

Timeline of the Consumer/Survivor Movement

Adapted from the History of the c/s/x Movement by Pat Risser, with additional contributions by Judi Chamberlin, Marquis de Swine (aka Billy Gamble), Darby Penney, Phyllis Solomon, and Susan Rogers for the Historical Roots of Peer Support Services course for the Academy of Peer Services



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Peer-Run Organizations are Highlighted in Yellow
(Use these in the course matching exercise.)

1793-

Early recorded peer support. According to psychiatric legend, French psychologist **Phillip Pinel** strikes the chains from mental patients held in the Bastille in France. He learned “moral” treatment from a former patient who became one of the ward superintendents, Jean Baptiste Pussin, who had success with his patients using gentle treatment and patience rather than physical abuse and chains.

1841-

Dorothea Dix begins her work on behalf of people with disabilities incarcerated in jails and poorhouses. She was not an ex-patient, but she was an educator who was shocked at the conditions for the inmates. She began a crusade and fought for new laws and greater government funding to improve treatment of inmates and patients and helped establish 32 state hospitals offering moral treatment.

1844-

The 13 superintendents and organizers of insane asylums and hospitals met in Philadelphia to form the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane (**AMSAII**). This became the American Psychiatric Association in 1921.

1845-

Alleged Lunatics’ Friend Society is organized by former mental patients in England to campaign for the human rights of people alleged to have mental disorders (who were known then as lunatics). They are recognized today as pioneers of the

consumer/survivor/ex-patients' movement (which was earlier known as the mental patients' liberation movement).

1851-1860

The Opal was a ten volume Journal produced by patients of Utica State Lunatic Asylum in New York, which has been viewed as an early liberation movement.

1868-

Elizabeth Packard published the first of several books and pamphlets in which she detailed her forced commitment by her husband in the Jacksonville (Illinois) insane Asylum. Similarly, in Massachusetts at about the same time, **Elizabeth Stone**, also committed by her husband, tried to rally public opinion to the cause of stopping the unjust incarceration of the "insane."

Negro Asylums - Central State Hospital in Petersburg, Virginia was the first hospital created for the care of Insane Negros. Godfrey Goffney was committed with a diagnosis of homicidal mania attributed to freedom from slavery. At Cherry Hospital, another institution established for the care of the "colored insane," patients were routinely leased to local white farmers to pick their cotton and other crops (Jackson, 2005 p. 17).

1883-

"**Eugenics**" is coined by Sir **Francis Galton** (a cousin of Charles Darwin) to describe his pseudo-science of "improving the stock" of humanity by allowing "the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing over the less suitable."

1892-

American Psychological Association (APA) founded.

1898-

Hiawatha Asylum for Insane Indians – The first and only federal institute for insane Indians was established in the town of Canton, South Dakota. (Stawichki, 1997)

1908-

Clifford Beers publishes 'A Mind That Found Itself,' an autobiographical expose of conditions inside state and private mental institutions.

1909-

Clifford Beers founds the National Committee for Mental Hygiene (**NCMH**) in New York City. This later became the National Mental Health Association in 1950 (**NMHA**) later to be known as Mental Health America (**MHA**).

1913-

Clifford Beers Clinic is the first outpatient mental health clinic in the United States.

1927-

The U.S. Supreme Court, in *Buck v. Bell*, rules that the forced sterilization of people with disabilities is not a violation of their constitutional rights. The decision removes the last restraints for eugenicists; advocating that people of inferior races or with disabilities or suffering from feeble-mindedness be prohibited from having children. By the 1970s, 60,000 such disabled people are sterilized without consent.

1935-

Bill W. and **Dr. Bob** found the self-help society known as Alcoholics Anonymous on June 10, 1935.

1937-

Dr. Abraham Low and 30 of his patients in Chicago begin a self-help group based on cognitive behavioral techniques. The program they started later becomes known as **Recovery-Inc**. Technically this was not a self-help movement because it was founded and continued to be led by a psychiatrist but was a successful mutual aid support group.

1940's -

The **Eugenics** movement in America also flourished in Germany during World War II. Since the postwar period, both the public and the scientific community have generally associated eugenics with Nazi abuses, which included enforced racial hygiene, sterilization, human experimentation, and the extermination of undesired population groups that were deemed "unfit to live." In Germany, Eugenics led to the death of 70,000 institutionalized mental patients and disabled people before the focus shifted to the extermination of six million Jewish people

1946-

The National Mental Health Foundation is founded by conscientious objectors who served as attendants at state mental institutions during World War II. It works to expose the abusive conditions at these facilities and becomes an early impetus in the push for deinstitutionalization.

NIMH authorized by National Mental Health Act and established in 1949, an institute of US Dept of Health and Human Services responsible for research on mental illness.

1948-

We Are Not Alone (WANA) was founded by a group of patients at Rockland State Hospital in New York in the mid to late 1940s and continued to meet as an ex-patient group. Their goal was to provide support and advice and help others make the difficult transition from hospital to community. By the early 1950s WANA dissolved after it was taken over by mental health professionals who transformed it into Fountain House, which became the basis for the Clubhouse model.

Albert Deutsch's book *The Shame of the States* about the horrible conditions in state mental hospitals is released.

1950-1960's-

The Civil Rights Movement – A time of social unrest where people with common interests such as women and the gay community formed groups with the objective of making or influencing changes in social policy and civil rights. By the end of the 60's the women's, gay rights, and disabilities rights movements had all emerged. People with psychiatric disabilities at this time were also challenging institutional practices, legal barriers and stigma.

1952-

The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (**DSM**) has **112** mental disorders in its initial edition. *Homosexuality is listed as a "sociopathic personality disturbance."*

1955-

Resident patients in state and county psychiatric hospitals in the U.S. peaks at around 550,000.

1956-

Congress passes the Social Security Amendment, which creates a Social Security Disability Insurance (**SSDI**) program for disabled workers aged 50 to 64.

1961-

Action for Mental Health issued by the Joint Commission on Mental Illness, a precipitant of Presidents Kennedy's policy changes.

A number of books critical of mental health care and mental illness – Thomas Szasz, *The Myth of mental Illness*, Michel Foucault, *The History of Madness*, and Erving Goffman, *Asylums*. *These writings contributed to the Anti-psychiatry movement.*

1963-

President **Kennedy**, in an address to Congress, calls for a reduction, "over a number of years and by hundreds of thousands, (in the number) of persons confined" to residential institutions." Though not labeled such at the time, this is a call for deinstitutionalization and increased community services. Congress passes and Kennedy signs into law the Mental Retardation Facilities and **Community Health Centers** Construction Act, authorizing federal grants for community mental health centers.

1960's-

Antipsychiatry Movement, influenced by civil rights movements, becomes a broad-based movement that questioned the legitimacy of standard psychiatric theory and practice. Mostly made up of radical therapists, intellectuals, and dissident mental health professionals, they challenged the validity of psychiatric categories, diagnostic practices and common forms of treatment. They do not invite or include the input of ex-patients.

At the same time, the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual grows to **168** mental disorders in the **DSM-II** from the 112 mental disorders in its initial, 1952 edition.

1969-

Stonewall Inn Riots – Police raid the Stonewall Inn in New York City's Greenwich Village. Protests and demonstrations begin, and it becomes known as the impetus for the gay civil rights movement. Marsha P. Johnson was one of the prominent figures in the uprising.

1970-

Insane Liberation Front (**ILF**) is organized by Howard Geld (known as **Howie the Harp**), Dorothy Weiner a union organizer and Tom Wittick a political activist/organizer in Portland, Oregon. It is the first known ex-patient group dedicated to liberation from psychiatry. As a result of the early efforts of the ILF, other local initiatives followed, many of them with Howie the Harp's direct participation, and most owing to his articulation of peer alternatives to traditional treatment methods and demonstrated success in funding and operating peer-operated service centers.

1971-

Mental Patients' Liberation Project (**MPLP**) is initiated by **Howie the Harp** when he returns to New York City based on the efforts of the ILF and similar events like the Stonewall Inn Riot happening in the gay and civil rights movements.

The Mental Patients' Liberation Front (**MPLF**) also starts in 1971 in Boston. Judi Chamberlin joins and works to raise consciousness about psychiatric oppression and increase self-help and mutual support alternatives for ex-patients.

David J. Rothman wrote *The Discovery of the Asylum*.

1972-

Network Against Psychiatric Assault (**NAPA**) forms in San Francisco. **Leonard Roy Frank** is one of the founders and early organizers.

Madness Network News begins as a San Francisco-area newsletter by David Richman and Sherry Hirsch in 1972. The first issue was an 18-20-page mimeographed newsletter on alternative ways of looking at psychiatry and included mental health providers and ex-mental patient contributions. It gradually evolves into a newspaper format, solely written by ex-mental patients and covering the ex-patients' movement in North America as well as worldwide.

The Alliance for the Liberation of Mental Patients, or "The Alliance" was formed in Syracuse NY. The group was originally named The Mental Patients Liberation Project to show solidarity with the NYC group but later changed their name. **Carole Hayes-Collier** is one of the early leaders. **George Ebert** joins soon after (Penney, 2004).

1973-

The first North American Conference on Human Rights and Psychiatric Oppression is held at the University of Detroit (and held annually in different locations until 1985).

The Rehabilitation Act is passed prohibiting discrimination in federal programs and services and services receiving federal funds. No otherwise qualified individual in the U.S. shall, solely by reason of a handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Due, in part, to the advocacy of the Gay Rights movement, homosexuality is removed from the American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic manual (DSM-II).

1974-

ADAMHA (Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration) established.

Network Against Psychiatric Assault (NAPA) in San Francisco becomes one of the most effective militant groups in the American ex-patient movement against psychiatric abuse. A series of well-publicized demonstrations, including a month-long "sleep-in" at the office of California Governor Jerry Brown results in negotiations that lead to the closing of the most abusive psychiatric institutions in the Bay Area.

1975-

The U.S. Supreme Court, in *O'Connor v. Donaldson*, rules that people cannot be institutionalized against their will in a psychiatric hospital unless they are determined to be a threat to themselves or to others.

Aid to Blind, Aid to Permanently and Totally Disabled, and Aid to the Elderly became federalized to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) which included mental illness as a disability. Provided for funds for living expenses for individuals being released from psychiatric hospitals.

1976-

Protestors stage a 30-day sleep-in in Governor Jerry Brown's office in California to call attention to uninvestigated deaths occurring in state institutions, people being used as forced labor, people forcibly drugged as well as other abuses such as seclusion and restraint. The group was given permission to sleep there. They met regularly with state officials. The group decided not to leave until their demands were met; their action resulted in investigating a number of deaths in state institutions (Bluebird, 2009).

1977-

Community Support Program (CSP) is unique but modestly funded demonstration program of NIMH (National Institute of Mental Health), the to stimulate and assist states and localities in improving opportunities and services in the community for people with a psychiatric condition who were not in need of structured long-term care. The original

program was to pilot a program of providing services for patients being released from the state psychiatric hospital. This program later funds several consumer/survivor initiatives.

The **504 Sit-in** was a disability rights protest that began on April 5, 1977. People with disabilities and the disability community occupied federal buildings in the United States in order to push the issuance of long-delayed regulations regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This demonstration paved the way for the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Baltic Street Mental Health Board, Brooklyn, NY founded as a not-for-profit to promote community awareness of the needs of people served by South Beach Psychiatric center. The organization's services include supported housing, bridge services, individual advocacy, information and referral, employment services, social and recreational services, education and training, peer counseling, and self-help at several sites in Brooklyn, Staten Island, the Bronx, and Manhattan. Baltic Street AEH is a consumer-run mental health organization that assists persons who are in recovery from mental illness to achieve successful and satisfying lives in their communities. A majority of the agency's staff and Board of Directors are current or former recipients of mental health services. (Penney, 2004).

1978-

Judi Chamberlin's landmark book *On Our Own: Patient Controlled Alternatives to the Mental Health System* is published. It becomes the standard text of the psychiatric survivor movement.

Leonard Roy Frank self-publishes *The History of Shock Treatment*. It is a vast collection of information on the history of shock treatment, starting with precursors of shock treatment, including the now discarded insulin coma shock treatment and continues to when he wrote it. Still available in paperback.

President's Commission on Mental Health - First Lady Rosalynn Carter heads this commission, which called for increased community supports.

1979-

The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, later renamed the **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** was founded in Madison, Wisconsin by two women who cared for their sons with schizophrenia and sought others with similar concerns. The grassroots organization focused on education, advocacy and support for family members. Consumers were later invited to join, not given equal status or respect to family members.

1980-

A group of advocates, many of them lawyers, formed the **National Association for Rights Protection and Advocacy (NARPA)**.

The First Annual Bastille Day Demonstration was held on July 14 by "The Alliance" based in Syracuse at the Willard Asylum for the Chronically Insane in Ovid, New York.

The Mental Patients' Liberation Project (in New York City) and related groups begin to hold annual **demonstrations and counter-conferences in May at the meeting of the American Psychiatric Association.**

Congress passes the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act (**CRIPA**), authorizing the U.S. Justice Department to file civil suits on behalf of residents of institutions whose rights are being violated.

The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual has grown to 224 mental disorders in the **DSM-III** from the 112 mental disorders in its initial, 1952 edition.

Report to the Secretary by the Department of Health and Human Services Steering Committee on the Chronically Mentally Ill released December 1980 entitled *Toward a National Plan for the Chronically Mentally Ill*. In response to President's Commission and National Plan, Mental Health Systems Act of 1980 signed into law by President Jimmy Carter which provided for improvement of community mental health care for persons with severe mental illness. Considered landmark mental health policy legislation. Under President Ronald Reagan Congress essentially repealed most of this Act.

1981-

The New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services (NYAPRS) is founded with origins in New York's clubhouse and social club community. Today, while not considered a peer-run organization, NYAPRS is a mix of professionals, people in recovery, peer supporters and others dedicated to the people, principles, and programs that make up New York's mental health recovery and rehabilitation community.

1982-

Berkeley bans electroshock (but the court later reverses the decision). **Ted Chabasinski** organized this.

The Tenth Annual **International Conference on Human Rights and Against Psychiatric Oppression** in Toronto Canada adopts the Declaration of Principles and makes a policy that only ex-mental patients can hold leadership positions in the mental patients' liberation movement.

1984-

The National Alliance of Mental Patients (**NAMP**) is renamed the National Association of Psychiatric Survivors (**NAPS**). The organization is short lived and not the same as the National Association of Peer Specialists which started 20 years later.

Committee for Truth in Psychiatry (**CTIP**) is organized by shock survivors **Marilyn Rice** and **Linda Andre**

1985-

The first '**Alternatives**' Conference is held in Baltimore in June and organized by On Our Own of Maryland. It was the first consumer/survivor conference to receive financial assistance from the NIMH Community Support Program.

The last **International Conference on Human Rights and Psychiatric Oppression** is held in Burlington, Vermont in August. The ex-patient movement was divided, many concerned funding by the federal government was leading to the movement being co-opted.

The National Mental Health Consumers' Association (NMHCA) founded.

National Depression and Manic Depression Association (**NDMDA**) – later known as the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) was formed in Chicago by two women who told their psychiatrist that they felt it was essential to their recovery to meet others who shared their experiences. The grass roots organization that formed grew to over 1000 peer-led support groups for people with mood disorders and their families.

Madness Network News ended publication with the winter issue.

1986-

National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse (NMHCSHC) is founded by Joseph Rogers as a division of project SHARE (Self-Help and Advocacy Resource Exchange), a consumer organization based at the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

The **Protection and Advocacy for Mentally Ill Individuals (PAIMI)** Act (P.L. 99-319) is passed, setting up protection and advocacy agencies for people who are in-patients or residents of mental health facilities.

The NIMH Community Support Program CSP makes funds available for National Consumer Run Technical Assistance Centers (**TACs**). The first two to receive funding were the National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse (**NMHCSHC**) and the National Empowerment Center (**NEC**). Later, the Consumer Organization and Networking Technical Assistance Center (**CONTAC**) was named the third National Consumer Run TAC.

The first group of psychiatric survivor/consumers trained to work for the mental health system as professionals were trained in Denver, Colorado as Consumer Case Manager Aides (**CCMA's**).

Dendron newsletter was published by the Clearinghouse on Human Rights and Psychiatry.

1987-

The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual has grown to 253 mental disorders in the **DSM-III-R** from the 112 mental disorders in its initial, 1952 edition. The Anti-psychiatry movement continues to object.

1988-

The Mental Health Empowerment Project (MHEP), Albany, NY, was founded by Dr. Ed Knight under the name, Mental Health Recipient's Empowerment Project. The mission of the not-for-profit was to develop and strengthen self-help and mutual support activities for recipients of mental health services. MHEP has been involved in the establishment of self-help groups throughout New York State, and in developing workshops to educate individuals on empowerment toward more independence, with increased quality of life. MHEP also serves to improve understanding and sensitivity among mental health providers, mental health planners, and families and friends of mental health consumer/survivors (MHEP, n.d.).

Hands Across Long Island (HALI), Central Islip, NY, is a grassroots mental health empowerment organization started in 1988 by and for recipients, ex-patients and survivors of the mental health service system. Beginning with 13 self-help groups, HALI quickly grew to 37 self-help groups and 16 double trouble groups, as well as a Resource Center for survivors and other special interest areas for recipients (Penney, 2004).

Access Agreement between Hutchings Psychiatric Center and the Alliance for the Liberation of Mental Patients in Syracuse, NY. This was the first time a NYS psychiatric center and a peer advocacy organization had reached such an agreement.

1989-

Resident patients in state and county hospitals in the U.S. drops below 100,000.

PEOPLE, Inc., Poughkeepsie, NY had its beginnings in two peer support groups founded separately in different locations in the state. Members of the two groups knew each other and came together to create a more formal organization which was incorporated in 1989 as PEOPLE, Inc. (Projects to Empower and Organize the Psychiatrically Labeled), which received funding from the State Office of Mental Health to provide advocacy and peer support. By 2004, PEOPLE, Inc employed 30 peers and served people with psychiatric labels in Ulster, Dutchess and Orange Counties in New York State (Penney, 2004). **The organization changed its name to People-USA.**

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) formally endorses consumer contributions to mental health systems.

1990-

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is signed by President **George Bush**. It protects the civil rights of people with disabilities and gives some protections to people with mental health conditions stating, "services and supports must be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the individual," thus advocating for community placement for people not needing a level of care required by institutionalized settings.

The inclusion of people with psychiatric disabilities in the ADA is largely due to the advocacy of Rae Unzicker.

Housing Options Made Easy, Inc. (HOME), Gowanda, NY, was formed as a not-for-profit agency that was developed and operated by individuals diagnosed with mental health conditions. The agency provides rental assistance and community support services including individual and systems advocacy, education and training, self-help and peer support in Erie, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and Allegany Counties, in New York State. The organization was founded by past and present recipients of mental health services in Gowanda, NY, in order to advocate for better housing for people being discharged from psychiatric hospitals. The philosophy of Housing Options is based on recipient empowerment and participation in all aspects of the services and supports provided through the agency (Penney, 2004). The organization changed its name to **Recovery Options Made Easy (ROME)**.

Support Coalition International (SCI) founded at the APA protest in May. The Coalition eventually becomes MindFreedom International.

Bastille Day is held on March 14 in Philadelphia and attracts 500 participants. The 10 annual Bastille Day Demonstration is held in upstate NY.

Altered States of the Arts is started at Alternatives 1990 in Pittsburgh. Co-founders are **Gayle Bluebird, Howie the Harp, Dianne Cote** and **Sally Clay**.

Bill Anthony, Director of the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation at Boston University declares the 1990's, "**The Decade of Recovery**," in an attempt to get "mainstream" programs, services, and staff to embrace the concept of recovery as the organizing principle of the public mental health system.

Darby Penney is appointed as the New York State OMH Director of the Office of Consumer Affairs.

1991-

"**Alternatives '91**" conference in Berkeley draws over 2,000 participants for the largest consumer/survivor conference ever. **Howie the Harp** calls this the largest voluntary gathering of mental patients in the known galaxy.

1992-

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (**SAMHSA**) was established by Congress under the ADAMHA (Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration) Reorganization Act on October 1, 1992. SAMHSA includes **CMHS** (Center for Mental Health Services).

1993-

Nation's First **Civil Service Peer Specialist title** is established in New York State. Darby Penney and Celia Brown are instrumental in creating the position. Celia is hired as the first Civil Service Peer Specialist in the U.S. (Penney, 2018).

National Assoc. of Consumer/Survivor Mental Health Administrators (**NAC/SMHA**) is established.

Governor Como signs the Reinvestment Act into law in New York State.

The Mental Health Coalition, Rochester, NY was a peer-directed project promoting empowerment through advocacy, education, training, and advancing the consumer voice in Rochester (Monroe and surrounding counties). The group formed a multi-stakeholder coalition and held a forum on consumers' issues and concerns, developed a mission statement, and published a newsletter (Penney, 2004).

1994-

The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual has grown to 374 mental disorders in the **DSM-IV** from the 112 mental disorders in its initial, 1952 edition. The influence of the pharmaceutical industry on the APA becomes increasingly apparent. As the pharmaceutical industry continues to benefit from the APA's increasing number of "diagnoses," Loren Mosher, Chief of NIMH's Center for the Studies of Schizophrenia resigns in disgust from the APA, saying he wanted no part of it, calling the APA the "American Pharmacological Association" because of its unethical ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

In April, the first class of the Consumer Service Provider Training graduates in Contra Costa County, California. This is the first training for Community Support Workers where the curriculum, class design and training were all implemented and taught by other consumer/survivors with a recovery orientation.

1995-

The Resource Center, Albany, NY was a state-wide peer-run organization in Albany, NY that provides technical assistance services and mentoring to peer-run organizations (Penney, 2004).

SAMHSA hires its first Consumer Affairs Specialist, Paolo del Vecchio, who goes on to hold positions as the Associate Director for Consumer Affairs and Director for the SAMHSA Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS).

The Howie the Harp Advocacy Center, New York, NY was founded in 1995 by the late Howie the Harp, a national leader in the consumer/survivor/ex-patient movement, the program's daily operations are run by mental health consumers. The Howie T. Harp Center offers a Peer Specialist Training Program, which prepares mental health

consumers for positions in human services agencies, as well as an Assisted Competitive Employment Program. The Center offers a year-long employment training program for mental health consumers who have been incarcerated in jails or prisons. Other services include workshops on such issues as parenting, financial planning, career advancement, time management and stress management. The Center also offers social and recreational activities, peer counseling, self-help, and advocacy services (Penney, 2004). As a semi-autonomous program of Community Access, the center does not meet the state qualification as a peer-run organization. However, it has provided high quality training for peers for over two decades.

1996-

The Mental Health **Parity Act** of 1996 passed, barring insurance companies and large self-insured employers from placing annual or lifetime dollar limits on mental health coverage.

1997-

The Peer Networking Group of Central New York, Syracuse, started in 1997 by a small group of people with psychiatric histories with the goal of helping their peers in a 20-county area of Central New York to gather and share information and knowledge. There was no model for them to follow, so they blazed their own trail. The group's goals were to network on a monthly basis; use their personal experiences to help their peers navigate mental health, social service systems, and alternatives; create an atmosphere that fosters self-determination and leadership development; provide mentoring ; and encourage diversity in all their activities. The PNG held monthly meetings for education, information exchange and networking. At these meetings, consumers/survivors/ex-patients, educators, and service providers can meet as equals to exchange ideas and information in a safe and comfortable setting. Attendees suggest topics and speakers for these meetings. Attendees from the 20-county area return to their communities to share information with other peers (Penney, 2004).

1998-

Intentional Peer Support (IPS) is a relational approach that was developed in the 1990's by Shery Mead and other activists who were working to shift the paradigm in mental health toward transformative relationships. "As peer support in mental health proliferates, we must be mindful of our intention: social change. It is not about developing more effective services, but rather about creating dialogues that have influence on all of our understandings, conversations, and relationships." – Shery Mead, Founder of IPS (Mead, n.d.).

Mental Health Peer Connection, Buffalo, NY is a peer-driven advocacy organization in Buffalo serving Erie County, NY. It is dedicated to facilitating self-directed growth, wellness, and choice, through genuine peer mentoring. Part of the Western New York Independent Living Project, which received funds from the New York State Office of Mental Health for an Individual Advocate, a Systems Advocate, and a Patient Advocate

at Buffalo Psychiatric Center. The next year, they received funding to assist people transitioning from acute care hospitals into the community. After that, WNY ILP developed so many recipient-run programs that, in 1998, it developed Mental Health Peer Connection as separate agency under WNY ILP (Penney, 2004).

Unique Perspectives (UP), Syracuse, NY was founded in 1998 as a peer-directed program operating a drop-in center under the auspices of Transitional Living Services of Onondaga County, Inc. The program, designed and developed by people who have been involved with the mental health system, offers peer support, opportunities for learning and sharing, as well as self-help opportunities. UP offers a comfortable, non-threatening atmosphere, and provides daily peer support groups, peer training, and social activities. The Center offers the services of two Peer Specialists who provide supportive, educational, and technical services to participants (Penney, 2004).

The Empowerment Center in Mount Vernon, NY had its beginnings in May 1993, when a group of ex-patients met in a church basement in White Plains to form a task force to investigate inpatient care in area hospitals. Simultaneously, at Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center, Pat Finneran, a patient, approached a staff member, John Rock, about her concerns regarding life on the ward, and they organized meetings with patients to review common problems on the wards and advocated for solutions. Upon discharge, Pat's tenacity led to Rockland Psychiatric Center's acceptance of a peer advocacy program funded through Westchester County. The Inpatient Task Force received county funding for a peer-operated clubhouse. Both programs, originally under the Westchester Independent Living Center, were merged as the Westchester Consumer Empowerment Center in 1994. In 1998, the organization was incorporated as an independent peer-run program known simply as The Empowerment Center (Penney, 2004).

The Peer Education Project, Albany, NY, was a project of the Resource Center, Inc., is a statewide project started in 1998 that employs part-time Peer Educators, who are current or former recipients of mental health services. Peer Educators provide impartial information on New York State's Prepaid Mental Health Plan (PMHP, a managed mental health care plan) to individuals receiving services at New York State Office of Mental Health outpatient clinics. Peer Educators provide recipients with information about the services available through the benefit package, and ensure that PMHP enrollees understand their rights and responsibilities. Through group informational and one-on-one sessions, enrollees learn skills to help them to participate fully in developing and implementing a personal service plan based on their own needs and desires. Peer Educators also provide workshops and self-help activities to assist recipients to develop additional skills to enhance their sense of empowerment and to promote their recovery. Some of the topics addressed are self-advocacy skills, using wellness self-management techniques, building a support system, and how to start and run a self-help group. During 2003, Peer Educators interacted with over 29,000 recipients of mental health services in group settings and one-on-one sessions (Penney, 2004).

The Center for Career Freedom is a non-profit corporation founded in White Plains in 1998 with a mission of rehabilitation and recovery of persons with chronic psychiatric

disabilities leading to competitive employment. Most of the 14 staff are survivors of mental illness and have extensive experience in business, counseling and teaching. The Center is a business school licensed by the NYS Department of Education, a Department of Social Services One-stop Workforce Training Provider, and a Microsoft Certified Office Specialist Training Center. The organization also offers career counseling, short-term cognitive behavioral therapy, and a drop-in center. In addition, the Center is a part of the Social Security Administration Ticket to Work Employment Network and a VESID Employment Network Provider. The Center also conducts and publishes research on the economics of recovery (Penney, 2004).

1999-

Supreme Court rules in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, 527 U.S. 581, that under the Americans with Disabilities Act (**ADA**), undue institutionalization qualifies as discrimination by reason of disability including people with a mental disability.

The **Oral History Project** began in 1999 in Albany to document the history of the mental health system in New York State from the perspective of consumers, survivors and ex-patients (c/s/x). Created by Darby Penney, then director of the Bureau of Recipient Affairs for the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH), the project was intended to help add some balance to the historical record on public mental health in the state by gathering oral histories of c/s/x to complement the more than 100,000 cubic feet of records from state psychiatric centers (Penney, 2004).

(See the end of this timeline for a link to the finished Oral History Project report.)

*The Historical Roots of the Peer Support Movement course ends here.
A separate course, The Goal is Recovery, picks up in 2000 and traces recovery supports and services, which created the growth of peer support as a paid service.
A few more events that lead into that timeframe and course follow.*

2000-

The National Council on Disability (**NCD**) publishes, "From Privileges to Rights: People Labeled with Psychiatric Disabilities Speak for Themselves." Several people in New York State testified and had their stories documented. Rae Unzicker, who advocated for people with psychiatric disabilities to be protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was a primary editor for this volume

SOCSI (Subcommittee on Consumer/Survivor Issues) is created as a federally supported body to advise the **CMHS** (Center for Mental Health Services) National Advisory Council on consumer/survivor perspectives and issues.

The Self-Help Source, Albany, NY, was a project of the Resource Center, Inc., that started in 2000 as a statewide toll-free call-in and online service designed to provide

broad access to free self-help information. Information on the availability of self-help groups is continually updated. Books and audiovisual materials are researched and reviewed. Materials on the development and facilitation of self-help groups are also available. The SHS webpage offers an announcement section that provides links to resources including: free articles and publications, free online classes, resources for free and/or inexpensive computer purchases, various archives of interviews and free programs, upcoming conferences, workshops, trainings, events given by recipient-run groups, and job opportunities in the recipient community. There is also a weekly online newsletter for people who subscribe through the website.

2001-

National Association for Rights Protection and Advocacy (NARPA) holds its 20th Annual Rights Conference in Niagara Falls. ([Mental Health Advocacy Then to Now](#) is a summary of the history of advocacy by Rae Unzicker.)

The **National People of Color Consumer/Survivors Network** is co-founded by Jacki McKinney and Celia Brown.

Community Consortium, Inc. was founded in Albany by leaders in the consumer/survivor/ex-patient leaders in New York State. Activities included the New York State Museum's exhibit, "Lost Cases, Recovered Lives: Suitcases from a State Hospital Attic," as well as public educational programming on mental health history from the patients' perspectives. The Community Consortium received a Documentary Heritage Grant from the New York State Archives to survey the holdings of peer groups in New York (Penney, 2004).

2002-

"...quality of life depends on a job, a decent place to live, and a date on Saturday night." A quote from **Charles G. Curie**, SAMHSA Administrator

Icarus Project is established in New York City.

Mary Ellen Copeland publishes the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)

2003 -

The President's New Freedom Commission vision statement: "We envision a future when everyone with a mental illness will recover, a future when mental illnesses can be prevented or cured, a future when mental illnesses are detected early, and a future when everyone with a mental illness at any stage of life has access to effective treatment and supports - essentials for living, working, learning, and participating fully in the community." The final report is an indictment of the fragmented mental health system and the need for recovery to the goal of mental health services.

Albany County Consumer Advocacy Board for Mental Health, Inc. (ACCAB) provided peer advocacy and peer support to Albany County residents with psychiatric disabilities. Its services included information and referral, individual and systems

advocacy, social and recreational opportunities, and self-help and peer support. The organization began in 1996 under the auspices of another peer-run agency, Community Living Associates Program, Inc. The program's funder, Albany County Department of Mental Health contracted with The Council of Community Services of NYS to assist ACCAB in becoming an independent, nonprofit organization, which was achieved in 2003 (Penney, 2004).

ADVOTEC was founded in 1999 in Middletown, New York to provide advanced training and technical assistance to peer-run advocacy groups, and to act as a central networking point to enhance communication and collaboration among peer advocacy groups on a statewide basis. Free training for peer advocacy groups teach practical applications of mental hygiene law and the use of advocacy strategies to assist people within the mental health system. The project received administrative support through the Resource Center, Inc., which also serves as fiscal agent. In 2003, ADVOTEC also began providing trainings on self-advocacy. These trainings provided peers with important tools to help them increase their advocacy efforts at the state and local levels, and to advocate on their own behalf with service providers (Penney, 2004).

2004 -

National Consensus Statement on Mental Health Recovery: "Mental health recovery is a journey of healing and transformation enabling a person with a mental health problem to live a meaningful life in a community of his or her choice while striving to achieve his or her full potential." The 2004 Consensus Statement included 10 fundamental components: Self-Direction, Individualized and Person-Centered, Empowerment, Holistic, Non-Linear, Strengths-Based, Peer Support, Respect, Responsibility and Hope.

Infusing Recovery into the Mental Health System is a white paper by the people who are New York State Consumers, Survivors and Ex-Patients. Approximately 12,000 people in New York State participated in the preparation, refinement, and review of this document.

The National Association of Peer Specialists (NAPS) is founded in Michigan.

2005 --

MindFreedom International - the project began as a newsletter called *Dendron* published by Clearinghouse on Human Rights and Psychiatry and funded with a start-up grant from the Levinson Foundation. In May 1990, a coalition formed during a counter-conference and peaceful protest to the Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in New York City. Originally called Support Coalition International (CSI), in August of 2005 it changed its name to **MindFreedom International**.

2006 -

Mental health consumer/survivors form the **National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery (NCMHR)** to ensure that they play a major role in the development and

implementation of health and mental health care and social policies at the state and national level.

The National Association of Peer Specialists (NAPS) holds its first national conference in Denver, Colorado.

2007 –

Letter to the State Medicaid Directors by CMS Director Dennis Smith names peer support an evidence-based practice and provides guidance to the states on what is required to receive funding for mental health peer support services under Medicaid.

For Further Study

For more New York State history, contributed by members of the c/s/x movement, visit Our “[Story of Commitment](#)” – an online history site coordinated by Lauren Tenney.

For a recent (2020) graphical timeline, visit the [Mental Health Peer Support Workforce Designline](#) compiled by Jessica Wolf of Decision Solutions for SAMHSA-Funded Central East Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)

For more on the development of peer-run organizations in New York State and related history, visit: [Documenting the History of Marginalized Groups](#): Organizations of People with Psychiatric Histories A Preliminary Guide to the Historical Records of Mental Health Consumer/Survivor/Ex-patient Organizations in New York State by Darby Penney and the Community Consortium, Inc. Albany, New York.
