



Talking About Tobacco:

A new conversation about tobacco use and peer support

Originally broadcast on February 18, 2021

Workshop Goal

In this first webinar, we discuss why a peer support-oriented discussion is so important and the need for those with tobacco use experience to step forward as champions for themselves and others. According to the CDC, “smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death... adults with mental health conditions consumed almost 40% of all cigarettes smoked overall.”¹[\[1\]](#)

We describe how people with mental health conditions, people of color, and people in other marginalized communities have been targeted by the billions of dollars the tobacco industry spends on advertising each year and ways in which these groups have routinely been subjected to oppressive and coercive treatment related to tobacco use. Large disparities exist in reaching people in mental health and marginalized communities with public health programs related to tobacco use. Culturally competent conversations and approaches, such as peer support, are essential to prevent further loss of life in these vulnerable populations.

We include personal stories by the presenters related to their own tobacco use, some common misconceptions about tobacco and nicotine and ways in which peer support can offer a non-judgmental space for talking about and exploring changes related to tobacco use.

Presenters: Amanda Saake, Susan Friedlander, Gina Calhoun, Regina Shoen, and LaVerne Miller.
Moderated by Rita Cronise.

¹ [\[1\]](#) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Burden of cigarette use. <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/resources/data/cigarette-smoking-in-united-states.html>

Workshop Objectives

By the end of the workshop, you will be able to:

- Identify how marginalized populations have been targeted for tobacco use
- Describe how culturally competent public health approaches and peer support can help to promote overall wellness
- Recognize motivations for using tobacco as shared in the presenters' tobacco stories
- Clarifying information related to tobacco use
- Explore the role peer supporters can play in addressing tobacco

Resources

ARTICLES ALPHABETICAL BY AUTHOR

- Copeland, M.E. (2014). WRAP® for Life, Chapter 15: WRAP® for Becoming a Non-Smoker. Mental Health Recovery and WRAP® materials are developed by Mary Ellen Copeland and copyrighted by Advocates for Human Potential, Inc.
https://www.wrapandrecoverybooks.com/store/wrap_for_life.html
- Ford, P., Clifford, A., Gussy, K. & Gartner, C. (2013). [A Systematic Review of Peer-Support Programs for Smoking Cessation in Disadvantaged Groups](#). *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 10(11): 5507-5522.
- Gardiner, P. (2004). [The African Americanization of menthol cigarette use in the United States](#). *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, Vol 6(1) S55-S65.
- Rosario, C. & Harris, K. (2020). [Tobacco Advertisements: What Messages Are They Sending in African American Communities?](#) *Health Promotion Practice*.
- Smith, S. (2010). [Tobacco signs still target city's poorest areas](#). The Boston Globe.
- van den Brand, F., Nagtzaam, P., Nagelhout, G., Winkens, B., & van Schayck, C. [The Association of Peer Smoking Behavior and Social Support with Quit Success in Employees Who Participated in a Smoking Cessation Intervention at the Workplace](#). *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16(16): 2831.
- Zern, A., Seserman, M., Dacus, H., Wallace, B., Friedlander, S., Manseau, M., Smalling, M., Smith, T., Williams, J., & Compton, M. (2020). [Screening and Treatment of Tobacco Use Disorder in Mental Health Clinics in New York State: Current Status and Potential Next Steps](#). *Community Mental Health Journal*. Online Ahead of Print.

OTHER RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONS

[Cigarette Smoking and Tobacco Use Among People of Low Socioeconomic Status](#). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website.

[Culturally Competent Smoking Cessation for People with Serious Mental Illness](#), Center of Excellence for Cultural Competence, New York State Psychiatric Institute, Cultural Competence Matters Newsletter, Feb 2009.

[Quick Facts on Risks of E-Cigarettes](#). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website.

[National Center for Cultural Competence](#). Georgetown University website.

[Morgan State University CEASE Smoking Program](#). Morgan State University, School of Community Health & Policy website.

[The Role of the Community Health Worker](#), New York Presbyterian Performing Provider System website.

[Tobacco Company Marketing to African Americans](#). Tobaccofreekids website.

[Tobacco is a social justice issue: Racial and ethnic minorities](#). truth initiative website.

[Tobacco-free Toolkit for Behavioral Health Agencies](#). California Behavioral Health & Wellness Initiative website.

[Train the Trainer Smoking Cessation Toolkit: Help Someone Quit Smoking Today](#). Institute for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research (IPR), Preventive Medicine, Patient Education and Community Outreach Center, Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, Keck School of Medicine of USC University of Southern California (USC), Multicultural Area Health Education Center (MAHEC), National Latino Tobacco Control Network (NLTCN), and Indiana Latino Institute (ILI).

WEBSITES

American Lung Association

<https://www.freedomfromsmoking.org/>

CDC Smoking and Tobacco Use

<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/>

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/quit-smoking/?s_cid=OSH_tips_D9385

<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/quit-smoking/index.html>

National Cancer Institute
<https://smokefree.gov/>

Nicotine Anonymous
<https://nicotine-anonymous.org/>

NJ CHOICES
<https://www.njchoices.org/>

North American Quitline Consortium (New York)
<http://map.naquitline.org/profile/usa/ny/>

NYS Smokers Quitline
<https://www.nysmokefree.com/>

Roswell Park Cessation Services
<https://rpcs.roswellpark.org/>

The Truth Initiative (inspiring tobacco free lives)
<https://truthinitiative.org/>

VIDEOS

NYC Health (2019). Nicotine Replacement Therapy. [Video 15:12 min.] Retrieved from
<https://youtu.be/UOEpWE8GY0Q>

Doors to Wellbeing (2019). Peer Support and Smoking Cessation by Gina Calhoun. [Video 60:33 min.] Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/UOEpWE8GY0Q>

RESEARCH

New Jersey CHOICES is conducting a study of people with mental health conditions who smoke. Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Department of Psychiatry in New Brunswick is conducting an **online survey** to evaluate tobacco quitting barriers in smokers with mental health conditions. Eligibility Requirements: Volunteers must be smokers who are 18 years or older. Compensation: You will be compensated for your time (\$20 gift card). Visit www.tinyurl.com/RUTBS to complete the survey.

PRESENTER BIOS

(In order of appearance)



Amanda Saake, LMSW, CPRP, NYCPS-P (she/her/hers)

Amanda Saake is currently the Special Assistant to the Commissioner at the New York State Office of Mental Health. In this role, she serves as the interface between individuals and families served by the public mental health system and OMH staff responsible for programmatic and policy decisions. She also provides leadership for Peer Support services. She is dedicated to strengthening the opportunities for the Peer workforce to have upward mobility in their careers and expanding opportunities for Peer Specialists to work in positions throughout the behavioral system of care. Amanda has more than 15 years' experience providing direct service and supervision in the human services workforce. Amanda has worked in a broad range of settings, including supportive housing, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), harm reduction, LGBT youth outreach, Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS), and outpatient mental health as both a practitioner and supervisor.

Amanda's commitment to high quality, person-centered care is also personal, stemming back to her first encounters with the mental health system at the age of 17. Amanda attributes her career as one of the most important aspects of her recovery journey.

Amanda has been a member of the Certification Commission for Psychiatric Rehabilitation's (CPRP) Board of Subject Matter Experts since 2013. She has served as a Commissioner for the PRA Certification Commission since 2019. In 2016, Amanda received the New York Nonprofit Media's "40 under 40 Rising Star" award. Amanda also received the Distinguished Alumni Award from her alma mater. Amanda received the Brendan Nugent Leadership Award in 2020.

Amanda is a graduate of Marywood University (Scranton, PA) and Columbia University School of Social Work (New York, NY). Amanda is a Licensed Master Social Worker, Certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practitioner, and a Provisional New York Certified Peer Specialist.



Susan Friedlander, LCSW

Susan Friedlander is the director of Community Integration and Wellness Initiatives at OMH's NYC Field Office. She received her B.A in Political Science from Kenyon College and her M.S.W. from New York University. Susan has a wide range of experience in the mental health field and has worked in clinics, inpatient hospitals, and psychiatric rehabilitation programs as a practitioner.

After several years at South Beach Psychiatric Center where she developed innovative interactive television programming, she joined the NYC Field Office as part of the Assisted Outpatient

Treatment Team. Subsequent roles have included serving as the Queens Borough Coordinator and the lead for Personalized Recovery Oriented Services programs. More recently, Susan has had the opportunity to focus on tobacco interventions including the development of “Crushing Cravings”, a 12-session curriculum for smokers in pre-contemplation. As a former tobacco user, she is passionate about assuring that people who participate in mental health services have access to stagewise tobacco interventions which support recovery and community inclusion. In her non-work hours, she adores travel, the arts, gardening, wildlife, forest-bathing, yoga and hanging out with Chloe, a semi-feral kitty she adopted in May 2020.



LaVerne Daisy Miller, JD

LaVerne D. Miller is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and Northeastern School of Law. She is a member of the New York State Bar. She has worked as an Assistant District Attorney in New York County and as a community organizer and community focused landlord/tenant attorney. Since 1997, she has worked in various leadership capacities primarily focusing on the development of a knowledgeable, competent, and empowered peer workforce.

She was the director of The Harp Peer Advocacy Center from 1997-2009 guiding the Center through an extended period of growth and national recognition. During her tenure, in addition to the peer specialist training program, she had a leadership role in developing and implementing the nation's first training program preparing peers with histories of involvement in the criminal justice system to provide services, support, and advocacy for peers in the criminal justice system. Many state and local jurisdictions received technical assistance from the Center's leadership in replicating this training program.

Similarly, during her tenure the Center, in collaboration with other peer operated programs and organizations and other partners in managing NYC Project Liberty Peer Support Initiative. Begun in 2002, this project was developed in response to the 9/11 Tragedy. Peers were hired to provide a wide array of outreach, educational, and counseling services to peers impacted by this tragedy. It is also important to note that peers provided these services to the larger community. This project had a significant impact in increasing the number of peers working in provider agencies, peer operated agencies, and government run agencies and program.

Since 2009, much of her work has focused on the intersection between mental health and the criminal justice system. She has provided technical assistance and support to state and local jurisdictions implementing such components of criminal justice reform as jail diversion, prison reentry, problem solving courts, crisis services, peer operated crisis centers and drop-in centers and the like.

Her work continues to focus on developing and implementing successful strategies that ensure peer in all reform efforts; the employment and full integration of peers and recovery support services across all systems that intersect with the criminal justice system; the identification of the impact that racial, ethnic, gender, and economic disparities in the criminal justice system and the adoption of laws, policies and practices that eliminate these disparities and level the playing field justice involve peers.

LaVerne is a much sought-after speaker and Technical Assistance consultant.



Gina Kaye Calhoun,

Gina Calhoun is the PA Program Director for Peer Support Education at the Copeland Center. She is a wife, sister, friend, fitness enthusiast, and a person with mental health challenges. She has over 25 years of experience in mental health services, first as a participant and now as a peer professional. When Gina is not promoting wellness and recovery, she enjoys adult gymnastics and spending time with her large dynamic family.

Gina won the Timothy J. Coakley National Behavioral Health Leadership Award. This award honors peer and family leaders in the behavioral health field whose work is characterized by the highest degree of integrity and a passion for creative approaches for improving the lives of persons living with mental health challenges, especially in the public sector.



Regina Shoen, NYCPS

Regina Shoen is an Advocacy Specialist II with the New York State Office of Mental Health, Office of Consumer Affairs. She has worked as a Peer Advocate, a Peer Supportive Case Manager, a state item Peer Specialist and a Certified Benefits Practitioner over the course of her career.

She firmly believes in the power of work as a tool towards recovery and is passionate about educating providers and programs about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. In addition to that, Regina works towards educating those who want to return to work about the incentives offered that enable them to do so without compromising their health insurance and other benefits. Regina has 15+ years working in Peer positions, and 30 years working in both mental health and developmental disabilities realms with both transitional age youth and adults. Regina is on the Center for Practice Innovations Advisory Panel and has worked as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) with the Academy of Peer Services (APS).

Regina has her own lived experience and has used that experience to share the message of hope and recovery through her various positions.



Rita Cronise, MS, ALWF (Moderator for this session)

Rita holds a position as distance faculty at Rutgers University on the instructional design team for the Academy of Peer Services, where she also serves as the Coordinator for the Virtual Learning Community.

She has been involved in the peer support movement for over 20 years and uses her lived experience both as a person with a major mental health condition and as a facilitator of many forms of peer support to provide resources to those in the peer support workforce. Rita is a former smoker who understands the challenges of managing this and other forms of addiction. In this and future webinars she shares her story of tobacco use and her motivation for change.