

## What is Recovery?

Adapted from the National Consensus Statement on Mental Health Recovery from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration within the US Department of Health and Human Services



**Recovery is a term that can be defined in many different ways. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration defines ten fundamental components of recovery:**

### **Self Direction**

The individual decides for his/herself to seek recovery and actively searches for it.

### **Individualized and Person-Centered**

The way to recovery that an individual chooses will be unique to that person's strengths, needs, experiences, and cultural backgrounds.

### **Empowerment**

The individual has the ability to speak for him/herself about what he/she needs, wants, and aspires. The person has control over their own future.

### **Holistic**

Recovery covers all aspects of a person's life. Areas include mind, body, spirit, and community. This can include: housing, employment, education, mental health and healthcare treatment and services, complementary and naturalistic services, addiction treatment, spirituality, creativity, social networks, community participation, and family supports. Families, providers, organizations, systems communities and society play crucial roles in creating and maintaining meaningful opportunities for consumer access to these supports.

### **Non-linear**

Recovery does not always happen in a consistent step by step basis. There is continual growth, occasional setbacks, and learning from experience. Recovery begins when a person realizes positive change is possible. This helps the individual move on to fully participate in the recovery process.

### **Strengths-Based**

Recovery focuses on building on the multiple capacities, resiliencies, talents, coping abilities, and inherent worth of individuals. Building on such strengths gives the person the ability to engage in new relationships and interact with others in supportive, trust-based relationships.

### **Peer Support**

Support through sharing experiences, knowledge, and skills with others going through recovery can help the individual as well as others by giving each other a sense of belonging, supportive relationships, a sense of value, and community.

### **Respect**

Acceptance by the community, society, and systems, as well as appreciation of the individual – including protection of rights, elimination of discrimination and stigma – is a necessary step for recovery to take place. Regaining self-acceptance and personal belief in one's self are also necessary. Respect means that the individual will be included and fully participate in all parts of his/her life.

### **Responsibility**

Taking personal responsibility towards taking care of oneself and attaining goals is necessary for recovery. Individuals have to try to understand their experiences and recognize coping and healing methods to promote their own well-being.

### **Hope**

The message of a better future – that people can overcome hardships that occur must be internalized. It is the motivation for recovery. It can be inspired by peers, families, friends, providers, and others.

### **Resources**

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

National Mental Health Information Center