatments in the long-term, while conferring significant cost savings.
- If people are opposed to attending AA, despite the strong evidence for its potential to aid recovery, providers should consider linkage to alternative meetings as they may confer benefits at similar levels of engagement.



What about “other” meetings?

- Although research has been focused on the 12-step groups, it seems that other groups could offer similar recovery, at least for established members.
- Providers should discuss the approaches used by these different groups to help participants identify the group that aligns most closely with their outlook and thus increase the chances of their long-term involvement.



Digital Recovery is Recovery

- In the absence of rigorous studies that can directly inform clinical and public health recommendations, a brief review of relevant literature, in context of barriers and potential drawbacks, suggests the risk-to-benefit ratio of participation in these free, digital recovery support services is favorable.
- Online recovery support meetings are likely to mobilize the same therapeutic mechanisms as empirically-supported, in-person mutual aid meetings.



Narcotics Anonymous

NA is focused on supporting people who identify as having a significant issue resolving problematic drug use—including alcohol.

- *Bulletin #29 (1996)*: "Drug replacement therapy" is not clean.
- *NA World Board PR Pamphlet (2016)*: Treating addiction with MOUD is not considered abstinent.



Alcoholics Anonymous

AA is focused primarily on supporting people who identify as having a significant issue resolving problematic alcohol use.

- Sobriety — freedom from alcohol — through the teaching and practice of the Twelve Steps is the sole purpose of an A.A. group.
- I see no way of making nonalcoholic addicts into A.A. members.

P-35: Problems Other Than Alcohol

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All Recovery

All Recovery Meetings are discussion groups based on universal recovery topics. They are open to anyone who is challenged by addiction, affected by someone else's addiction, and to supporters of recovery in general. All Recovery Meetings embrace all pathways of recovery. These inclusive mutual support meetings often are available in-person at your local Recovery Community Organization. A full calendar of digital meetings is also available through a partnership between Unity Recovery, WEconnect, SOS Recovery, and Alano Club Portland.



Harm Reduction Works

Everyone is welcome in these meetings, especially people who aren't sure what harm reduction is or whether it can help them. People who embrace abstinence or choose moderation or take medications for opioid use disorder or are just beginning to wonder if alcohol and drugs is a problem are welcome. Friends, families, and allies are welcome.



Medication Assisted Recovery Anonymous

Many people who utilize prescribed medications for opioid use disorder, (e.g., methadone & buprenorphine) sometimes feel unwelcome at traditional recovery meetings. MARA believes that recovery is simply to recover from an unsafe lifestyle, and it believes in the value of medications as a means to recovery.





Recovery Community Centers

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Know Your History

Birth of a New Movement (2013)



Recovery Community Organizations

Governance & Tax Status

Across the country, organizations that are independent, non-profit, led and governed by people in recovery, family members, friends and allies are mobilizing resources within and outside of the recovery community to make it possible for the over 23 million Americans still struggling with addiction to find long-term recovery. Each organization has a mission that reflects the particular issues and concerns of its community.



RCC

A Recovery Community Center (RCC) is a place free from stigma that offers peer recovery support to the entire recovery community, regardless of pathway – free of charge. Types of support fall within four categories:

1. emotional,
2. informational,
3. instrumental, and
4. affiliational



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Where Are We Now?



Services

Harm Reduction

1. Syringe Service Program
2. Street Outreach
3. HIV/HCV Testing
4. Safer Sex Supplies
5. Naloxone Distribution
6. 24-hr Naloxone Vending



Services

LYFT Transportation

1. Recovery meetings
2. Employment interviews
3. Work- or work-related appointments
4. Medical and/or behavioral health appointments
5. Other recovery-related needs



Services

Life Services

1. Shower & Hygiene
2. Clothing Closet
3. Coffee, Water, & Food
4. Computers & Printers
5. Connection to social services



Services

Peer Support

1. Men's Group
2. Mutual Aid
3. Grief & Loss Support
4. Healthy Lifestyle Groups
5. Women's Group
6. Individual Coaching



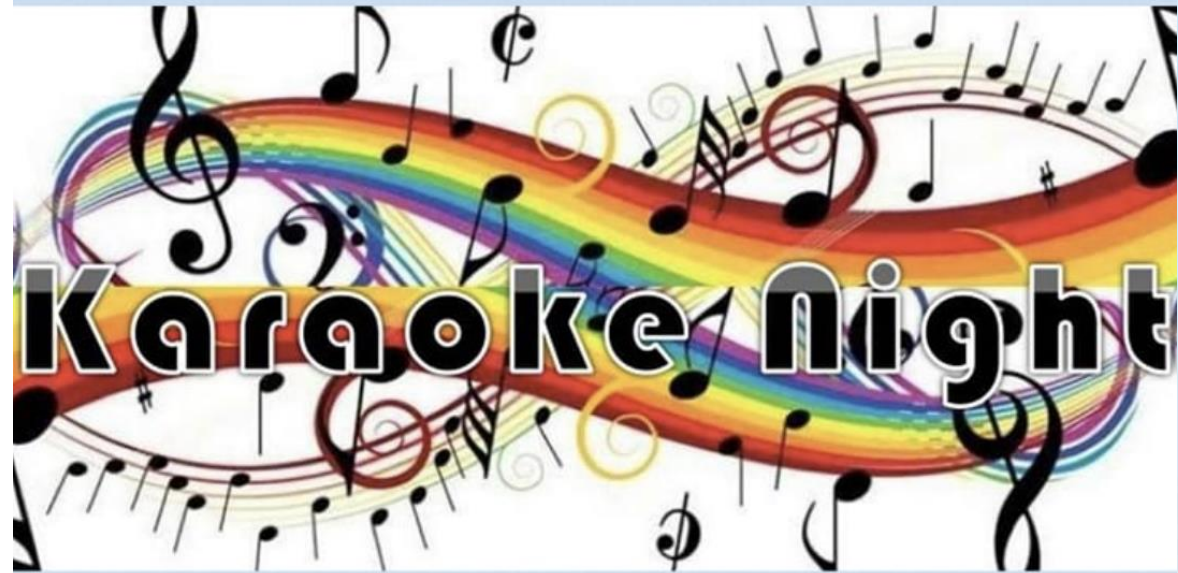
Open from 9-9
Men's Group 7:30



Services

Prosocial Activities

1. Open Mic
2. Poetry Slam
3. Live Music
4. Card Games
5. Storytelling
6. Bingo



Food @ 5

Peer Support @ 6

Karaoke 7-10



Research

- RCCs are easily accessible, attractive, mostly state-funded, recovery support hubs providing an array of services to individuals in various recovery stages. They appear to play a valued role in facilitating the accrual of social, employment, housing, and other recovery capital.
- RCCs are utilized by an array of individuals with few resources and primary opioid or alcohol histories. Whereas strong social supportive elements were common and highly rated, RCCs appear to play a more unique role not provided either by formal treatment or by MHOs in facilitating the acquisition of recovery capital and thereby enhancing functioning and quality of life.
- RCCs engage and provide benefits for individuals facing the greatest challenges in terms of clinical pathology and low QOL and resources.



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More to Learn

Funding



Optimizing Recovery Funding, Volumes 1 & 2

**Volume 1: Barriers to Acquiring Funding for
Organizations in the Ecosystem of Recovery**

**Volume 2: Strategies for State Funding of
Recovery Support Services**

January 2023



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More to Learn

Science

CoARS

The Consortium on
**Addiction
Recovery
Science**





Rationale and Role of Recovery Community Centers: A Bio-Psycho-Social Perspective

Recovery Webinar Series Enhancing Research Infrastructure for Recovery Community Centers (NIDA R24)

November, 20 2020



Resources

- [Recovery Resource Guide – JBS International](#)
- [Recovery Community Centers – JBS International](#)
- [Recovery Community Organization Toolkit – Faces & Voices of Recovery](#)
- [Optimizing Recovery Funding | PRCoE – SAMHSA](#)
- [CoARS Recovery Research Seminar Series](#)



Citations

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Citations

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<https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.14281>



Thank You

The purpose of RCORP is to support treatment for and prevention of substance use disorder, including opioid use disorder, in rural counties at the highest risk for substance use disorder.

Contact Information:
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RCORP-TA

RURAL COMMUNITIES OPIOID RESPONSE PROGRAM - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



www.fletchergroup.org

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