

Staying Afloat in Troubled Waters

Support & Self-Care Measures for the
Peer Professional Workforce
Facing Grief: Suicide, Overdose & Covid-19

June 25, 2020

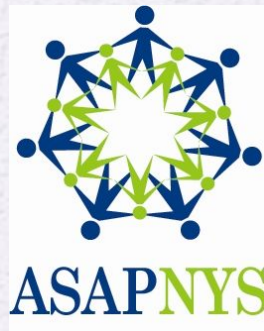
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Staying Afloat in Troubled Waters

Presented by the Alcoholism & Substance Abuse
Providers of NYS (ASAP)



Funding from the NYS Office of Addiction Services &
Supports (OASAS)



**Office of Addiction
Services and Supports**

Staying Afloat in Troubled Waters

welcome

John Coppola
Executive Director
ASAPNYS

We Are Glad You Are Here

A Moment of Silence

A Moment of Silence
For those lost to Overdose, Suicide, Illness and Violence

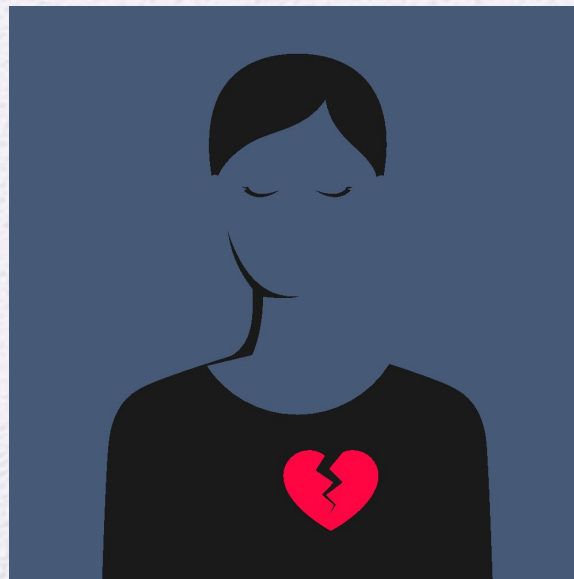


The Heart of the Matter

Part One

Navigating Grief: The Impact of Overdose & Suicide on Peer Professionals

OMH Emotional Support Helpline: 1-844-863-9314



The Heart of the Matter

A Landscape of Loss

The Changing Tides of Overdose and Suicide Loss During
The Covid-19 Pandemic

Experiences of Peer Professionals



The Heart of the Matter

Poll #1- Have you or your agency experienced an increase in overdose/suicide loss since the initiation of COVID-19/Quarantine?

The Heart of the Matter



“Grief is an inevitable experience within the work we do. The weight of its burden can harden the heart and exhaust our energy.”

-William White

The Heart of the Matter

The Weight of the Burden

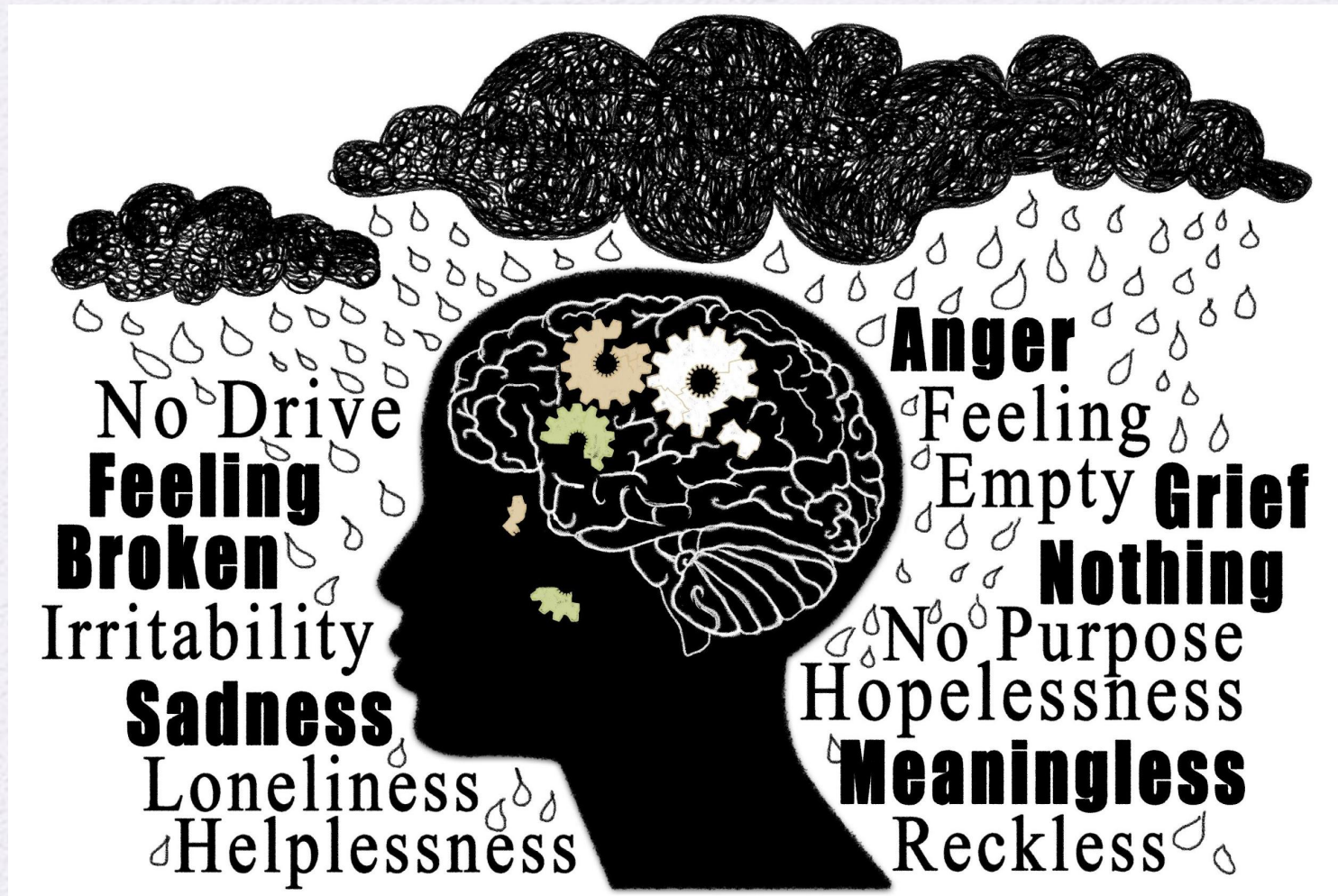
Coping
With
Trauma
Loss and
Grief

Compassion
Fatigue and
Vicarious
Trauma

Burnout



The Heart of the Matter



The Heart of the Matter

Grief and Loss Experiences Common to Overdose and Suicide

Disenfranchised Grief

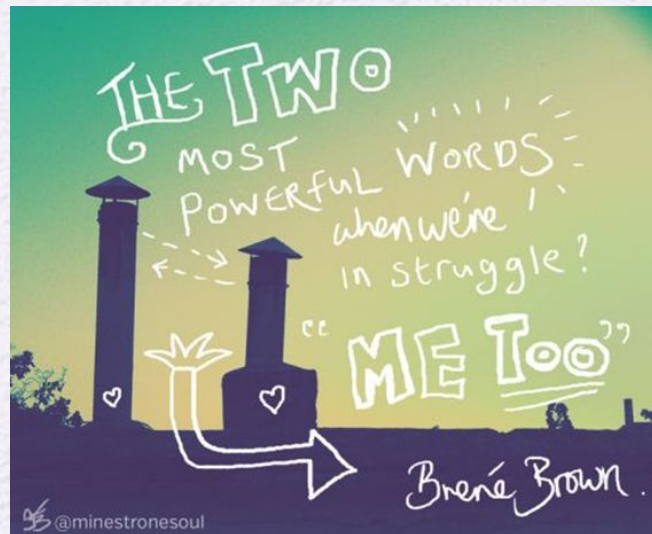
Ambiguous Loss (Death)



The Heart of the Matter

Empathy

Our empathy both allows us to relate (lived experiences) and creates a vulnerability to the traumatic experiences of others



The Heart of the Matter

We have not been directly exposed to the trauma scene, but we hear the story told with such intensity, or we hear similar stories so often, or we have the gift and curse of extreme empathy and we suffer. We feel the feelings of our clients. We experience their fears. We dream their dreams. Eventually, we lose a certain spark of optimism, humor and hope. We tire. We aren't sick, but we aren't ourselves."

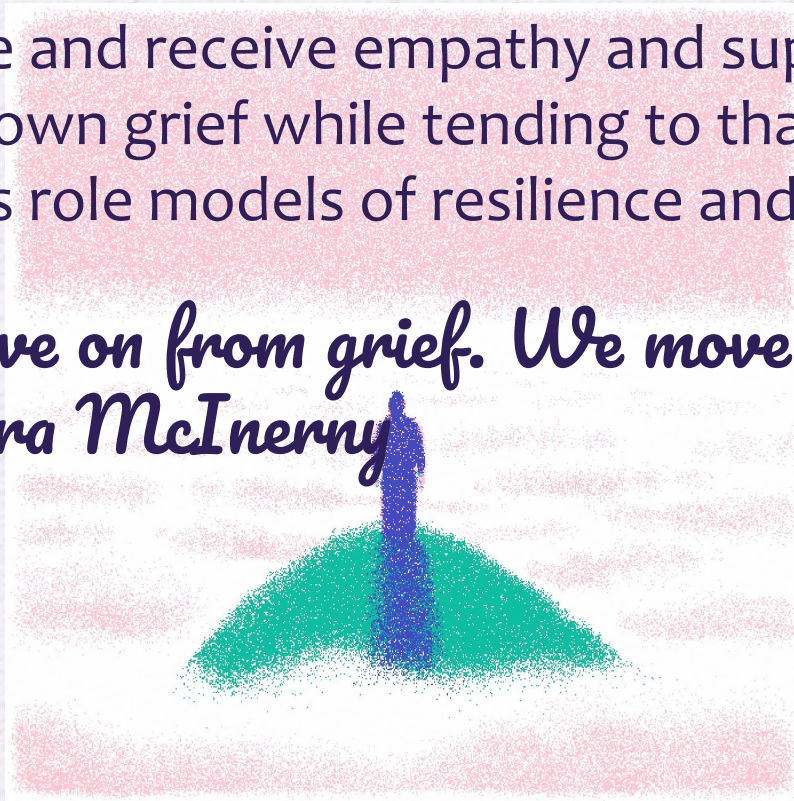
- C. Figley, 1995

The Heart of the Matter

How Can We?

- Give and receive empathy and support?
- Hold our own grief while tending to that of others?
- Serve as role models of resilience and self-care?

We don't move on from grief. We move forward with it. --Nora McInerney



The Heart of the Matter

Questions for Reflection

- It is ok for me to feel _____
- It is ok for me to need _____
- I need to trust in _____
- I am proud of myself for _____
- I give myself credit for _____

Troubled Waters

Part Two

Navigating Through The Challenges of Covid-19



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"Covid-19 on top of the continuing onslaught of opioid deaths has intensified these losses as we find ourselves in the midst of twin pandemics."

-William White

Troubled Waters

COVID-19 & Increased Rates of SUD, OD and Suicide

KEY DRIVERS OF CONCERN

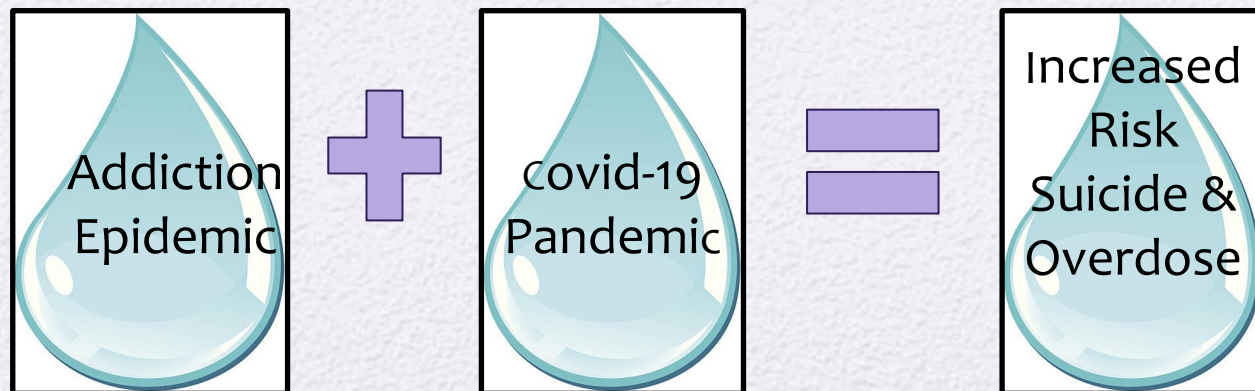
ISOLATION

UNCERTAINTY

UNEMPLOYMENT/FINANCIAL LOSS

LACK OF ACCESS TO TREATMENT

DISRUPTION IN SUPPORT



Troubled Waters

PEER
PROFESSIONALS
ARE
ESSENTIAL
WORKERS



Troubled Waters

Peer Professionals In the Face of Covid-19 FOR-NY Survey: A Collective Call to Action Here's What You Told Us

Almost 50% of the Peer Professional Workforce felt their work has been impacted by the pandemic

Troubled Waters

How have you, and your work as a Peer Professional, been impacted by the pandemic?



Troubled Waters

How have your program participants/recoverees been impacted by the pandemic? How has the pandemic impacted their treatment/recovery services?



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Peer Workers' Covid-19 Personal Concerns

- Isolation/Loss of connection/support
- Overwhelm
- Both personal and professional loss and grief experiences
- Concerns around own recovery/wellness

Source: FOR-NY Survey: A Collective Call to Action Responses

“Laughter is a symbol of hope, and it becomes one of our greatest needs of life, right up there with toilet paper.” -- Erica Rhodes

Troubled Waters



The human capacity for burden is like bamboo- far more flexible than you'd ever believe at first glance.

Jodi Picoult

A Response of Resilience

Under Difficult & Sudden Circumstances.

Learned new technologies:

Telemedicine, Zoom group meetings, texting support, check-in sessions

Developed new ways to initiate and access: MAT, treatment, and Harm Reduction Strategies

Employed creativity: Overdose education, outreach, connection

Troubled Waters



The nourishment of pain is yours.

Weave its magic into your life. Let it
cloak your shoulders.

Let it open you like a flower.

Let it educate your heart and reveal
your superpower. Tanya Markul

Troubled Waters

Poll #2 Do you feel you have adequate support and/or resources to manage the impact of these personal and professional challenges?

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Tend and Befriend

Reach Out

We Can Only Get Through This Together



Staying Afloat

Part Three

Attending to Wellness Through Self-Care Measures and
Workplace Support & Advocacy



Staying Afloat

"The most precious things we have to offer those we serve are a ministry of presence and a message of hope in the face of the worst circumstances. Maintaining that presence and our ability to convey hope requires focused self-maintenance."

-William White

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Acts of Responsibility

- Responsible Caregiving
- Responsible Citizenship
- Unpaid & Unacknowledged Acts of Service

Acts of Self-Care

- Centering
- Mirroring

Rituals of replenishment can help keep us centered on the larger meaning of our advocacy and recovery support work as well as help us sustain our personal health and perspective--William White

Rituals of Replenishment

Staying Afloat

Acts of Responsible Caregiving

One must be careful in carrying light to the community to not leave one's own home in darkness"

--an adage shared to Bill White from a trainee

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Acts of Responsible Citizenship and Unpaid and Unacknowledged Acts of Service Outside the Professional Helping Role

“These flow from the realization that we must balance our acts of individual healing with efforts to shape a world where wounds can be prevented and the health of the healed can be sustained.”

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Self care
is a
divine
responsibility

Self-care has several purposes in the context of peer work:

- *Allows peer professionals to check in with their mental and physical state before symptoms of burnout/ stress overload become overwhelming;*
- *Offers a continuous reminder to practice mindfulness and stress reduction;*
- *Reminds us to manage our vulnerabilities;*
- *Helps mitigate the potential for compassion fatigue and burnout.*

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Centering Rituals

“Usually performed alone, these allow us to reassess life values, clarify personal priorities, maintain congruence between our internal self and social self--helping us to stay grounded and aligned with our aspirational recovery values.”

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Be Kind To Yourself Meditation

A Contemplation to Give You the Compassion You Need



*This is a moment of suffering.
Suffering is a part of life.
May I be kind to myself in this moment.
May I give myself the compassion I need.*

<https://self-compassion.org/>

<https://self-compassion.org/test-how-self-compassionate-you-are/>

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Mirroring Rituals

“If centering rituals reveal to me what I need to do, mirroring rituals deliver the people in my life that will help me do those things”

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Workplace Support & Advocacy

- Supervision (Protective for Peer Professional well-being)
- Check-in meetings: Create a safe space for individual/collective input; supporting others through grief experiences
- Review agency policies
- Re-imagine the workplace environment
- Recognition and Appreciation: Personalized, meaningful and frequent

<https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/grief-infographic.pdf>



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Workplace and Personal Wellness Staying Safe in the Work Setting and Beyond

- Social Distancing
- PPE for Self (and Participants)—masks, hand sanitizer, gloves
- Access to Covid-19 Testing
- Support from Leadership
- Harm Reduction

A square graphic with a white background containing the text "Stay Safe and Healthy" in a black, cursive, handwritten font. The word "and" is smaller and positioned between "Safe" and "Healthy".

Stay Safe
and
Healthy

Staying Afloat

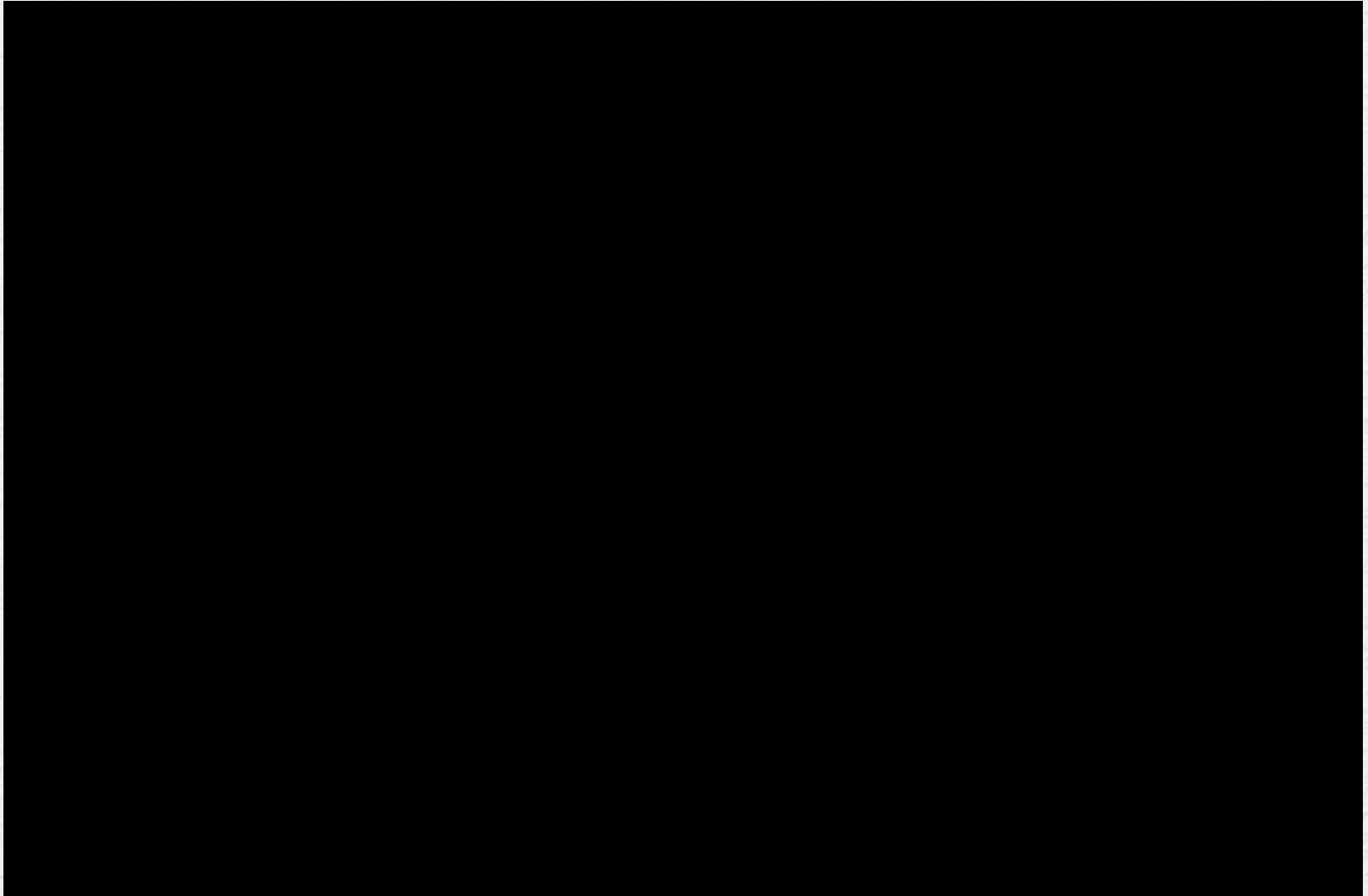


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Recognition, Appreciation & Gratitude



Angelia Wilson-Smith, Executive Director
Friends of Recovery - New York



Closing Comments

Those of you on the frontlines of peer recovery support are writing the future of recovery with your lives. I wish each of you Godspeed on your journey into that future.

- William White

Closing Comments

What's Next

- This Presentation (slides/recording) will be made available next week along with handouts and resources. Next slide will have list of resources for you today.
- To receive clock hours for certification renewal for: NYS CRPAs / CARCs; Social Work CE's and CASAC CE's, please complete the attestation forms at the end of this webinar. (For attendees participating in live webinar only.)
- Watch for the registration links to the upcoming **Zoom Series, Dates: July 16th, 23rd, August 6th, and 20th at 1PM.**
- Place any final thoughts or questions in the chat box.

Resources

Resources for Mental Health Support

NYS OMH Emotional Support Hotline

1-844-863-9314

Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255) or Text HOME to 741741

There may be a wait time to connect.

FOR-NY Link to COVID-19 and Online Recovery Resources

<https://for-ny.org/get-help/>

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