



ALTERNATIVES 2008

Adams Mark Hotel / Buffalo, New York

October 29 – November 2, 2008

Creating Community Through Active Citizenship

The National Empowerment Center announces ALTERNATIVES 2008 — the national mental health conference organized by and for mental health consumers and survivors.

call for presentations / selection criteria

Presentations emphasizing participatory involvement of attendees, handouts, and ability to replicate ideas will be given priority consideration. Reviewers will evaluate proposals according to the following:

- Relevance of the proposal to the conference theme and learning themes.
- Expertise and experience of presenters.
- Opportunities for attendees to develop new skills and/or replicate a successful program.
- Indication that the lead presenter is a consumer/survivor.
- Clear outline of the purpose and learning objectives of the presentation.
- Demonstration that a variety of learning techniques will be used throughout the presentation.

Workshops will be 90 minutes. There will be a limited number of 3-hour institutes. In the spirit of community building, we encourage active engagement of participants for at least half of the workshop time. We encourage all presentations to be given in clear, simple language — free of acronyms and system jargon. Presenters are encouraged to include youth co-presenters.

Funding for this conference was made possible in part by Grant No. SM56680 from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.



ALTERNATIVES 2008 is funded by:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Mental Health Services [www.samhsa.gov]

ALTERNATIVES 2008

topical areas for WORKSHOPS & INSTITUTES

ALTERNATIVE 2008 is seeking proposals for presentations from a wide range of people, including young people. This conference offers in-depth technical assistance on consumer/survivor delivered services and self-help/recovery methods. Our Advisory Committee, which includes consumer/survivor leaders from across the nation, seeks proposals in the following learning themes ...

LIVING AS CHANGE AGENTS »

We are active partners in communities and the world. Presentations on consumers/survivors actively engaging in creating our communities

and shaping our services by being agents of change. Topics might include:

- A. STATEWIDE NETWORKING:** Sessions that encourage consumers and consumer groups to join efforts in developing statewide consumer/survivor networks to help shape local, statewide and national mental health policy and practices.
- B. ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM:** Promoting and protecting rights, reducing restraint and seclusion; addressing stigma and discrimination, legislative and judicial issues (i.e., ADA & Fair Housing), criminal justice, advance directives.
- C. SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION ACTIVITIES:** Working within the system to change legislation, policies, practices and community attitudes regarding the New Freedom Commission's recommendations for creating a consumer-driven, recovery-oriented system. Topics might include: peer specialists, peer coaches, program evaluation, and research projects.
- D. HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE:** Innovative ideas to promote financial wellness, strategies to transcend SSI/SSDI with a strong focus on employment, education, consumer/survivor-owned business endeavors and good affordable housing.
- E. PARTICIPATORY LEADERSHIP:** Activities to bring forth the life-learning expertise in the group such as world café, participatory leadership, action research, appreciative inquiry, values-based leadership, summits, participatory dialogues, town meetings, and more.

EMBRACING DIFFERENCES: CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND BEYOND »

Strategies of dealing with discrimination that go beyond cultural sensitivity and tolerance. If we were to actively engage in finding that which is truly likable about the differences in each other, we would transcend cultural competence. We invite innovative sessions that engage participants in cultivating an appreciation of difference and the ability to see, hear and honor one another. Topics might include:

- A. WORLDVIEWS AND ETHNO-CULTURAL ISSUES:** Implementing action-oriented plans to include varied cultural beliefs, differences and approaches in self-help, peer-run and recovery programs.
- B. CULTURAL FLUENCY:** Creating or furthering awareness of cultural differences and developing cultural understanding among peers, within the mental health community and peer-provided services. Awareness and acceptance of difference is an essential part of building community. Topics might include rural/urban issues, outreach to minority groups in the consumer/survivor movement, and effective methods for promoting inclusion.
- C. GROWING BEYOND STIGMA:** Overcoming effects of prejudice and discrimination that are barriers to full citizenship. Building inclusive communities while recognizing differences including age, race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and geographic location.
- D. EXPERIENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE IN OPEN, HONEST COMMUNICATION:** Experiential workshops on communication styles, listening skills, non-violent communication, radical honesty, mediation, etc.

CREATING PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY WELLNESS »

A wellness focus allows us to view ourselves as whole beings with physical, spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual, financial and environmental dimensions. Many social forces challenge our personal and collective wellness. Our peers are much more likely to suffer significant physical health problems than the general population. These health problems hinder recovery, interfere with quality of life, and create financial difficulties. We encourage sessions highlighting how to create and sustain wellness in our working, living and learning communities. Topics might include:

- A. PEER-DELIVERED HEALTH PROMOTION APPROACHES** that foster healthy lifestyles and address health concerns such as diabetes, obesity, metabolic syndrome, tobacco dependence and substance use/dependence. Promoting healthy eating and lifestyle choices such as information on nutrition and other supports to sustain physical, emotional, and mental health.
- B. HOLISTIC/ALTERNATIVE HEALING APPROACHES** such as yoga, meditation and exercise. Alternatives such as acupuncture, massage and energy healing; community approaches to wellness and health promotion.
- C. TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES TOWARD WELLNESS** such as self-help and peer support approaches to healing trauma, understanding self-harm as a response to trauma, and developing self-esteem.
- D. STRESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS** and how to maintain wellness to protect against burnout in our advocacy and other work.
- E. PERSONAL FINANCIAL WELLNESS** such as how to acquire knowledge and increase skill to manage one's own money, how to create independence through taking personal financial responsibility, budgeting, saving, etc.
- F. SPIRITUAL WELLNESS** such as the power of spiritual practice, forgiveness, compassion, service, etc.
- G. HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS:** The dynamics of relationships; parenting, communication skills, dating, sexuality, etc.

ENGAGING IN THE ARTS »

Arts and community cultural activities are known to activate our innate healing capacities and inspire our connections to the wider community. Communities offer many venues where we can express and/or enjoy our cultural and artistic talents and aspirations, find personal and community recovery through the healing power of the arts. Art is often a powerful vehicle for personal and social change as well.

- A. THE HEALING POWER OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION** such as journaling, poetry, humor, storytelling, dance, music, drama, and the visual arts. We invite interactive workshops where attendees have an opportunity to participate actively in the learning experience.
- B. INTEGRATING THE ARTS IN OUR COMMUNITIES/SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH ART:** We invite workshops that demonstrate how to bring the community together through art and provide healing and change for individuals and communities. Creating Arts drop-in centers, organizations, festivals, exhibits, poetry readings (including art and music in conference agendas) and using art projects and programs to transform the mental health system and our communities, address stigma, call attention to mental health issues: poverty, housing, civil rights, etc.

HISTORY OF OUR MOVEMENT »

- A. CEMETERY RESTORATION PROJECTS**
- B. ORAL HISTORY PROJECTS**
- C. STRUGGLES DIFFERENT CULTURAL GROUPS HAVE HAD OVERCOMING OPPRESSION** (*race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, etc.*)
- D. RESEARCH ON OUR PAST**

PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY
MAY 15, 2008

[See "2008 Application for Workshops & Institutes" form on page 5 for submission details.]



2008 HOST CITY: BUFFALO, NY

Join us in Buffalo at **ALTERNATIVES 2008**, as we create a learning community and share our stories as consumer/survivors with wisdom and hope. Out of our common experience, we become conscious of the power of being part of creating something larger than ourselves, as we become active citizens in our human community.

NEW ENGLANDERS FIRST SETTLED BUFFALO, THE “CITY OF GOOD NEIGHBORS”.

Reader’s Digest has named Buffalo the third environmentally-cleanest city in the United States.

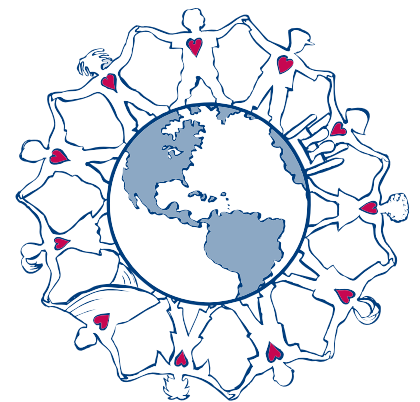
In 2001, *USA Today* selected Buffalo as winner of its “City with a Heart” contest, proclaiming it the nation’s “friendliest city.” We are delighted to have Buffalo host **ALTERNATIVES 2008**.

2008 CONFERENCE THEME:

Creating Community Through Active Citizenship

CREATING OR BUILDING COMMUNITY is a process of finding a place of belonging, sharing our stories, making consensual decisions — built upon respect for all individuals and inclusive of difference.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP is changing one’s community through involved participation to improve life for all. Now more than ever, we are called to become active partners, in our communities and the world, by exercising our rights and responsibilities as citizens.



2008 APPLICATION for workshops & institutes

I understand that all presenters must pay the full conference registration fee and are also responsible for all travel and lodging expenses. A limited number of federal scholarships are available for individuals to attend Alternatives. The application is available at the Alternatives website and must be submitted by mail by May 28, 2008 to the address on the form.

TITLE OF PRESENTATION — EXACTLY AS IT SHOULD BE PRINTED IN CONFERENCE MATERIALS:

[please indicate format]..... 90-MINUTE WORKSHOP 3-HOUR INSTITUTE

topical area of workshop (see list): _____

lead presenter (consumer / survivor): _____

address: _____

city / state / zip: _____

phone: _____ fax: _____ e-mail: _____

HAVE YOU PRESENTED AT AN ALTERNATIVES CONFERENCE PREVIOUSLY?

NO YES >> please specify topic(s) and year(s): _____

Please list any other conventions or gatherings at which you have presented this topic:

co-presenter(s)	phone	e-mail
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

DOES YOUR PRESENTATION REQUIRE AUDIO / VISUAL EQUIPMENT?

NO YES >> please specify:

- slide projector
- overhead projector
- flip chart / markers
- screen

Due to budget constraints, Alternatives 2008 cannot supply LCD projectors or laptop computers; however, presenters are welcome to bring their own.

I will bring my own laptop and LCD projector.

APPLY BY E-MAIL or ONLINE ... or MAIL ONE (1) COPY of:

- COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM.
- 50-WORD ABSTRACT OF PRESENTATION.
- ONE-PAGE OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION (incl. learning goals and objectives).
- BRIEF BIOGRAPHY (no more than 50 words) FOR EACH PRESENTER.

PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MAY 15, 2008

MAIL: ALTERNATIVES 2008 (Presentation Proposals)
c/o Horizon Meetings
P.O. Box 500209 • Austin TX 78750

E-MAIL: tanya.garde@horizonmeetings.com

ONLINE: Complete this form online at
www.power2u.org/alternatives-2008

QUESTIONS: Tanya Garde • 888-776-1286 ext. 103

