



*Training Peer Workers in Mental
and Behavioral Health:*

DEVELOPING A MEASURE
OF PEER SUPPORT

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Peer Support

In the 1970s, during the peak of the civil rights movement, groups of people who'd been institutionalized in psychiatric hospitals joined together to fight the inhumane treatment they received with the hopes of offering alternative support for people struggling with mental and behavioural health.

Howie "The Harp" Geld

1952-1995

He is often called the originator of the ex-patients movements. After leaving the Insane Liberation Front in the spring of 1970, he began the Mental Patients Liberation Project in 1971.

He was hospitalized at age 14 for over a year, and upon his release, Howie dedicated himself to a lifetime of advocacy for the mentally ill.

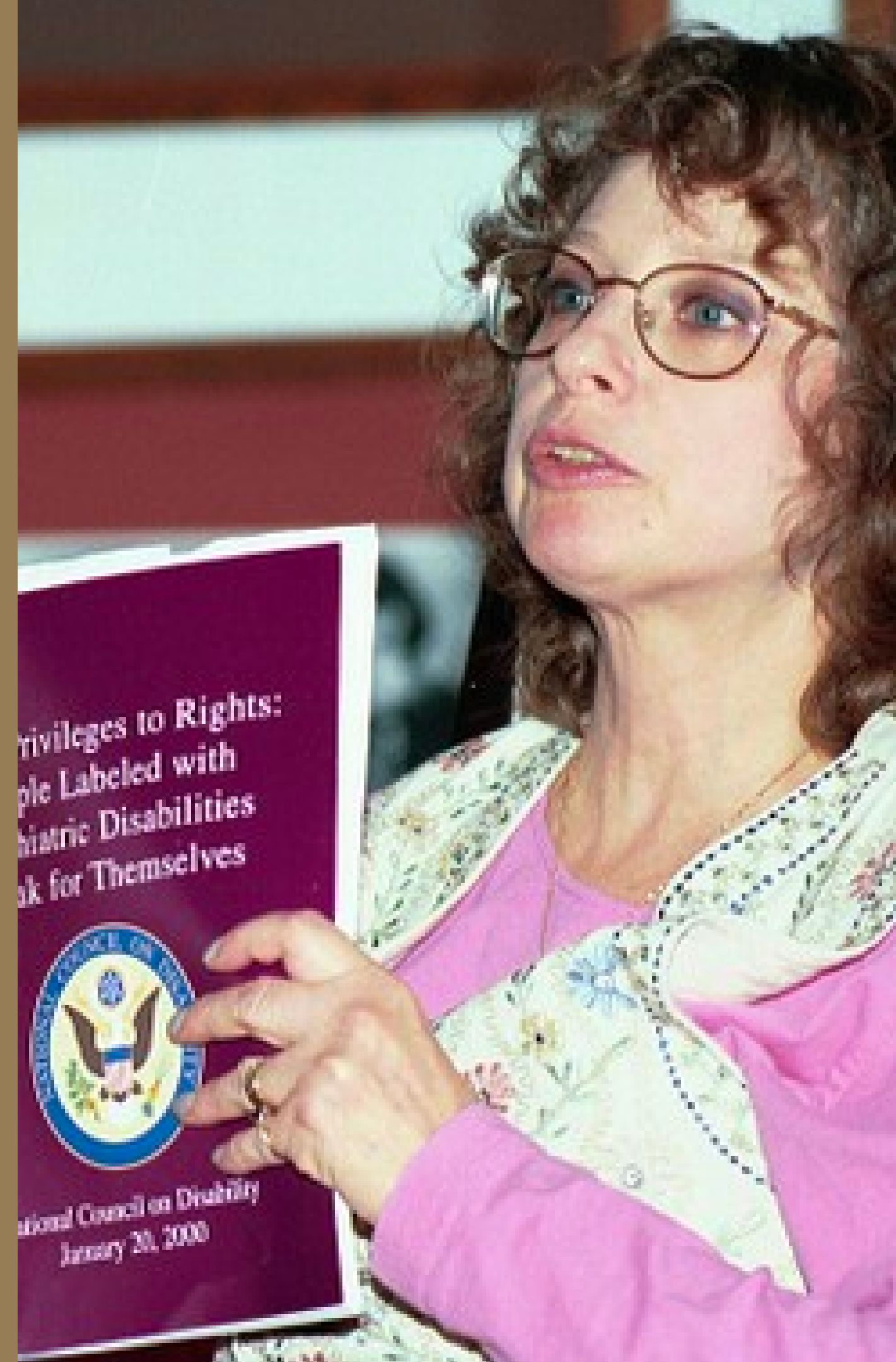


Judi Chamberlain

1944-2010

Known for writing and publishing *On Our Own: Patient Controlled Alternatives to the Mental Health System* in 1978.

This book is considered the manifesto, or textbook for peer support work that revolutionized the mental health system and thoughts around peer support.



So what is peer support?

"Peerness"

Community



Interpersonal
connection

Recovery
Advocate

Self
Empowerment



Why evaluate it?

- 1) Though it was born out of a need to destigmatize and rehumanize lived experiences, not everyone has the same story.
- 2) Evaluation allows peer support workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, organizations, and others have a better understanding of what interventions are working i.e. reducing/controlling mental illness and increasing hope/change.
- 3) Uniform expectations of peer support work ensures that program impacts are properly documented, further contributing to federal level advocacy work.

Current Standards for Peer Support

Varies by state

Shared lived
Experience

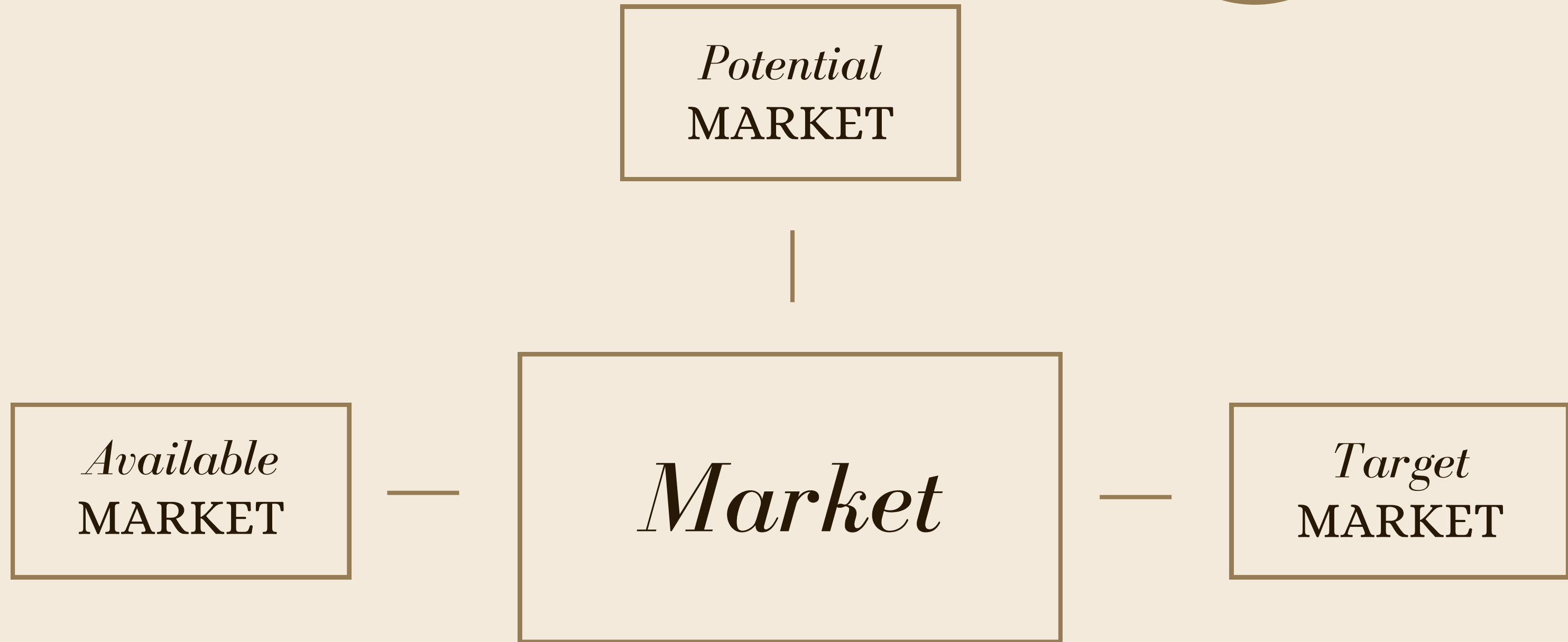


Ability to discuss
personal
recovery stories



Mentorship
Advocacy
Recovery
Support

In a variety of settings: peer led
organizations, shelters, recovery homes, etc.



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Evaluation STRATEGIES

We specifically focused our evaluation on assessing peer led Interventions with the hopes of analyzing job satisfaction and self efficacy, in order to advocate for the validity of peer support Interventions.



Methods

A total of 272 interviews were coded by two researchers to estimate interrater reliability. The interview questionnaire consisted of seven questions, six of which described a hypothetical, but practical situation, in which the PSWs would respond. The seventh question asked for a description of an ideal peer environment. Each interview response was coded on a 9-point scale, with the first representing the most ideal response and the ninth representing an incomplete, or unsure response.





Conclusion

This evaluation tool helps us to better examine the validity of peer support interventions and corroborate other pertinent outcomes such as peer worker contribution, social and empathic self-efficacy, and job satisfaction. From this data, we can improve peer worker training programs by specifically targeting the learning needs of PSWs.



Thank You

Please let me know If you have any questions.

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