



MENTAL HEALTH EMPOWERMENT PROJECT



2025 Available Trainings

MHEP INC., 204 SECOND ST. ALBANY, NY 12210

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TRAUMA-INFORMED

Trauma-Informed Approaches – Full or Half-day

This workshop will discuss different ways the mental health system and individuals can be trauma-informed. Trauma-informed approaches are services that have an appreciation for the high prevalence of traumatic experiences in persons who receive mental health services. For example, Trauma Informed Practitioners ask, “What happened to you?” Instead of asking, “What is wrong with you?”

Importance of Play for Trauma Survivors - Half-day

Play is not just essential for kids; it is an important source of relaxation and healing for adults. Play is crucial for trauma survivors because it provides a safe space to process and express difficult emotions. We will explore play, its brain-changing effects, and how to develop our “playful side.”

Creating a Grassroots Demand for Trauma-Informed Approaches - Half-day

Creating grassroots demand for trauma-informed approaches involves:

- Engaging communities at the local level.
- Raising awareness about the importance of trauma-informed care.
- Fostering a shift in attitudes and behaviors toward understanding and supporting those affected by trauma.

This training uncovers the essential components of creating systemic changes in service delivery, especially in healthcare, education, mental health, social services, and criminal justice.

Understanding Self-Injury from the Survivor's Perspectives – Half-day

During this workshop, we will explore the difference between self-harm and self-injury. We will discuss self-injury as a strategy for self-preservation rather than destruction. We will review the “Cycle of Despair” that happens when someone reaches out for support or gets caught, discuss alternative coping strategies, and how to be sure our reactions aren’t shame-based. We will discuss supporting someone injured using the same principles we use in peer support.

First Aid for Emotional Trauma – Half-day

This training is designed to guide the participant in being present and supportive without pushing the person to talk more than they're comfortable with. It's about creating a safe space for participants, actively listening to their experience, validating their feelings, offering reassurance, and providing practical support. The training focus areas include Contact and Engagement, Safety and Comfort, Practical Assistance, Connection and Social Supports, Validation of Feelings and Experiences, and Knowing Limitations.

The Faces of Grief- Half-day

An overview of the leading model of the stages of healing from grief is discussed, with an in-depth exploration of each stage. Collaborative discussion is encouraged as people apply the relevance of each stage to their own personal experiences with grief. The concept of “complicated grief” is discussed. The importance of “making meaning” is highlighted as an integral part of the healing process. This is related to the core value of peer work, wherein everyone’s path to healing is different. Also, the importance of community connection is highlighted as a key component to the healing process.

ADVOCACY

Nuts and Bolts of Advocacy - Full or Half-day

Advocacy is speaking in support of something/someone. It is a type of problem-solving designed to protect personal rights and ensure a dignified existence. In this workshop, participants will learn the different types of advocacy, basic advocacy tools, and how to develop a successful advocacy plan.

Self-Advocacy - Half-day

Self-advocacy essentially means “speaking up for yourself” and involves expressing one's needs and representing one's own interests. In this workshop, participants will learn valuable tools for self-advocacy, how to develop a self-advocacy plan, and that self-advocacy doesn't mean you have to do it alone!

Legislative Advocacy - Half day

Legislative advocacy is an effort to influence the introduction, enactment, or modification of legislation. This workshop will teach participants to engage in a set of actions targeted to create support for or modify a policy or proposal.

Systems Advocacy – Full or Half-day

Systems Advocacy is an effort to change policies, rules, or laws that determine how services are provided. It works to create change within a system or agency and/or influence public perspectives that drive policy development. Participants will learn about advocacy on the federal, state, and local levels.

Psychiatric Advance Directives – Half-day

Psychiatric advance directives (PAD) are a relatively new instrument that may be used to document a person's specific instructions or preferences regarding future mental health treatment. In this workshop, participants will learn how to develop a PAD to use in the event they lose the capacity to give or withhold informed consent to specific treatments.

Complete Advocacy Training - 5 Full-days

This five-day intensive training equips participants with the knowledge, skills, and basic understanding of Mental hygiene law to lead impactful advocacy strategies. Each day delves into critical topics, such as patients' rights, human rights, civil rights, confidentiality, the right to review clinical records and the nuts and bolts of advocacy. The training provides practical tools and frameworks to empower participants in their professional and community roles.

How to Participate in Community Service Boards and Sub-Committees – Half-day

Getting Involved with Local Mental Health Services Policy and Planning" is a practical training designed to empower participants with the knowledge and tools to influence mental health policies in their communities. This program covers strategies for accessing local government mental health plans, understanding budgets, attending key meetings, and collaborating with stakeholders. Participants will learn how to navigate committees, advocate effectively, and assess citizen involvement in mental health planning. The training emphasizes networking, mentorship, and strategic approaches to drive meaningful change in local mental health systems.

Skills in Negotiation - Half-day

Any time two groups with conflicting interests meet to discuss their issues, they are negotiating. Sometimes, the negotiations are explicit; the groups consciously draw on negotiation strategies. Usually, they are not. Too often, those who advocate for change enter into negotiations with only a vague sense of what they hope to accomplish and how to achieve it. This workshop is designed to enable advocates to negotiate effectively.

Assertiveness Basics – Half-day

Assertiveness is standing up for your right to be treated fairly. It is expressing your opinions, needs, and feelings without ignoring or hurting the opinions, needs, and feelings of others. This workshop will teach us the difference between passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior. Participants will learn to be more assertive in their daily lives and how to counter aggressive techniques used by others. This training goes hand in hand with the Skills in Negotiation training.

The History of our Movement – Full or Half-day

From the outcry of alleged lunatics in the late 1800s to the birth of the Mental Patients' Liberation Movement in the 1970s, from the call for self-help and alternatives in the 1980s to the birth of the Peer industry in the 1990s, "The History of Our Movement" chronologies more than 100 years of the history of people who have endured the public mental health system.

Confidentiality of clinical records - Half-day

Confidentiality implies a relationship between two or more persons in which the information communicated between them is to be kept in confidence. This workshop will discuss why confidentiality is necessary, the legal implications, and the implications of a peer support relationship. It will also include the process of gaining access to one's clinical records.

Rights of people who use the Mental Health System – Full day

The fact that a person is receiving psychiatric Treatment cannot be used by itself as grounds to deprive them of any civil rights. This workshop will help participants explore the rights of individuals involved in treatment in all public mental health system aspects. This includes the commitment and retention process, AOT, Housing Rights, and navigating (avoiding) the CPEP system.

APS REVIEW

Full APS Core Course Training - 10 Full Days

This comprehensive overview of The New York State Academy of Peer Services 13 Core Courses offers training to acclimate peers who wish to become certified peer specialists. The core courses are part of an extensive curriculum that builds competencies in recovery principles, communication skills, and peer support techniques. This training is an overview and is not a certification. However, this review of the core courses is designed to equip peers with the knowledge and skills needed to complete the APS modules for certification.

CULTURE

Cultural Curiosity – Full or Half-day

Cultural curiosity is the desire to learn and understand more about people from different cultural backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. This workshop will involve learning about someone's cultural heritage or understanding how their cultural background influences their thoughts, feelings, or behaviors.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Asset-Based Community Development - Full-day

Asset-based Community development (ABCD) is a powerful approach focused on discovering and mobilizing the resources already present in a community. The ABCD point of view encourages people to recognize that their community is a glass half full of assets, not one-half empty of needs. Community assets are resources that become valuable when brought together and made productive. The ABCD approach provides a way for citizens to find and mobilize what they have to build a stronger community.

WELLNESS

Action Planning for Wellness and Prevention - Full-day

This Presentation is based on a publication by SAMHSA. In this workshop, we will cover six stages of action planning for wellness and prevention: Developing a Wellness Toolbox, Daily Maintenance Plan, Identifying Triggers, Early Warning Signs, When Things Are Breaking Down or Getting Worse, Crisis Planning (including Post-crisis) This is the public domain version of the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP).

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Modeling and Inspiring through Recovery Narratives - Half-day

This workshop explores the difference between an “illness story” and a “recovery narrative” and helps participants explore the power and potential of their own narrative as a recovery tool.

Principals of Recovery – Half-day

This training highlights the principles of recovery in peer support, which are essential guidelines for helping individuals in mental health and recovery achieve their fullest potential through mutual support, shared experiences, and empowerment. These principles emphasize the importance of hope, choice, and individual strengths. Focus areas include strengths-based approaches, choice and control, mutual respect and dignity, and peer-led initiatives.

What's In Your Recovery Lunchbox – Full or Half-day

This training utilizes the tangible object of a lunchbox to symbolize what we fill ourselves with daily to support our recovery. We will uncover, discuss, and discover items in our recovery “lunchbox,” such as Health and well-being, Self-determination and personal strength, Dignity and respect, Honesty, Personal integrity and trust, Mutuality and hope.

Finding Your Authentic Voice / Speaking Your Truth – Half-day

Participants will discover and learn how to embrace their authentic personal and professional voice through guided exercises, reflective practices, and interactive discussions. Focus areas include Self-awareness and Confidence, Genuine Connections, Personal Fulfillment, Professional Success, Effective Communication, Resilience and Adaptability, and Social Responsibility.

Your Personal Value Statement – Full or Half-day

For several reasons, personal values are crucial in peer support, as they profoundly influence the support's effectiveness, quality, and authenticity. This training will explore, identify, discuss, and create key components of a Personal Value Statement. Focus areas will include Core Values, Purpose, and Commitment. The participants will be encouraged to create a personal value statement in real-time.

Language Matters: The Power of the Words We Use – Half-day

This workshop reviews the power that language plays in healing and recovery. We identify the differences between illness and deficit-based language versus language that is healing and strengths-based. We discuss the harmful impact labels have on us and those we serve. We review the danger of stereotyping. We discuss how strengths-based and recovery-focused language can foster hope and empowerment on our journeys to wellness.

Mindful Healing – Half-day

This workshop explores the notion of healing as a choice and discusses the power we have over our own healing process. We highlight the value of individualized definitions for healing and the pathways to get there. We delve into how mindfulness practices (or being in the present moment) have powerful healing effects on the same parts of the brain that are impacted by trauma. Examples of mindfulness practices are shared. The usefulness of mindfulness in peer work is discussed as it relates to the core values.

8 Dimension of Wellness – Half-day or Full-day

This training covers the 8 Dimensions of Wellness, as defined by SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), and represents key areas of life that contribute to overall well-being. These interconnected dimensions highlight the holistic approach to mental health and wellness.

The Faces of Grief – Half-day

An overview of the leading model of the stages of healing from grief is discussed, with an in-depth exploration of each stage. Collaborative discussion is encouraged as people apply the relevance of each stage to their own personal experiences with grief. The concept of “complicated grief” is discussed. The importance of “making meaning” is highlighted as an integral part of the healing process. This is related to the core value of peer work, wherein everyone’s path to healing is different. Also, the importance of community connection is highlighted as a key component to the healing process.

Exploring the Process of Change – Half-day

The well-known model for change is reviewed, with an in-depth discussion of each “stage” in the change process. Barriers that can arise at each “stage” to keep people stuck are discussed. The notion of “relapse” as a stage is challenged and redefined to be more in line with recovery-focused peer values. The core peer values are presented, with an emphasis on the importance for individuals to remain in the driver’s seat of their own roadmap to recovery.

The Healing Power of Gratitude – Half-day

This workshop reviews common gratitude practices, along with the specific elements of those practices that facilitate healing and wellness. These healing elements are related to the core peer values of empathy and connection. A distinction between gratitude and “toxic positivity” is made, so that use of these practices in peer work will stay in line with our values.

The Attributes of Emotional Awareness – Half-day

Emotional awareness refers to the ability to recognize and better understand one's own emotions and those of others. This workshop will focus on emotional awareness components, such as self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management.

Preventing Burnout – Half-day

This workshop focuses on the emotional, physical, and overall mental exhaustion that can occur when someone is faced with excessive and prolonged stress. Burnout will be defined, and we will discuss strategies and tools to help prevent its harmful effects.

Boundaries – Half-day

Healthy boundaries can create a framework that helps define how you want to be treated by others and how you treat others. The workshop will focus on communicating our boundaries, respecting others, setting expectations, and recognizing our needs while interacting with others.

COMMUNICATION

Skills in Negotiation - Half-day

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Public Speaking – Full or Half-day

Equip individuals with the skills and confidence to effectively share their experiences, advocate for mental health or any other subject matter that is important to the individual, and engage with various audiences through public speaking. In this training, individuals will learn, review, and practice delivering presentations for small group gatherings and large audiences within mutual support and beyond. Focus areas include vocals, body language, and the heart behind your message.

Public Speaking 2.0 – Full or Half-day

An extended and in-depth look into the creation of your message and presentation. Individuals will work in real time to create their presentation's **think, feel, and do**. Participants will be able to present material and receive feedback from each other.

PowerPoint Demystified and Best Practices – Full or Half-day

This training aims to teach participants how to create visually engaging and effective PowerPoint presentations by applying best practices in design, content, and delivery. Areas of focus include design principles and content delivery with the incorporation of clear and focused messaging, slide layout and structuring, and audience engagement.

Finding Your Authentic Voice / Speaking Your Truth – Full or Half-day

Participants will discover and learn how to embrace their authentic personal and professional voice through guided exercises, reflective practices, and interactive discussions. Focus areas include Self-awareness and Confidence, Genuine Connections, Personal Fulfillment, Professional Success, Effective Communication, Resilience and Adaptability, and Social Responsibility.

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The Energy Behind Communication – Full or Half-day

Energy, particularly enthusiasm, is a vital element in communication. It's not just about the words we use but the 'energy' we convey through our tone of voice and body language. Communication that focuses on the energy it puts out engages the audience and ensures our message is received and understood. This workshop aims to heighten awareness about communication and the energy behind it. This workshop can directly impact peers, peer supporters, and anyone wanting to positively impact their communication.

Language Matters: The Power of the Words We Use – Half-day

This workshop reviews the power that language plays in healing and recovery. We identify the differences between illness and deficit-based language versus language that is healing and strengths-based. We discuss the harmful impact labels have on us and those we serve. We review the danger of stereotyping. We discuss how strengths-based and recovery-focused language can foster hope and empowerment on our journeys to wellness.

Understanding Mutual Support – Half-day

This workshop reviews authentic mutual support and highlights the benefits gained in a reciprocal relationship. We will review mutuality, shared experience, respect and empowerment, and confidentiality.

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How To Facilitate Support Groups – Half-day

Facilitating a peer support group involves creating a safe, welcoming environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences and supporting one another. This workshop highlights establishing a clear group purpose and goal, creating a safe and inclusive space, facilitating group discussion, and encouraging empathy and validation.

PEER SUPPORT

The Energy Behind Communication – Full-day or Half-day

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Person-Centered Principles – Half-day

Person-centered principles are guiding values that focus on the interests of the individual receiving support. This workshop will focus on supporting people in a manner guided by their wishes to obtain their own quality of life. Focus areas include personal empowerment, dignity, respect, and compassion.

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