

Peer Support Specialist Times

"Recovery and healing happen in relationship." - PSL for the 21st Century

The Beating Heart

By Lori Ashcraft



Many of us have spent years in training learning approaches and techniques to treat mental health issues and restore wellness to those we serve. I myself have spent far too many years going to school, earning degrees that helped me feel like I was worthy of doing this work. Along the way I've learned something far more important and that is that we can have all the degrees possible, but if we do not approach the people we serve with respect; present attention; continue to stay in our head and don't move from our head to our heart; we will not make much of a difference for them or for ourselves.

Coming from the heart is especially important for leaders, since their attitudes and actions affect both those who work under their direction and those who are served in the program. You will see a wonderful example of this in this prerecorded interview with Crestwood Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Office, Patty Blum. Patty has been faithful to the messages of the heart for more than 40 years and continues to move the needle at every opportunity. (Continued on Page 2)



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CRRS Update



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The Beating Heart

Continued

As you listen to Patty, you'll find the steps she took to create good programming. But try to focus beyond the content and listen for what motivates her and causes her to keep looking for better ways to provide services. Look past the doing and find the being. You'll hear a heart beating. A heart that relentlessly moves her, gives her courage to feel the pain of those she wants to set up for recovery; a heart that holds hope for people who need it the most. Leaders who are willing to operate at this level are the leaders who make a difference, who influence programs in a heartfelt way and bring real life to what otherwise could be meaningless.

Watch the **Viva La Evolution** episode for this article here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQJGWMNa_rI

CMPSS Specialization Training for Parent, Caregiver, Family Member Peers-Supporting Family Resilience

40 hours [32 CES available upon request]

The "Supporting Family Resilience" course is a fun, skill-based, and highly interactive workshop for individuals providing specialized peer-to-peer family member and caregiver support services. This 40-hour learning experience will prepare and equip participants with the latest generation of knowledge, skills, and tools for providing, promoting, and empowering family resilience.



Recovery Practices for Ethics and Law for Peer Support

6 hours [6 CES available upon request]

This fun six-hour dynamic, skill-based, and wholly interactive course will provide participants with an understanding of how the recovery movement and principles became the foundation for peer support ethical codes as well as many laws regulating behavior healthcare and psychiatric treatment.



CMPSS Specialization Training for Justice Involved Peers—Recovery, Resilience, and Reintegration

40 hours

This dynamic 40-hour, skill-based, and wholly interactive course will provide participants with an understanding of how to provide person-centered support to individuals with justice involvement experiences.



Growing Professionally as a Peer Support Specialist in Recovery Services

By Jim Ritchie



Your path to professional growth may be more than you might think. **Our mission at Crestwood Recovery Resilience Solutions (CRRS) is to promote, equip, and support a skilled, professional Peer Support Specialist workforce.** In addition to our 80-hour *Peer Support Learning for the 21st Century*- curriculum, as well as other professional recovery practices curricula: <https://recoveryresiliencesolutions.com/training-products/>), we support a network of peer support specialists across the state and beyond. In this professional peer fellowship we support each other to pass the state certification exam, to share ideas and challenges related to our work, and to celebrate each other's successes along the way.

Like all professions, staying informed and getting re-invigorated is a mindful practice that requires our energy and focus. Our work calls us to experience and express gratitude daily, to give grace always- especially when it is difficult, to acknowledge and celebrate accomplishments, and to keep our skills and practices in shape routinely through networking with other peers and through continuing education.

The CRRS Team is excited to announce a whole new line of curricula to support the continuing education for Certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists. In addition to our *Recovery Practices for Ethics and Law for Peer Support* (6 CEs), we are rolling out a new and exciting 16 hours of peer professional development curricula called *Advancing Recovery and Resilience Skills-Taking Peer Support to the Next Level*. This

program is comprised of 8 individual, 2-hour live-facilitated learning courses, including:

- **Facilitate to Fascinate** (Delivering Engaging Recovery Classes and Groups)
- **Stepping Back While Stepping Up** (Practicing Next-Level Peer Support Skills)
- **Working Well to Be Home Free** (Scoring a Win for Wellness by Leaving Work at Work)
- **Staying Peer By Anchoring Against Drift and Shift** (Staying Accountable to the Peer Support Scope of Practice)
- **Building Bridges Over Troubled Waters** (Navigating Discomfort and Perceived Differences In PSS Work)
- **Building Boundaries, Not Walls** (Preserving the Principled Peer Support Relationship)
- **Ten Team Building Tenets in Peer Support** (Success Strategies for Working with Diverse and Integrated Teams)
- **Supporting System Recovery** (Being a Change Agent)

Each of these courses will have CEs from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the California Board of Registered Nursing (BRN). The courses can be delivered one at a time or as two-day training program. By September 1, please check our website for updates and how to enroll <https://recoveryresiliencesolutions.com>.

In the meantime, let us know how you're doing. We would love to post announcements of your recovery accomplishments, including career promotions!



Traveling Light by Using a Carry-on of Spirituality

By Chris Martin

I've learned the hard way that the airlines charge a heavy toll for extra baggage. The moment of reckoning always starts at the ticket counter. When it's time to hoist the heavy bag onto the scale, we seasoned travelers know how to suppress squinting facial movements and grunting sounds while pretending the bag is feather light. But the scale and the observant eye of the ticket agents always detect the extra weight. What comes next are those dreaded words.... "You need to remove some of the items from your bag," After a few sighs and of guilt from being found out, we kneel on the floor to start sorting through all those tightly packed things. **We don't want to sacrifice anything, but we know we have to find the right balance for the scale.** Meanwhile, the sympathetic travelers in our line begin judging who we are by the contents of our baggage, now spread out in full display. Sound familiar, fellow travelers?



There's another type of baggage we can carry which can also weigh us down. It can take us to our limit and sometimes exceed it. Although there may not be a monetary cost, this load can levy other types of heavy tolls on us. **Baggage like worry, fear, anxiety, resentment, unforgiveness, impatience, guilt, shame, etc. can all wear on us and be too heavy to hoist onto any scale.** And if we stop, look inside, and closely examine what we've been toting around, we realize we've needlessly been carrying way too much weight.

It's usually our spirit inside of us that bends under the weight of baggage before our back does. What is our spirit? The word spirit comes from the Latin word spiritus meaning breath. Merriam-Webster Dictionary goes on to define spirit as **"the force**

within a person that is believed to give the body life, energy, and power." Our spirit is what

we usually point at when we're introducing ourselves. We say, "Hello, my name is" as we point or motion toward the direction of our heart. Perhaps a four-year-old boy said it best when he defined spirit as "what holds our bodies up."



Spirituality is about connecting our spirit to something bigger than ourselves, and it often involves a search for meaning in life. People can renew and recharge their spirit by making spiritual connections to their sources. For some people, their source might be their higher power; it could be nature, it might be the arts or music; for others it could be the universe or humanity, etc. **When we develop and sustain spiritual practices, we also develop and sustain our recovery and resilience.** Four traditional ways to build spiritual muscles (your choice) are meditation, contemplation, prayer, and service to others.

For our future journey, we may want to consider the expense of what we pack and haul around. The cost of bearing such a burden can be high for our heart, health, and happiness. Freeing ourselves of this heavy load might take changing our habits and thinking; practicing new ways of being; getting outside support; as well as seeking help from our sources. **Our best travel advisory might be that we have an option of leaving behind all that baggage and travelling light.** We can encourage ourselves to always travel light and "carry on."

By Chris W. Martin from the "Next 40 days to a resilient journey of meaning and purpose." 2020 Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc.



CRRS is pleased to announce two new rollouts of our Peer Employment Learning Center (PELC) that we started planning in July. We will be conducting our fourth PELC roll out with persons served at Crestwood San Diego, with our 80-hour **Peer Support Learning for the 21st Century** (a CalMHSA approved Medi-Cal PSS certification training) starting in October. We are also pleased to start our first PELC rollout in Pleasant Hill, that will also begin within this same timeframe. For more information on our PELC projects, please visit us at <https://recoveryresiliencesolutions.com/pelc/>

CRRS is also pleased to conduct our fourth **CMPSS Specialization for Parent, Caregiver, Family Member Peers, Supporting Family Resilience**, from August 23 through September 6 online. We have completed 2 MC PSS Certification training in

July and will complete another in August, as well. We will be completing another onsite 80-hour MC PSS Certification Training in Stanislaus County in November and doing additional contract work in other counties. We are also fielding lots of inquiries regarding the 6 hours of Law and Ethics and we will be announcing some scheduled online trainings in the coming weeks. Our Fall cohorts are filling fast, so if you are interested in one of the scheduled online trainings between now and December, please pre-register here:

Pre-Register: www.surveymonkey.com/r/CBHI-MC-PSSC-TrainingRegistration. We will be developing our 2025 schedule in the next few weeks and updating our website. Please reach out to us with any questions or if you would like more information. If you are interested in an onsite training at your county, please reach out to us.

In the meantime, thank you all for doing this amazing Recovery work and for supporting people in our communities to live their best lives. You are making a difference in the world!

All the best,

- Jim Ritchie, CRRS Director of Operations

Viva la Evolution!

A podcast on Growth, Resilience, and Transformation

- ◆ Promote the recovery process with individuals and teams.
- ◆ Shift your organization's culture to a recovery focus that builds resilience
- ◆ Listen to interviews with important leaders in the recovery field and hear from people who are in recovery and how they got there.
- ◆ Discover unique ways peer support specialists can support your team and enhance recovery service outcomes.

Join The Conversation!

