

ROSC COMMITTEE

Recovery Definition and Guiding Principles

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Recovery from Mental and Substance Abuse Disorders: a voluntary and individually driven process of change through which individuals work to improve their own health and well-being, live a productive life, and welcome opportunities for growth.

Guiding Principles of Recovery:

- Recovery occurs via many pathways.
- Recovery is holistic and exists on a continuum of improved health and wellness.
- Recovery may require the intervention of clinical and/or medical treatment.
- Recovery can be supported by family, friends, peers, and allies.
- Recovery is supported through community efforts, relationships, social networks, and public education and advocacy.
- Recovery is culturally based and influenced.
- Recovery is supported by addressing the relationship between and among trauma, mental illness, substance use disorders, and physical health issues.
- Recovery involves individual, family and recovery community strengths.
- Recovery is based on respect.
- Recovery is based on hope.
- Recovery involves addressing and transcending discrimination, shame and stigma.
- Recovery should be supported by a welcoming and respectful community.
- Recovery involves engagement in the community at large and active citizenship, including all of its rights and responsibilities.

The new working definition of Recovery From Mental Disorders and Substance Use Disorders is as follows:

A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

Through the Recovery Support Strategic Initiative, SAMHSA also has delineated four major dimensions that support a life in recovery:

- **Health:** Overcoming or managing one's disease(s) as well as living in a physically and emotionally healthy way.
- **Home:** A stable and safe place to live.
- **Purpose:** Meaningful daily activities, such as a job, school, volunteerism, family caretaking, or creative endeavors, and the independence, income, and resources to participate in society.
- **Community:** Relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope.