

# The Strength of Lived Experience:

*Incorporating Peers and Alumni into Court Services*

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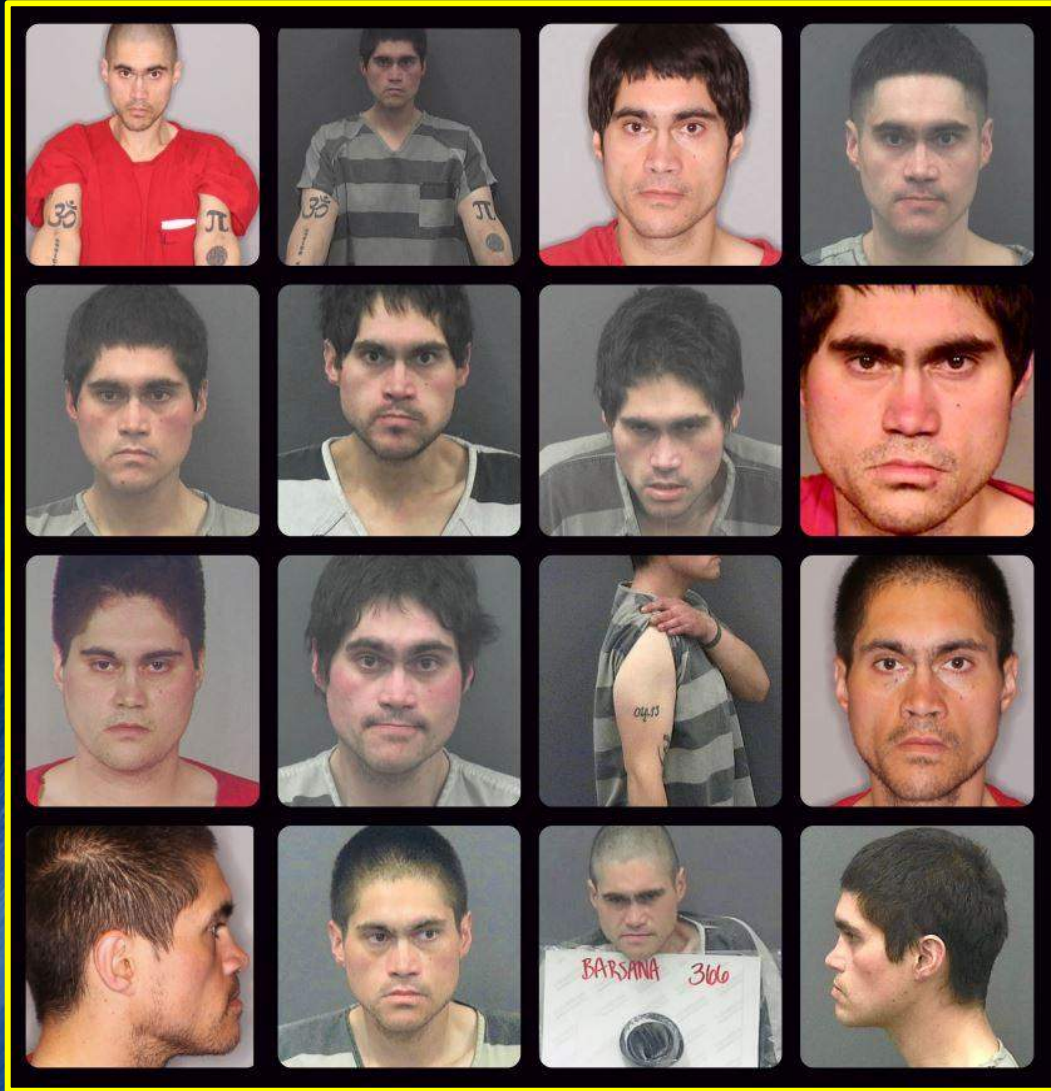
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# Agenda

- *The Strength Behind Lived Experience*
- *Peer Support Values and Competencies*
- *The Role of Peers*
- *Guidelines for Incorporating Peers into Courts*
- *Utilizing Alumni Support*

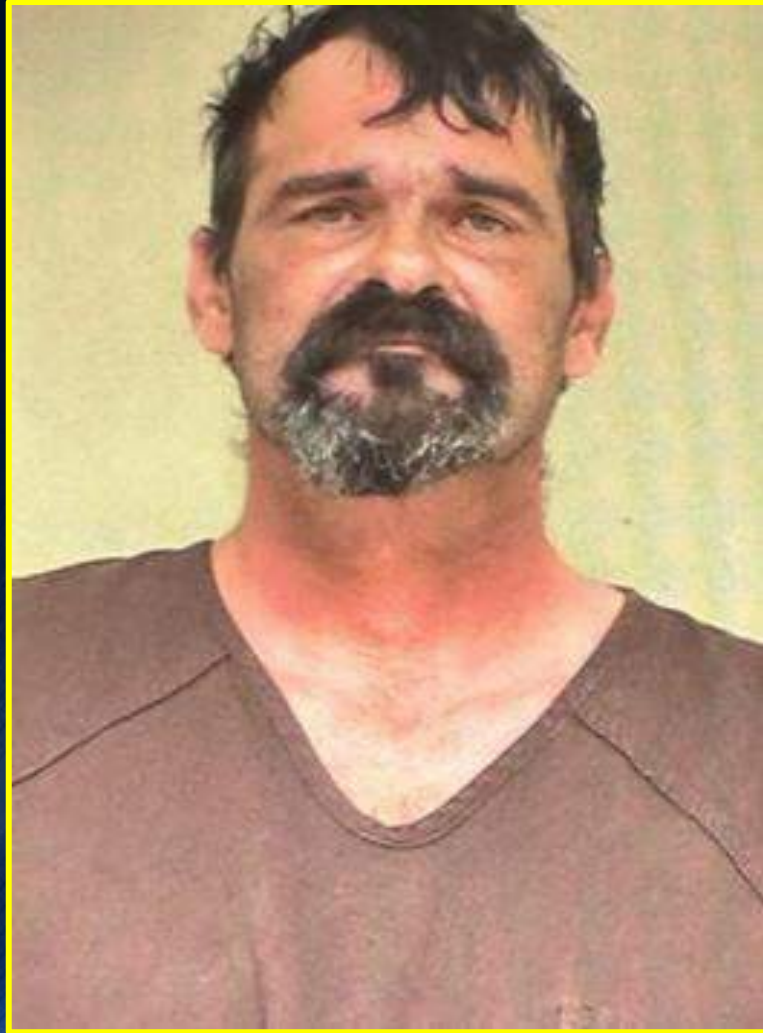


# *The Strength of Lived Experience*





# *The Strength of Lived Experience*



## *What is Peer Support?*

- **Peer support** is a system of giving and receiving help based on shared lived experience, empathy, and mutual respect.
- It involves individuals with personal experience of recovery, mental health challenges, substance use, problem gambling, sex work or incarceration offering guidance, support, and hope to others on similar paths.





# **Peer Core Values & Competencies**

**Core Value 1:** Peer Support is Voluntary

**Core Value 2:** Peer Supporters are Hopeful

**Core Value 3:** Peer Supporters are Open Minded

**Core Value 4:** Peer Supporters are Empathetic

**Core Value 5:** Peer Supporters are Respectful

**Core Value 6:** Peer Supporters Facilitate Change



# **Peer Core Values & Competences**

**Core Value 7:** Peer Supporters are Honest and Direct

**Core Value 8:** Peer Support is Mutual and Reciprocal

**Core Value 9:** Peer Support is Equally Shared Power

**Core Value 10:** Peer Support is Strength Focused

**Core Value 11:** Peer Support is Transparent

**Core Value 12:** Peer Support is Person Driven

## *Peers Practical Day to Day Duties*

- Attend court hearings and connect with participants
- Attend weekly orientation to meet new participants
- Visit with participants in-custody
  - Pick up participants from jail
  - Ride along with participants to inpatient treatment, housing intakes, medical appointments, etc.
    - Complete a recovery capital assessment with new participants
    - Offer emotional support to participants in crisis





# *The Role of a Peer*



## Peers DO'S

- Share personal recovery experiences to build authentic, mutually supportive peer-to-peer relationships.
- Assist participants in understanding court procedures, timelines, and expectations, providing guidance on complying with court orders and fulfilling requirements.
- Accompany participants, when requested, to facilitate access to and use of community resources.
- Collaborate with court staff to address and overcome any barriers that may prevent participants from achieving their goals.

## Peers DO'S

- Advocate for participants by helping them understand their rights and ensuring fair treatment within the court system, while also communicating their needs or challenges to the court.
- Work closely with participants to help them build social support networks and connect with appropriate recovery resources.
- Support participants in staying accountable to their court program by assisting with goal setting, tracking progress, and providing reminders for upcoming court dates or required actions (such as attending treatment or support groups).





## Peers DON'T'S

- Peers should not be used as substitutes for case managers
- Peers should not give recommendations on how to respond to court non-compliance
- Peers should not work as clinicians or give clinical advice
- Peers should not give legal advice
- Peers should not be used as 12-step sponsors



## Peers DON'T'S

- Peers should not be used as community supervision officers.
- Peers do not monitor court compliance or work directly for the court.
- Peers do not perform drug tests
- Peers should not be not monitoring housing compliance such as curfews
- Peers should not be conducting home checks or employment checks, or any other duty that verifies compliance with court requirements and reports back to the team.





## **GUIDELINES FOR INCORPORATING PEERS IN COURT SERVICES**

- 1. Court staff receive training on the core competencies of peer support.**
- 2. The court has written rules and responsibilities that align with Peer Support Services nationally recognized competencies and ethics.**
- 3. The court program has established processes for recruiting, hiring and orienting Peer Support Specialist to the court program.**
- 4. The court ensures that peer support specialist receive regular and ongoing external supervision from qualified staff.**
- 5. Peer Support Specialist receive annual ethics training, and policies are in place to address ethics issues.**



Add the  
Strength of  
Lived  
Experience with  
Program Alumni





## Program Alumni

*Do not require professional certification or state agency licensing.*

*Specific program graduate.*

*Relationships with participants can continue after program completion.*

*Are not paid, employed or supervised by the program's team or outside agency.*

*Follows group confidentiality and other ethical agreements developed by the alumni group.*

## Peer Support Specialist

*Requires professional certification through training and testing.*

*Are not required to be program specific graduates.*

*Relationships with participants are professional and are meant to be temporary.*

*Peers have direct supervision by their employer and are paid.*

*Follows employers' policy and procedures on confidentiality, mandatory reporting and ethics.*

## Role of Alumni

- Organize special activities and events such as holiday celebrations, softball games, outdoor activities, etc.
- Helping current participants develop healthy relationships outside of the program.
- Facilitate support groups.
- Offering direct mentorship that is not connected to program staff or peers.
- Sharing personal testimony in the community.





## Washington State Therapeutic Court Alumni Association

- Registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- Fostering and strengthening alumni and recovery communities across Washington State
- Delivering education on therapeutic courts, diversion programs, and alternatives to incarceration
- Facilitating monthly check-ins with alumni statewide to maintain connection and support
- Offering a robust online recovery support network
- Advocating through personal storytelling at events, in the media, and by providing speakers upon request



**WSTCAA**  
Washington State Therapeutic Courts  
Alumni Association

**RECOVERY STRONG**

"Rising above and growing together"

### OUR PURPOSE

To support alumni group development and sustainability to meet the needs for extended recovery support for all therapeutic court graduates throughout WA State.

### MISSION STATEMENT

To improve the connection between therapeutic court alumni throughout Washington State. To harness the collective power of WA State alumni to create, encourage, and empower alumni to establish additional alumni recovery groups and communities.

### WE ARE...

Alumni and supporters from across WA State that are vigilantly attempting to collaborate and connect through our shared purpose and compassion for those in therapeutic courts and recovery in general.

### YOU CAN...

Connect with us via Facebook or Squarespace in order to lend your hand to our events and collaborations. Join our team of therapeutic court alumni and become an agent of change! We want YOU with US!



# Thank You!

*Questions?*

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