

The logo for the MI PEERS CONFERENCE 2025. It features the text "MI PEERS" in a large, dark blue, sans-serif font. A light blue silhouette of the state of Michigan is positioned between the "MI" and "PEERS". Below "MI PEERS" is the word "CONFERENCE" in a smaller, light blue, sans-serif font. At the bottom is the year "2025" in a dark blue, sans-serif font, flanked by two horizontal lines: a green line on the left and a blue line on the right.

MI PEERS CONFERENCE —2025—

CONFERENCE INFORMATION AND AGENDA

August 7 & 8, 2025

Suburban Collection Showplace Novi, Michigan

Conference Overview Agenda

Early Registration Wednesday August 6, 2025	Day 1 Thursday August 7, 2025	Day 2 Friday August 8, 2025
Registration opens: 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Registration opens: 7:30 a.m.	Registration opens: 7:30 a.m.
Karaoke: 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Breakfast and networking: 7:30 a.m. — 8:45 a.m.	Breakfast and networking: 7:30 a.m. — 8:45 a.m.
	Welcome, opening, and keynote: 9:00 a.m. — 10:15 a.m.	Welcome, opening, and keynote: 9:00 a.m. — 10:15 a.m.
	Break: 10:15 a.m. — 10:30 a.m.	Break: 10:15 a.m. — 10:30 a.m.
	Workshop-Session 1: 10:30 a.m. — Noon	Workshop-Session 4: 10:30 a.m. — Noon
	Lunch and awards: 12:15 p.m.— 1:15 p.m.	Lunch 12:15 p.m.— 1:15 p.m.
	Workshop-Session 2: 1:15 p.m. — 2:45 p.m.	Workshop-Session 5: 1:15 p.m. — 2:45 p.m.
	Break: 2:45 p.m. — 3:00 p.m.	Break: 2:45 p.m. — 3:00 p.m.
	Workshop-Session 3: 3:00 p.m. — 4:30 p.m.	Workshop-Session 6: 3:00 p.m. — 4:30 p.m.

Continuing Education:

All the sessions offered this year qualify for Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Continuing Education (CE) credits.

For each session offering CEs, conference staff will be in the classroom and will scan the barcode on the back of your name badge to check you in for the session. Once the session is over, you will be required to sign out on a paper attendance sheet. When signing out, please make sure your name and email on the sign-out sheet is correct.

You ***will not receive credit*** if your barcode was not scanned at the beginning of the session, you did not sign out of the session, or if you miss more than ten minutes of the session. No exceptions will be made.

A separate certificate for each session you attend will be emailed to the address included on the sign-out sheet. Please save these certificates in a secure location.

Dress and Attire:

The conference is casual attire. Comfortable shoes are strongly encouraged as the Suburban Collection Showplace is quite large. We suggest carrying a sweater throughout the day as some of the conference room temperatures may fluctuate.

Fragrance Free Event - For the safety and comfort of those with chemical and environmental sensitivities, please refrain from wearing perfumes, colognes, or using scented products. Thank you!

Parking:

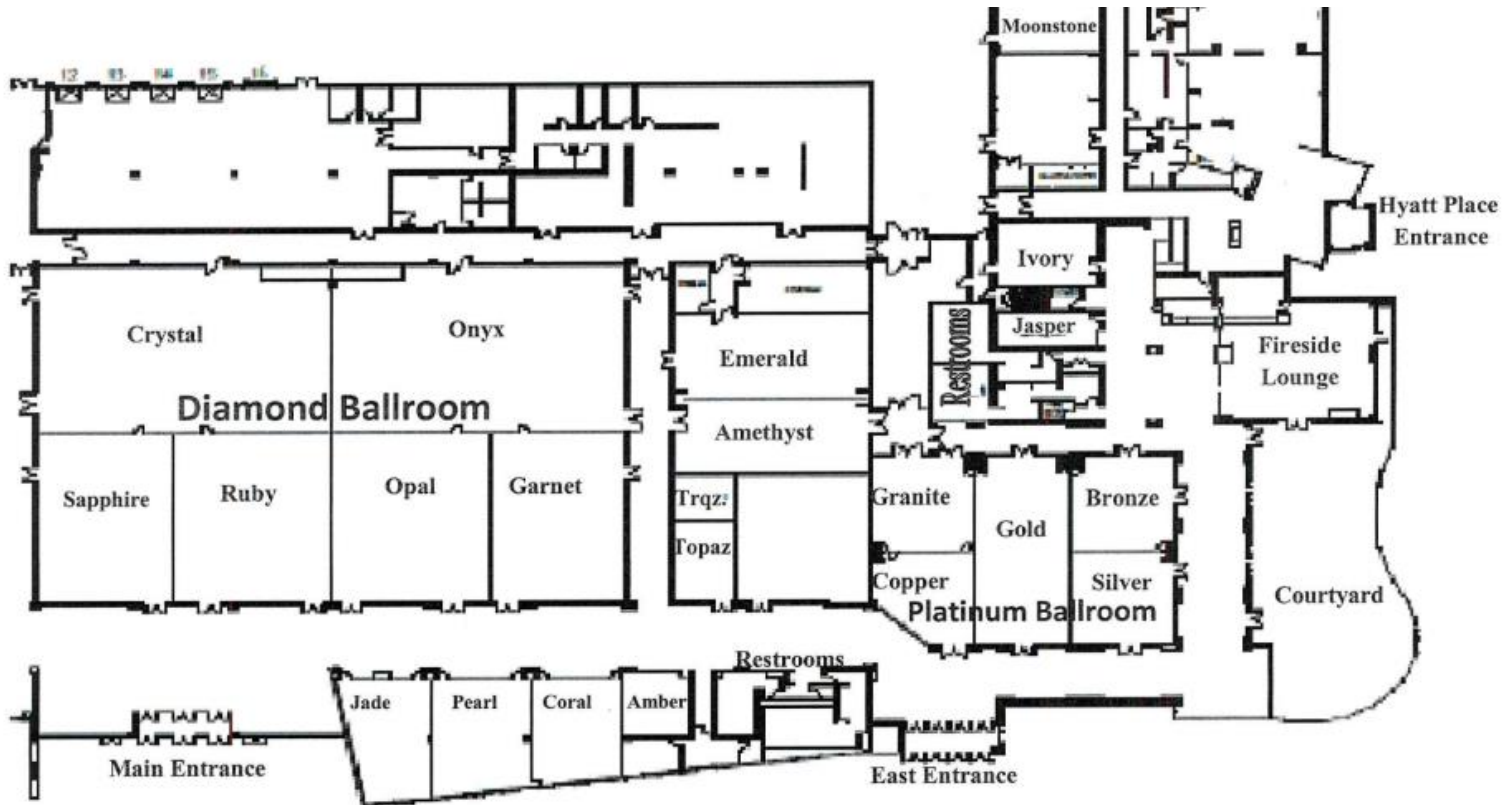
Parking at the Suburban Collection Showplace is free of charge. Areas around the conference center generally have ample and free parking.

Evaluation:

Your feedback helps make the conference better! Every year, our planning team reviews the feedback we get from our past conference evaluations. After the conference, keep an eye on your email for an invitation to take the post-conference evaluation survey.

Take this year's survey and you will receive a coupon code for a discounted ticket for the 2026 MiPeers Conference!

Suburban Collection Showplace Map



Day 1| Thursday, August 7

7:30 a.m. | Breakfast and Networking

Lobby

9:00 a.m. | Welcome and Keynote

General Session Room

Keynote: Building Power and Leadership Through Disability Justice

Dom Kelly



Dom Kelly is the Co-Founder, President & CEO of New Disabled South, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and New Disabled South Rising, its 501(c)(4) arm. Dom is one of a set of triplets with cerebral palsy and a lifelong disability advocate. He received a Master of Science in Nonprofit Leadership degree from the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice. Dom is a part of the 2025 global cohort of Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity, was chosen as a 2024 Rockwood National Leading 'From the Inside Out' Yearlong Fellow, and was one of ten winners of the J.M. Kaplan Fund's 2023 Innovation Prize. He currently lives in Atlanta, Georgia with his wife Catie, their daughter Mahalia, and their dog Vivi.

Dom has been organizing in the New Disabled South since 2009, committed to building a progressive future for disabled people in his region. His previous roles as a senior advisor and founding member of Stacey Abrams' gubernatorial campaign, and as a lead fundraiser and advisor on disability for her voting rights organization Fair Fight Action, both led him to make his vision for New Disabled South a reality.

10:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. | Workshop Session 1

Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits.

Connecting the Dots: The Link Between Substance Use Disorders (SUD) Recovery and Sex

Location TBD

Co-facilitated by individuals in long-term SUD recovery through Planned Parenthood of Michigan's Sexual Health Ambassadors (SHA) program; this training will help attendees understand the connection between recovery and sexual health.

Sexual behavior has long been stigmatized which can lead to intense feelings of shame, guilt, rapid declines in self-esteem, and unhealthy behaviors. Working to reduce the stigma of sex in early recovery helps to remove barriers and build the confidence necessary to set sexual and relationship boundaries.

We believe that focusing on a more inclusive approach to the messages about sex and relationships – an approach that includes opportunities to educate clients on abstinence as well as consent, supportive relationships, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), contraceptives, and barrier methods like condoms, can empower clients to make healthier decisions for themselves and support long-term recovery.

Presented by:

Carrie Ullery-Smith, CPRC – Planned Parenthood
Kim Johnson, CPRC – Planned Parenthood
Jeff Lange, CPRC – Planned Parenthood
Jennifer Stratton – Planned Parenthood
Marina Bigger, CPRC – Planned Parenthood

Peers Organizing for Advocacy

Location TBD

If you've ever wanted to advocate for positive mental health change from a peer perspective, this workshop is for you. If you've ever felt like there is too much to do and you're just one person, this workshop is for you. If you've ever felt like nothing ever changes, this workshop is for you.

Workshop presenters will discuss ways peers are already making big changes on a state and national level through collaborations like Michigan Peer Specialists

United, Michigan Peer Recovery Coalition, the National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery and more.

Presented by:

Braunwynn Franklin - CPSS
Ann E. Cole - CPSS

Johanna Nicolia - Adkins
Sean Harris - PhD

From Bitter to Better: Transforming Pain into Purpose

Location TBD

Pain and resentment can keep us stuck- but they can also fuel profound transformation. In this interactive workshop, the presenter will share their journey from bitterness to betterment, offering practical tools for turning personal struggles into strengths. Participants will explore ethical self-disclosure, trauma-informed support, and resilience-building strategies to enhance their effectiveness as peer supporters. Through engaging discussions, real-world scenarios, and hands-on exercises, attendees will develop emotional wellness tools, set healthy boundaries, and create a personal transformation roadmap. Whether navigating your own recovery or guiding others, these sessions will empower you to shift from bitterness to betterment-one step at a time.

Presented by:

Tobias Neal - Mcomm, ThM, CPRC

**Implementing Multiple Pathways and
Enhancing Recovery Capital**

Location TBD

The session will cover recovery coaches' critical role in fostering community connections. The presenter will explain how introducing participants to community resources and providing warm hand-offs can lead to improved outcomes, not just during the service but also as participants transition into their futures and potentially pursue careers in the recovery field. Attendees will learn practical strategies for implementing and incentivizing multiple recovery pathways. Increasing recovery capital, and offering complimentary services. Amy will demonstrate how leveraging the lived experiences of recovery professionals can inspire participants and reinforce the message that their voices and choices are valuable.

Presented by:

Amy Brune - CPRC

Mind and Body Flexibility

Location TBD

Come learn the value of flexibility in your life's challenges and successes. We identify ways of how your mind and body really do work to respond between being flexible and being not flexible. We will become aware of how we can create flexibility within our day-to-day happenings. This workshop will help you develop some positive opportunities to be flexible and celebrate success.

Presented by:

Linda Rama - CPSS

Human Trafficking and the Effectiveness of Peer Support

Location TBD

Introduction to Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery is designed to provide peer support specialists and recovery coaches with functional and practical tools, enabling them to learn and better understand the crime of human trafficking, the different types of human trafficking that exist, and an understanding of the scope of the problem. This course will support peers in the field to better identify human trafficking and provide greater assistance.

Presented by:

Deborah Monroe - CPRC, CPSS

Moral Injury

Location TBD

Moral injury refers to the deep psychological, emotional, and spiritual wounds that occur when individuals engage in, witness, or fail to prevent actions that violate their moral or ethical beliefs. Unlike PTSD, which is a fear-based trauma response, moral injury is predicted on a guilt/shame based internal wound stemming from acts of commission and/or omission. Moral injury is most pervasive in high-stakes professions such as military service, healthcare, law enforcement/first responders, and justice-involved individuals.

Presented by:

Kevin Scott Sr. - PhD, CPRC, CPSS

1:15 p.m. -2:45 p.m. | Workshop Session 2

Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits.

Employing People with Substance Use: Lived/Living Experience (PSULE)

Location TBD

A Michigan harm reduction program terminated a peer staff member after they self-reported a return to substance use and sought help, highlighting issues in internal policies, procedures, and stigma. In response, the Harm Reduction Unit at MDHHS, supported by Vital Strategies, created a peer-led training program. This program aims to guide employers on how to hire, manage, and support PSULE in a fair and consistent manner. A diverse, inclusive workgroup — including professionals and individuals with PSULE — developed the training through monthly meetings, with members compensated for their contributions.

Presented by:

Laura Hodson - Harm Reduction Analyst

Larry West - CPRC, Peer Coordinator Crisis Response Initiative

Hannah Meissner - CPRC, Youth Services Program Coordinator

Helping People Embrace Changing Trends in Decision-Making

Location TBD

The trend in decision-making is to help people get the support they need to make decisions without removing their rights with guardianship. This presentation will talk about ways to help people understand decision-making. People attending will learn about tools they can use to decide where they need decision-making support and how to get support in the least restrictive ways. Special focus will be given to how peer mentors can use these tools to support others through the decision-making process.

Presented by:

Mary Shehan - Community Inclusion Coordinator

Tonnio Graves - Certified Peer Mentor

Building Resilient Communities: A Recovery-Based Training in Sustaining Long-Term Wellness

Location TBD

The goal of this training is to equip individuals and organizations with the tools, skills, and knowledge necessary to build and sustain a supportive recovery community. This program focuses on the importance of social support, peer-led initiatives, shared experiences, and long-term well-being, with an emphasis on recovery from addiction, mental health challenges, and other life-altering situations.

Presented by:

Nate Parish - CPRC Ingham County Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC)
Nelson Serrano - CPRC Muskegon County MDOC
Fred Fredrickson - CPRC Ingham County MDOC
Jennifer Oklad McFarland - CPRC Muskegon County MDOC

Recovery Coaching the Justice Impacted Population

Location TBD

This session will focus on the essential function of recovery, coaches and aiding individuals grappling with SUD and mental health challenges who find themselves in or at risk of entering the criminal justice system. It seeks to eliminate the ways in which recovery coaches can help clients overcome barriers, acts of crucial resources, and ultimately achieve lasting recovery. By addressing the needs of this population, recovery coaches can contribute to reducing recidivism and fostering healthier communities.

Presented by:

Amy Kern - CPRC
Caitlin Griswold - CPRC
Mike Wenzel - CPRC
Amy DiCicco - CPRC

Welcome to Recovery Coaching in the Emergency Department/Hospital Setting

Location TBD

Welcome to Recovery Coaching in the Emergency Department/Hospital Setting. Besides giving a general overview of what the position looks like, the training focuses on the unique qualities of the position, how to deliver a trauma-informed and person-centered approach and what skills a CPRC can build to effectively serve an individual in the medical environment.

Presented by:

Kara Trainor - CPRC, CPSS
Elaine Dimock

Bridging Benefits and Work for Peer Workers

Location TBD

Social Security work incentives make it impossible to work, make more money, keep health insurance and either keep the Social Security disability cash benefit or stay connected to this benefit to easily restart it. This workshop will debunk the fears of working while receiving benefits.

Presented by:

Tracy Howard - BSW, CPWIC, WIPC-C
Ardith Brown - BSW, WIPC-C

Introduction to Wellness Recovery Action Planning

Location TBD

Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) is a self-directed wellness and recovery process designed to help individuals take control of their health and well-being. WRAP helps individuals create personalized plans to maintain wellness, and effectively manage crises related to mental health and addiction. This workshop provides an overview of WRAP, explores various ways it can be implemented, and outlines the requirements to become certified WRAP facilitator.

Presented by:

Deborah Monroe - CPRC, CPSS

3:00 p.m. -4:30 p.m. | Workshop Session 3

Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits.

Game Over Recovery On: Peer Coaching for Gaming/Gambling Disorders

Location TBD

This session educates participants on gaming and gambling disorders, emphasizing peer coaching's vital role in recovery. This course covers diagnostic criteria, impact, and treatment options, distinguishing between professional and peer-led support. Participants learn about practical wellness tools and strategies, including mindfulness and community building, to aid recovery. The presentation aims to reduce stigma, highlight the importance of shared experiences, and empower individuals with knowledge and resources. Through interactive elements and real-world examples, it promotes hope and encourages help-seeking, while providing access to community support and prevention strategies.

Presented by:

Sarah Matthews - CPRC
Christopher Keils - CPRC

Rooted in Culture, Rising in Recovery

Location TBD

For Indigenous people, healing is not just personal, it's deeply cultural, historical, and communal. This panel brings together Indigenous voices to explore how reconnecting with culture, ceremony, land, language, and community serves as a powerful foundation for sustaining recovery. Panelists will share personal stories, discuss cultural connections and can answer questions that highlight the strength they have found while "Walking the Red Road." Acknowledging and supporting the importance of cultural reclamation as a pathway to recovery can be helpful when supporting folks from tribal communities.

Presented by:

Anna Winters - CPRC, RCPF
Eric Sowmick - Skaabewis "Helper"
Sarah Deaton - MA, LLPC, NCC, CPRC

Lacey Mandoka - CCAR-RC
Bob Storrer- CADC, CCAR-RC
Eli Bennet - SCIT Member

Mindfulness 101: Essential Skills for Peers and Individuals Served

Location TBD

Mindfulness is the practice of grounding yourself in the present moment with acceptance and non-judgement. There are many ways to practice mindfulness, and this presentation aims to teach key concepts and exercises that can be integrated into daily life. Attendees will have the opportunity to practice mindfulness skills as a group through breathwork, meditation, and journaling workshops. These skills can be used for peers in crisis setting, everyday activities, and with individuals served. Additionally, peers will be given tips to teach each of these learned skills to their consumers and continue the mission of creating a more conscious and fulfilling life.

Presented by:

Amaya Guthrie - CPSS

Community Starts Here!

Location TBD

A hands-on, welcoming workshop for peer mentors, advocates, and everyday leaders who believe real change begins with connection. Together, we will use plain language, real life examples, and simple activities to explore how small actions- like offering support, listening with care, and sharing our lived experiences- can spark stronger, more inclusive communities. We will also talk about creating informal support circles around shared experiences, like dating as a woman with a disability, the pressure of being a service provider with lived experience, and the very risk of burnout. Along the way, we will look at trauma-informed ways to care for ourselves and others. Everyone will leave with practical tools, renewed confidence, and a clear first step to grow connection and community wherever we go.

Presented by:

Jamie Junior - BA, CCHW, RSST
Kenya R. Harper

Recovery and Employment: Creating Inclusive Workplaces for Jobseekers in Recovery

Location TBD

Join us as we explore how recovery-focused employment support and workplace culture reform come together to create real opportunities for individuals in recovery. We will dive into practical, person-centered strategies that help job seekers succeed - from pre-employment, preparation to job placement, smooth transitions, and long-term retention. You will also learn how the Recovery-Friendly Workplace initiative is transforming company cultures and strengthening communities across Michigan so that job seekers and individuals in recovery can continue employment in a supportive environment. This session will demonstrate how partnerships with Recovery Community Organizations are bridging the gap by providing community-led education through lived experience and resources. Together, we will break down barriers, open doors to meaningful employment, and build workplaces where everyone has the chance to thrive.

Presented by:

Amy Miller
Nicki Gabel

Powerful Communication Patterns

Location TBD

Imagine what it would be like to get your point across with more clarity. What would it be like if you could structure your language into patterns that would help you get the results you want? The presenter will share 20 years of Powerful Communication Patterns so you can “plug and play” the words you need to shift people’s thinking and behavior to move further into recovery. For example- when you want to encourage someone and motivate them to change something in the future. Let’s have fun hearing ways to communicate with the unconscious mind too. Come and learn all these powerful communication patterns.

Presented by:

Chuck Hendrix - CPSS

Bridging the Gap: Integrated Care for SUD in Hospital Settings

Location TBD

This interactive training equips Michigan's peer workforce with practical tools and collaborative strategies to effectively assess, engage, and support patients with SUD. Participants will explore evidence-based approaches to treatment, principles of trauma-informed care, and models for coordination between medical, behavioral health, and social service providers. Designed to break down silos and foster a unified approach to care, this training emphasizes communication, cultural humility, and recovery-oriented systems of support within acute care environments.

Presented by:

Darin Szczotka - LMSW, CPRC

James Decker - CPRC

Yolanda Preston - BSN, RN, CARN, CCM

Day 2 | Friday, August 8

7:30 a.m. | Breakfast and Networking

Lobby

9:00 a.m. | Welcome and Keynote

General Session Room

Keynote: A Peers Path to Purpose

Adam Grant



Adam Grant is the Executive Director of a Brighter Way, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving formerly incarcerated individuals in Washtenaw County, Michigan. Adam is a Certified Peer Recovery Coach (CPRC), Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS), and community health worker who brings over 30 years of lived experience with incarceration and reentry to his leadership role. Under his direction for the past three and a half years, A Brighter Way has achieved a remarkable 97% navigation success rate through their "Reentry Through Relationship" approach. He is a graduate of Just Leadership USA's 2022 Leading with Conviction cohort and previously served as Jackson Area Recovery Community coordinator for Home of New Vision.

His work focuses on peer-led navigation, wrap-around services, and community support centered on "people, healing, and quality of life." Through his leadership, A Brighter Way has expanded its impact through innovative programs including the 21st Century Elder Program, direct housing initiatives, and workforce development partnerships. His commitment to transforming lives extends beyond his professional work — he believes deeply in person-centered care and empowering individuals through relationship-based support. He is happily married to his person and is living his best life while dedicating himself to creating brighter futures for others, navigating reentry and building stable, successful lives in their communities.

10:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. | Workshop Session 4

Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits.

The Art of Effective Communication: Strategies for Clarity, Confidence, and Connection

Location TBD

This interactive workshop will explore the many ways we communicate — both verbally and non-verbally — every day. Participants will examine the five styles of effective communication and their impact on relationships. The session will cover techniques for active listening, examples of effective dialogue, and how these tools can lead to successful interactions. Emphasis will also be placed on understanding body language — such as eye contact and posture — and its role in productive communication. The workshop will conclude with strategies for engaging in meaningful discussions and negotiations that lead to mutually beneficial solutions.

Presented by:

Brian Wellwood - CPSS

Matthew Whipple - Associate Director- Project Doors

Michelle Olson - CPSS

Awareness as a Foundation for Recovery

Location TBD

In this workshop, you will be able to create your own network of like-minded people that want more awareness in the mental health system. We are one but, we are mighty and together we can do so much more. Learn about the Drop-in Centers all over the state of Michigan and the value they offer our communities and peers. In this workshop, you will learn how to advocate for more wellness in our own communities and gain support from other peers. I am a CPSS and the Drop-in Center saved my life in 2012. Explore ways that you can become more involved in your community from advisory boards, to facilitating a group, to being open to the opportunities in our backyards and spreading awareness about mental health wellness.

Presented by:

Michelle Riger-Spicer - CPSS

Michalean McGraw

Introduction to Harm Reduction

Location TBD

This presentation will discuss the philosophies behind substance use, harm reductions strategies, and the impact they have on individuals and communities. This interactive session addresses stigma, barriers, and successes to implementing harm reduction strategies with different communities and audiences. Audience members will be encouraged to ask questions and participate in this open dialogue.

Presented by:

Brooke Cross - CPRC, RCP-F

Branda Page - MS, BSN, RN, CAADC-DP, CPRC

From Challenge to Change: Embracing Gentle Teaching with Rex and Ray

Location TBD

Ray Schuhholz is a Community Living Services peer mentor, mental health advocate, public speaker, and sits on several local committees to advocate for underrepresented individuals. Rex Sharkey is a board-certified behavior analyst for Centria Autism and court appointed special advocate in the Wayne County Third Circuit District Court. Rex is a passionate advocate for individuals with all abilities. The presenters will share how they incorporate the principles of gentleness into their professional lives as advocates.

Gentle teaching is a person-centered approach in compassion, dignity and relationship building. This workshop will explore the core principles of gentle teaching and how it can be used to support individuals by creating an environment that fosters trust and belonging. Through interactive discussions and real-life examples, the presenters will identify ways to incorporate gentle teaching into everyday peer interactions.

Presented by:

Ray Schuhholz - CPM

Rex Sharkey - Board Certified Behavior Analyst

The Creative Exchange: A Framework for Meaning and Peace

Location TBD

The philosophy of Creativity and the Creative Exchange are a foundational creative principle and framework for improving our ability to seek meaning in our lives and to enjoy the peace that results. This foundational framework offers valuable principles for anyone seeking to develop meaning and peace in their lives, and can be used by peer support practitioners to offer the same benefit to the people they support. This presentation will cover a simple philosophical framework, relevant examples, and chances for discussion about practical application.

Presented by:

Ryan Christman - CPSS

Recovery Rainbow

Location TBD

Rainbow Recovery is an interactive and affirming workshop designed for peers who support LGBTQ+ adults in recovery. Using the colors of the rainbow as a thematic guide, this session explores the layered experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals navigating mental health healing. Through storytelling, group dialogue, and reflection, participants will examine how affirming identity, fostering inclusive spaces, and recognizing intersectionality can transform recovery outcomes. This workshop centers adult voices and offers practical strategies for creating safe, empowering environments within peer support and recovery programs.

Presented by:

Blake Harvey - CPSS

Veteran Reinforcement and Resources Information Session

Location TBD

This session will provide expert guidance to the complexities of the Veteran Administration (VA) system including health care support, benefit support, and understanding of burial support. Community partner connections to link veterans and support staff with local, state and national organizations. This presentation will assist veterans that are undeserved, unserved and transitioning out of the military. We will break down complex processes into simple actionable steps. Information will be provided on overcoming barriers that prevent services.

Presented by:

Dwayne Kelly - CPSS

Reginald Howard - CPSS

Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE)

Location TBD

HOPE is a new way of seeing and talking about experiences that support children's growth and development into healthy, resilient adults. Research has led us to create a new paradigm based on an understanding of how Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) drive healthy development and can mitigate the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Through positive experiences children can form strong relationships and meaningful connections, cultivate a positive self-image and self-worth, experience a sense of belonging and build skills to cope with stress in healthy ways. HOPE will help shift our focus from a deficits-based approach to one that identifies, celebrates, and promotes access to PCE. This workshop will discuss how we can put HOPE into action.

Presented by:

Lisa Clavier- Founder and President, Kiersten's Ride, Certified Trainer

1:15 p.m. -2:45 p.m. | Workshop Session 5

Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits

Peer Mentoring Supporting Self-Determination

Location TBD

This workshop explores the power of peer mentoring and self-determination. Participants will learn how peer mentors with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) build supportive relationships, help others set and achieve goals, and advocate for themselves with confidence. We'll dive into effective mentoring practices and strategies that foster independence and inclusion. Participants will hear from peer mentors on how they support others to live a self-determined life.

Presented by:

Tracy Vincent
Jake Schaafsma- BA, CPM

Ray Schuhholz- CPM
Josh Ford- CPM

From Trauma to Triumph: Integrating Peripheral Nervous System Skills in Trauma Informed Care

Location TBD

This workshop provides an overview of trauma-informed care, focusing on a peer approach. Participants will learn about various trauma responses, the nervous system, and its impact on behavior and emotion control. Participants will be equipped with skills to support trauma survivors and foster resilience and healing.

Presented by:

Crystal Fitzgerald- CPSS
Tammy Bumstead- CPSS

Unlocking the Power of Peer Support

Location TBD

This session will expand the scope and utilization of peer support within programs and organizations involving increasing education and awareness about the unique value peer specialists bring through their lived experiences. At the Dayton VA Medical Center, education about peer support led to improved mental health outcomes- demonstrating how informed integration of peer support can significantly benefit patient care. Attendees are encouraged to think creatively about how to apply these concepts in their own settings—clearly communicating their values, scope, and offerings while fostering meaningful partnerships. Despite common challenges such as role misunderstanding, peer support professionals can overcome these barriers through persistent advocacy, relationship-building, and demonstrating their impact within the healthcare system.

Presented by:

Johnny Poynter- PSS

2025 Michigan Peer Specialist/Peer Recovery Coach Survey: Preliminary Findings

Location TBD

This presentation will review the design and preliminary analysis of the 2025 combined Peer Specialist/Peer Recovery Coach survey, including information on wages and workplace experience. The results of the survey can support advocacy to improve recruitment, retention, training, and workplace experience of CPSSs and CPRCs throughout the state.

Presented by:

Adrienne Lapidus- PhD
Delora Williams- CPSS
Kristen Abraham- PhD

Michigan's Crisis System

Location TBD

This presentation will provide attendees with an overview of Michigan's developing crisis system and how it aligns with SAMHSA's national model. Presenters will share a description and data on each of three primary system components: someone to contact, somewhere to go, and a safe place to be. The presentation will also highlight the role of peers throughout the system.

Presented by:

Krista Hausermann, LMSW, CAADC
Julia Hettich, MSW

Trauma Awareness: Creating a Kinder Community

Location TBD

Join us for an interactive event focused on understanding trauma. We'll explore what trauma is, how it affects individuals, how it influences our reactions to events and ways we can make a positive impact in our community. Come learn, share, and grow together as we deepen our understanding and work toward healing.

Presented by:

Carolyn Pifer- CPSS, CHW

3:00 p.m. -4:30 p.m. | Workshop Session 6

Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits.

Building Culture through Peer-Facilitated Groups

Location TBD

Peer-facilitated groups offer a safe, supportive environment for individuals as they focus upon recovery, offering choice in terms of their specific areas of interest and individual needs. Presenters will discuss the specific groups they facilitate, how they prepare and present group curriculum, ways they promote their groups to the people they serve, and success stories of individuals who benefited from peer-led groups. Peer-facilitated groups have the potential to revitalize peer teams and generate enthusiasm and participation, providing unique avenues where peer support can connect to the individuals we serve on another level. This presentation aims to offer takeaways that will assist peer providers in developing, launching, and successfully maintaining peer-led groups within their agencies.

Presented by:

Kelly Willis- CPSS
Shannon Hoolihan- CPSS

Krista Koppen- CPSS
Jeff Erno- CPSS

Peer Recovery Coaches: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Location TBD

The presentation will provide brief historical context for the peer field for the past 15 years. Presenters will provide first-hand experiences with individuals they provide services with staff, administration, and community. Discussing the good, the bad, and the ugly of dealing with success, failure, grief, burnout, and learning moments from ethical dilemmas faced with colleagues and staff.

Presented by:

Angela Fay- CPRC
Chris O'Droski- CPRC

Burnout- Are You Heading That Way?

Location TBD

In our role as peer support specialists and recovery coaches, we deal with many challenges helping others with their mental health and SUD, often forgetting to take care of ourselves. In this session we will discuss burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary trauma and the interconnectedness of them in the roles we play. We will look at the characteristics of each of them and talk about the various warning signs, symptoms, and impacts that each of these can cause in our jobs. We will discuss ways these can be prevented, both on an organizational and personal level. This session will look at how to build a burnout-resistant culture and focus on prioritizing self-care.

Presented by:

Angie Messinger- CPSS, CPRC: OnPoint Allegan
Nichole Aldrich- CPSS, CPRC: OnPoint Allegan

Introduction to Spirituality for Peers

Location TBD

The purpose of this program is to help you, as a peer, understand what spirituality is and how you would help someone discover it. Explore your own beliefs and values regarding spirituality. This training will provide you with the tools and resources needed as a peer so you can speak about spirituality in an educated, accepting way beyond any bias you may carry. Spirituality plays a large part in recovery and by completing this course, you will be able to help those you serve understand, accept, and embrace spirituality for themselves.

If you have any concerns that will be shared or practice here may conflict with your religious beliefs, please consider not attending this offering. Full participation is required for credit for this offering

Presented by:

Rodasi Campbell- CPRC, RCPF, ERYT

Getting to Know the People We Serve

Location TBD

This session is a reflective, skill-building workshop- it is designed to increase meaningful engagement with individuals experiencing addiction, mental health challenges, and crisis. Blending practical tools with compassionate insight, this session supports peer support specialists, peer recovery coaches, and others in recovery-oriented roles, overcomes internal barriers, and cultivates flexible, empathetic responses. Topics include: harm reduction, response flexibility, transformative listening, mindfulness, self-compassion, and honoring personal choice- all aimed at strengthening authentic, person-centered connections.

Presented by:

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