



***February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016  
Tuolumne County Enrichment Center***

***Reducing Stigma by Becoming a  
Visible and Valued Part of the  
Community***

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# Outline and Objectives

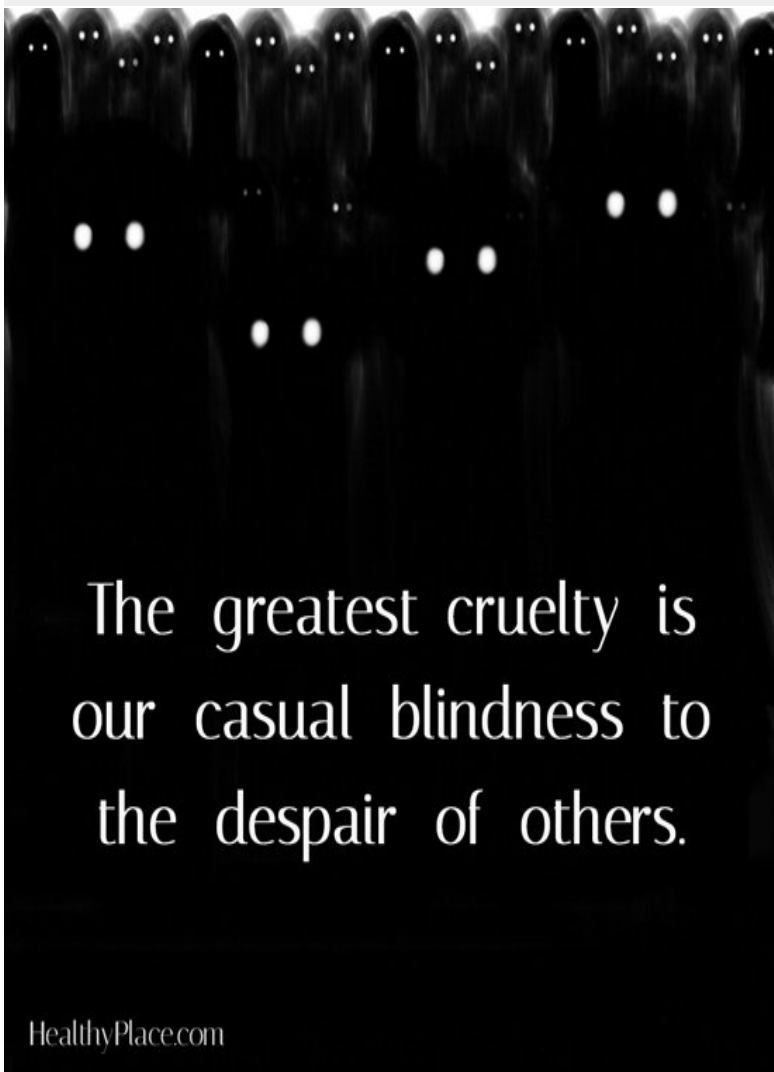
- 1. Stigma and Stigma Reduction** **OBJECTIVE:** *Participants will increase familiarity with the causes and effects of stigma as well as strategies for stigma reduction.*
- 2. People with Lived Experience** **OBJECTIVE:** *Participants will appreciate the power of personal narratives and become familiar with various methods of sharing them.*
- 3. The Role of Organizations** **OBJECTIVE:** *Participants will identify tasks for stigma reduction (public relations, collaboration, and community education - especially the role of “Community Ambassadors”.)*
- 4. Closure** **OBJECTIVE:** *Participants will review resources provided and begin an “Action Plan” that is relevant to their context (agency, center, community).*

# *Stigma Hurts Individuals*

SOMETIMES I DON'T  
KNOW WHAT IS WORSE,  
LIVING IN A STATE OF PANIC OR  
LIVING WITH OTHER **PEOPLE'S**  
ATTITUDES ABOUT IT.



# *Stigma also Hurts Society*



MENTAL ILLNESS  
IS NOTHING TO BE  
ASHAMED OF, BUT  
**STIGMA** AND BIAS  
SHAME US ALL.

-BILL CLINTON



# *Who is Responsible for Stigma Reduction?*

*(Everybody!)*

- *Individuals with mental illness as well as their families and friends. – **Avoid Shame! Don't Isolate!***
- *Individuals and families without a known history of mental illness. – **Be Brave! Speak up!***
- *All local, state and global agencies dedicated to mental health. **Be Proactive and Effective. Reach out!***
- *All other government and community entities. **Be inclusive and productive. Collaborate!***

# *Where Do We Start?*

## *“This Feels Overwhelming”*

*Although stigma is a complex and worldwide societal problem, a “bottom up” approach is the most realistic and manageable (Individual & Local).*

*People with personal (lived) experience of mental illness have the potential for being the most effective change agents in their communities.*

# ***What can I (we) do?***

## ***“This Still Feels Overwhelming!”***

***No one can do everything, but everybody can do something.***

- *Evaluate one’s own strengths, limitations, interests, talents, and obstacles to overcome.*
- *Focus on personal recovery goals (short and long term) and create small steps or roles to get there.*
- *Accept the help of professionals, family, peers, and/or other community members.*
- *Be aware that your actions and behavior influence community perception of you and your group.*

# Negative Visibility

## (Personal)

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Department</i>
<i>Public Intoxication/Other illegal activities</i>	<i>Unkempt or unwashed skin, nails, or hair</i>
<i>Angry outbursts</i>	<i>Torn, stained, or ill fitting clothes</i>
<i>Violent or menacing behavior</i>	<i>“Sloppy” or inappropriate clothing</i>
<i>Sexually inappropriate</i>	<i>“Offensive” body art or jewelry</i>
<i>“Bizarre” behavior</i>	<i>Generally poor hygiene (odor)</i>



## ***Addressing Negative Visibility***

*In a perfect world, everyone is accepted with unconditional regard. In reality, people are judged by how they look and act. That judgment may extend to associated groups and agencies through oversimplification and stereotyping.*

***How can you address behavior and deportment concerns while respecting individual rights, choices, and lifestyles?***

# Community Obstacles

- **Financial** - *Lack of funds, poor money management.*
- **Social** - *Lack of access (transportation), minimal events or opportunities.*
- **Occupational** - *Lack of opportunities for productive roles.*
- **Physical/Environmental** - *Limited avenues for exercise and activities.*
- **Intellectual** - *Lack of venues or groups for interests and hobbies.*

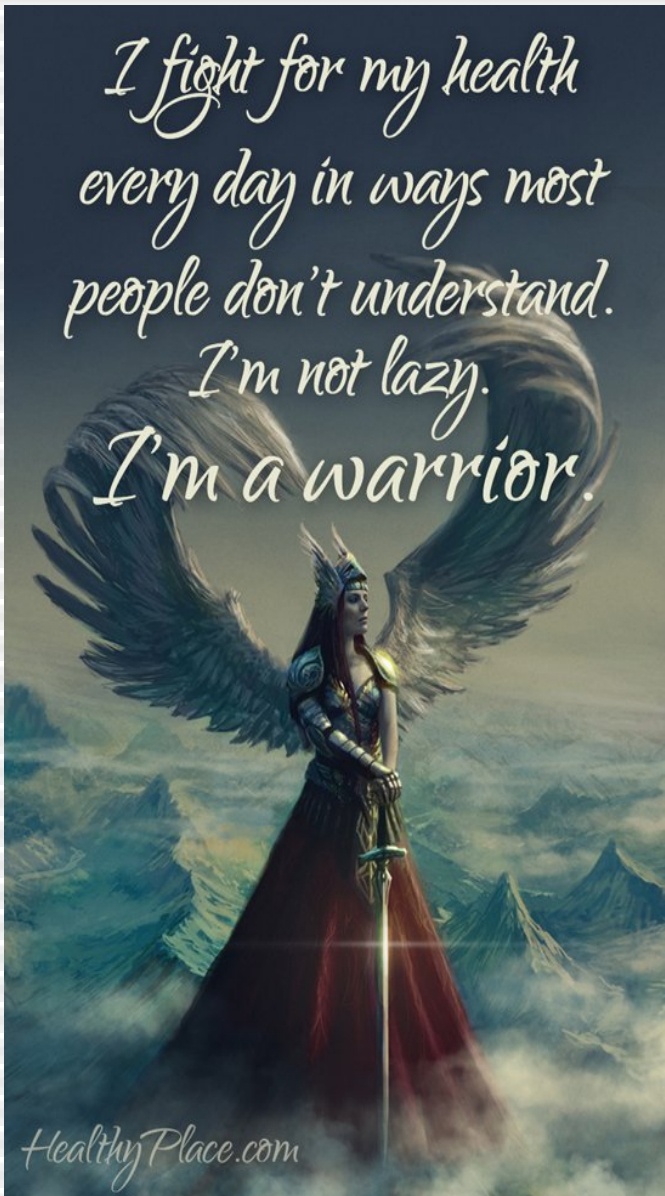
# ***Overcoming Community Obstacles***

***Goal: Helping consumers become visible and valued members of the Community by overcoming external obstacles.***

***What clinical interventions, agency strategies, or wellness center activities can help meet this goal?***

# *The Power of the Personal Narrative*

*I fight for my health every day in ways most people don't understand. I'm not lazy. I'm a warrior.*



*Understanding one's "lived experience" is crucial for personal recovery as the process increases self awareness and esteem, as well as thought organization and skill development.*

# *Resistance to Sharing Lived Experiences*

*There are many factors that influence an individual's ability or willingness to share their personal stories (past experiences, poor skills, fear, lack of motivation, florid symptoms). Only the individual can decide if and when their stories can be shared with others.*

***What can or should a Wellness Center or clinical service do to address this resistance?***

# Sharing "Lived Experience"

*Disclosure can support the recovery journey of peers.*

*It is also a powerful tool in overcoming societal ignorance – the root cause of stigma.*

**(See handout – “Tips for Public Speaking”)**

DON'T  
BE ASHAMED  
OF YOUR STORY,  
IT WILL INSPIRE  
OTHERS.



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# *Alternative Methods for Sharing Personal Narratives*

*Regardless of recovery or health status, not everyone has the temperament or desire to be a public speaker. Other methods of sharing include:*

- *Written stories/Poetry/Song writing*
- *Personal artwork/Group murals*
  - *Photography/Video*
  - *Website postings*
  - *Short plays or skits*

***What is currently being done at your organization?***

***What would you like to add?***

# Organizational Responsibility

- *Clinics and wellness centers provide the structure and services to assist individuals in enhancing personal visibility and perceived social value.*
- *However, the responsibility doesn't end there. There are many ways that agencies can engage in stigma reduction through public relations, collaboration, and community education.*



# ***Enhancing Organizational Visibility and Value: Public Relations***

- *Develop a working relationship with local media (newspaper, radio, TV)*
- *Advertise services through media and distribute flyers in community.*
- *Submit editorial commentaries on related issues (worldwide or local).*
- *Sponsor display booths at community events(e.g. county fair, local festivals)*
- *Publish “success stories” related to fiscal management, received grants, new programs, expanded services and outcome data.*

***What does your agency currently do?  
What would you like to add?***

# ***Enhancing Organizational Visibility and Value: Collaboration***

- *Collaboration starts “at home”. Develop and follow through with communication protocols between clinical services and wellness services.*
- *Appoint representatives to serve on related agency boards in community.*
- *Create interagency task forces on specific and timely topics; (e.g. prisoner releases, emerging or changing drug problems; homelessness).*
- *Develop mechanisms for information sharing and role clarification among various community groups. (e.g. Family services, inter-faith councils, tribal councils, transportation services, schools, police department).*
- *Volunteer to help other organizations with their fundraisers and special events.*

***What does your agency currently do?  
What would you like to add?***

# ***Enhancing Organizational Visibility and Value: Community Education***

- *Offer workshops or trainings that are open to the community.*
- *Conduct informational sessions at local organizations (e.g. benevolent and business associations).*
- *Keep up to date on accurate national data related to mental health and use existing recognized sources to educate community. (See example handout from SAMHSA).*
- *Write and disseminate your own “information sheets”(e.g. flyers, brochures, “tips”, resources).*
- *Develop “Community Ambassadors” for outreach and ongoing education. (see next slide).*

***What does your agency currently do?  
What would you like to add?***

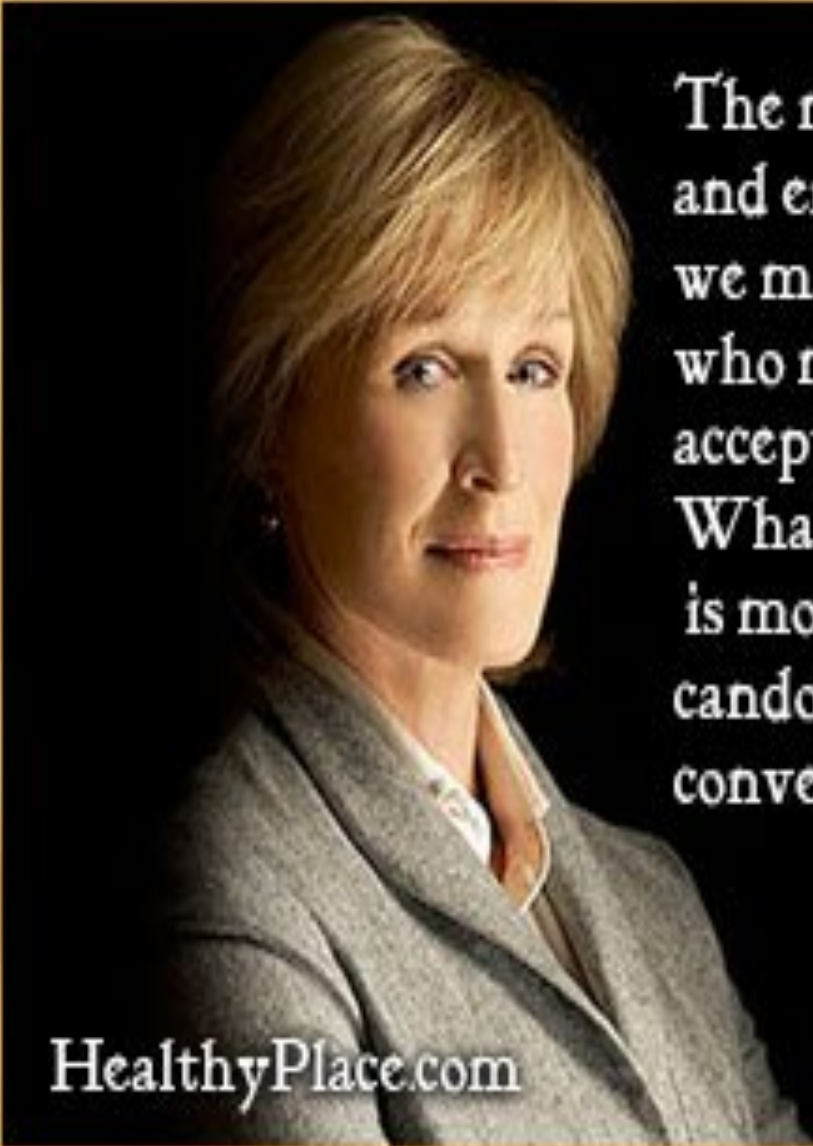
# *Becoming a “Community Ambassador”*

*“Community Ambassadors” could be anyone who represents your organization to the outside community. However, also consider having people designated as “ambassadors” (especially including board members and staff as well as peer participants) and helping them prepare! All “community ambassadors” should prepare and practice relevant one minute “speeches” and preferably carry some form of “business” card to foster future networking.*

# The “One Minute Elevator” Speech

*The concept of a “one minute elevator speech” is to create an opportunity to network with others and foster “goodwill” in your community. The idea is to be ready to “put your best foot forward” in a very limited amount of time. It also generally assumes that for a short amount of time, you have a ‘captive” audience. (It doesn’t have to be an elevator!) The opportunity may arise in numerous situations such as waiting in line or sitting next to someone at an event or meal.*

# *Summary Statement*

A portrait of Glenn Close, a woman with short blonde hair, wearing a grey blazer over a white collared shirt. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression.

The mentally ill frighten  
and embarrass us. And so  
we marginalize the people  
who most need our  
acceptance.

What mental health needs  
is more sunlight, more  
candor, more unashamed  
conversation.

Glenn Close

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# *Where Do You Go From Here?*

***Notice that there were many questions posed in this presentation that can only be answered by on going dialogue and commitment to action throughout the organization.***

- *What ideas can be realistically implemented in your setting?*
- *What resources do you need?*
- *Who is going to be responsible for sustainability of new structures and formats as well as planning on-going tasks?*

# Closure

*For further information, please feel free to contact us!*

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*Please complete the provided evaluation form*

***Thank you for your participation!***