

The Transformation Center

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About Us:

The Transformation Center is a Massachusetts statewide peer-operated training, technical assistance, and peer support networking organization that seeks to effect transformed policy and practice in communities and systems by facilitating the growth, well-being and voice, in its full diversity, of people in all stages of recovering mental health wellness and freedom from addictions. People who experience mental health challenges and mental illnesses are of potent value in our communities, yet discrimination and misconceptions remain a current barrier. The Transformation Center was formed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on May 19, 2008 by September 2007 vote of the membership. Its current three core functions, described more fully below, are Peer Support, Training and Advocacy & Best Practices. We are non-profit, 501 (c)3 tax exempt organization.

Our logo – which depicts a flight of geese flying in formation - refers visually to the story “Lessons from the Geese” (of unknown origin) where the collaboration and shared leadership of geese in the wild are a model we aspire to in our work. Many of us also deeply connect with Mary Oliver’s poem “Wild Geese,” which was shared with us early on by an early “mental patients liberation” movement leader. Please read it below.

Vision:

We live in communities where people, individually and together, experience well-being, and help each other with mutual respect and compassion, to overcome the challenges in life.

Mission:

As peers in all stages of recovering our mental health wellness and freedom from addictions

~ We promote the growth and voices of people with lived experience, individually, in communities and in organizations.

~ We facilitate these diverse voices to impact and transform policy and practice.

Values:

Self-Determination: We support the right of every person to choose their own recovery path without force.

Being part of the solution: We encourage every person to effect change & growth, to educate & help both self and others.

Independence: We celebrate the process of growth to self-sufficiency & support the right of each person to strive for it.

Mutuality: We build connection, giving & receiving help with self-respect & shared responsibility.

Leadership:

Leadership consists of a community based Board of Directors who are people with lived experience of mental health, trauma, and/or addictions recovery. The Board listens to the grassroots, multicultural and cross-disability community, and helps project this voice into policy, practice, and recovery supports. The Peer Specialist Certification (CPS) Oversight Committee provides external review of the CPS training and testing content and processes, and develops policy including emerging continuing education guidelines.

The Transformation Center helped to found, and takes a leadership role in the Transformation Committee (Transcom) which functions as a subcommittee of the Massachusetts State Mental Health Planning Council. Transcom's membership includes state agencies, provider policy & professional organizations, peer-operated program leaders, Certified Peer Specialists, peer advocacy organization leaders, educators, evaluators and managed care leaders. Transcom established three priorities to support transforming mental health and substance use services toward consistently providing person-driven and recovery-oriented care. These 3 priorities are:

- Support, safeguard, and expand peer specialists, peer workers, and peer-run programs
- Provide information, education and training on innovative recovery practices (for providers, hospitals, peer communities, DMH, legislators, cultural / linguistic communities)
- Advocate for funding for peer workers and innovative recovery oriented services

Three Functions of The Transformation Center:

Peer Support

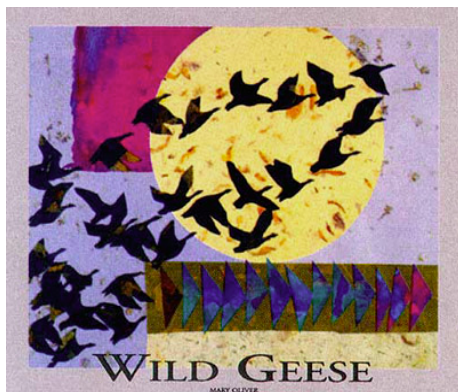
- Promote the growth, voices, well-being, and compassionate mutual support of people with lived experience, individually, in communities and in organizations by hosting individual and group peer support interactions, communications and events

Training

- Provide training for people with mental health and addictions recovery needs to promote their own growth and that of peers, and to engage as paid providers in the human services workforce
- Provide training for human service providers and policy makers to increase skills needed to promote mental health and addictions recovery, to support people in recovery as human service providers themselves and to carry out person-driven services
- Provide training for diverse community groups to learn about mental health wellness and recovery from addictions

Advocacy and Best Practices

- Identify best practices from evidence available in research, practice outcomes and lived experience
- Disseminate best practice information and resources to the community, providers and policy makers
- Facilitates the diverse voices of people in all stages of recovering their mental health wellness and freedom from addictions to impact and transform policy and practice at the individual, organizational and community levels



Wild Geese

You do not have to be good.

You do not have to walk on your knees for a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.

You only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves.

Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.

Meanwhile the world goes on.

Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain are moving across the landscapes, over the prairies and the deep trees, the mountains and the rivers.

Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air, are heading home again.

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely, the world offers itself to your imagination,

Calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting, over and over, announcing your place in the family of things.

By Mary Oliver ~ Artwork by Bonnie Acker