

MAY-JUNE 2020 | ISSUE 5

# MUCH NEWSLETTER



"We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

"Letter from a Birmingham Jail [King, Jr.]"

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Massachusetts United for Connection and Healing (MUCH) is a statewide entity that fosters networking between Certified Peer Specialists, community leaders, and people receiving support. Our foundation is our belief in collaboration. This approach views different perspectives as points for learning and connection, instead of roots for opposition. MUCH fosters mutual relationships that can result in personal and professional healing and growth as defined us, the members. Our focus on unity includes wanting your feedback and insight. Please know our hand is always extended and our ears are open. Welcome!

This newsletter aims to support and shine a spotlight on your hard work regarding projects, events and trainings. Please feel free to submit information for upcoming newsletters to [KPower@kivacenters.org](mailto:KPower@kivacenters.org)

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In solidarity,  
Khalil Power



# Upcoming Advice Section!



## Working for an RLC

I want to talk about my experience working for a Recovery Learning Community. I enjoy this job very much. I have made valuable connections, met interesting people and been able to help many. I am an individual with lived experience who has experienced multiple hospitalizations and am now working full time and on a graduate degree at Northeastern University studying for a master's degree in global studies. I have always loved international issues and now I am able to go back and take classes in my first love all the while working full time as a peer bridger.

What is it like to be a bridger for the Northeast Recovery Learning Community? It is a fascination position and I have helped many of my peers in the 2 and a half years I have been doing this. I wouldn't change this position for any other. What does a peer bridger do? I meet with individuals who are living at Tewksbury State Hospital and I transition them to the community. Our goal is to work with individuals three months prior to discharge and three months after discharge. Working for an RLC is a lot of fun too as it opens me up to all sorts of experience, that vary between working in the hospital and working with peers in the community.

My intention by this article in the MUCH newsletter is to introduce myself to you and give you an opportunity to get to know what I do. Moving forward, I will be part of a group working on an answer column so if you have any questions let them rip.

Melissa Talal

If you have questions you would like to ask please do!

You can email your questions to:

[KPower@kivacenters.org](mailto:KPower@kivacenters.org)

& [mtalal@nilp.org](mailto:mtalal@nilp.org)

# TALKING WELLNESS

*How did the idea for "Talking Wellness" come about?*

It's very interesting how we wind up in the right place at exactly the right moment at times. I was actually working on a golf tournament fundraiser, with the General Manager of WUTY 97.9FM radio in Worcester. I decided to strike while the iron was hot. You don't get what you don't ask for, right? I made a pitch as to how important and interesting it could be to have a show on the schedule that focused on the Eight Dimensions of Wellness, talking with movers and shakers in the mental health field who are plentiful here in Worcester and all of Massachusetts. We've covered topics such as the growth of the Hearing Voices Network, Peer advocacy throughout the state, spoken with leaders of mental health agencies throughout the commonwealth, peers fighting in the trenches for basic human rights in hospitals and elsewhere, as well as different folks with connections to and alignment with our mission statement.



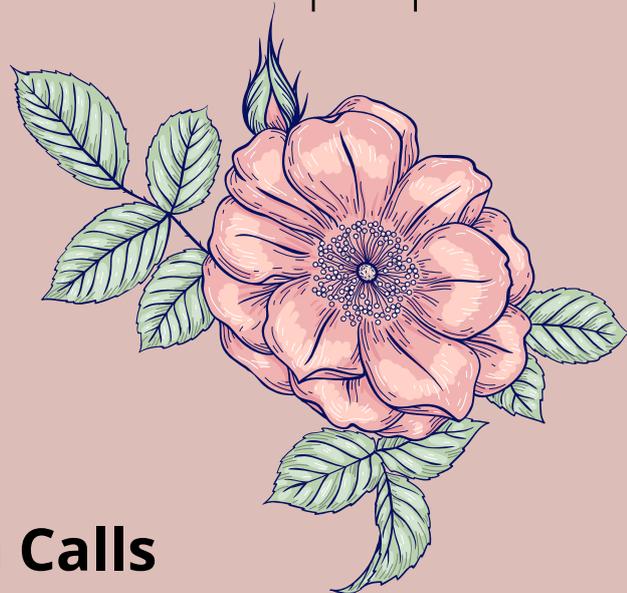
Most recent episode [here](#)

# MUCH OPEN MEETINGS

## **Statewide Peer Bridgers Meeting**

If you are a Peer Bridger and would like to connect with your fellow bridgers statewide, please join the Statewide Bridgers Meeting! We talk about how to best provide support to people in hospitals, problem-solve how to increase access to Peer Bridgers and share resources for when people are discharged.

Weekly on Wednesdays  
2:30-3:15 pm  
(774) 209-5953



## **CPS Connection Calls**

If you are a Certified Peer Specialist and would like to connect with others statewide, this is the call for you! We discuss how to best improve understanding of the profession, increase knowledge about upcoming events and trainings, and how to best support one another in our work.

First Wednesday monthly  
6:00-7:00 pm  
(774) 209-5953

As we all know, COVID-19 has disrupted many plans statewide. Here is a list of **upcoming events and trainings**. Check in directly with those hosting events for updates about any changes made.

## **Statewide Peer Networking Awards Banquet POSTPONED!**

Although we are optimistic that things our communities will be in a much better place come May, we are postponing our Statewide Peer Networking Awards Banquet originally scheduled for May 8

until a later date to be determined.

In order to hold this even on **May 8**, we would need to be seeking registrations and sponsorships now, and it feels unfair to ask everyone to be thinking about an event like this when we're all being asked to stay home and practice 'social distancing right now!

We are working on a reschedule date and will share the updated details soon! In the meantime, we are keeping nominations open for the eight awards we will be giving when the event does happen!

**DON'T WAIT! VOTE NOW!**

# EVENTS & TRAININGS

Stand Against Racism: The Importance of Youth Voice

Dates: **May 8,** 2020 9:30am - 11:30am

[REGISTER](#)

**Join us for our annual Stand Against Racism event!  
We're going virtual!**

The [MKI Alliance for Racial Equity](#), presents a panel and presentation about the importance of youth voice in advancing racial equity.

Including youth in conversations on race is necessary to build more racially inclusive and equitable communities. It is imperative that we take the necessary action to make sure uplift our youth and make their voices heard. We must begin cultivating the next generation of young professionals of color in order to enable them to continue doing work in and for their communities. Let's begin thinking about who is doing the work in our communities and for whom?

Local CDCs and youth serving organizations can play an important role in engaging youth in racial equity work to enhance their leadership development. Through an open dialogue, this virtual experience will focus on youth leadership development and the adults that support them. We hope that joy us for this important conversation!

# EVENTS & TRAININGS

## Healing-Centered Community Engagement

Dates: **May 12**, 2020  
9:30am - 12:00pm

Instructors: Carrie Niemy & Nella Young, Enterprise  
Community Partners  
LOCATION: ZOOM ONLINE

In this time of crisis, it is hard to imagine that something seemingly as simple as our community engagement processes might actually build our communities' resilience. A healing-centered approach to community engagement has been proven to do so.

Even beyond the need to build resilient communities, why healing-centered engagement? As a field, we often work in systematically disadvantaged communities with inter-generational trauma at the core of their experience. We have learned that a history of trauma and constant re-traumatization gets in the way of getting people to the table and in the words of our friend Michael Enzi,

# EVENTS & TRAININGS

“if you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu,” a phenomena that perpetuates the cycle of inequity and trauma.

In this immersive workshop, we will walk through the tenets of a healing-centered engagement approach, which is essential to building the connection and trust needed to engage people in meaningful planning processes. We will provide actionable examples from across the country that go beyond how to plan good meetings and will equip participants with three easy to use tools to put to work immediately. The session will include discussion about modifying these tools for use during this period of social distancing.

[Register Here!](#)

*Registration deadline:* Monday, May 11, 2020

*Registration fee:* \$60 Regular, \$30 MACDC Member \$15 Student/AmeriCorps/Intern

# EVENTS & TRAININGS

## Peer-Run Organization Learning Collaborative Series Webinar

### SAVE THE DATE

This webinar is a part of a series hosted by the five Consumer/Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Centers: the National Empowerment Center, the CAFÉ TA Center, NAMI STAR Center, Doors to Wellbeing, and Peerlink.

Stay tuned for information about upcoming webinars in the series on **May 19, July 14, and September 15.**

Register at

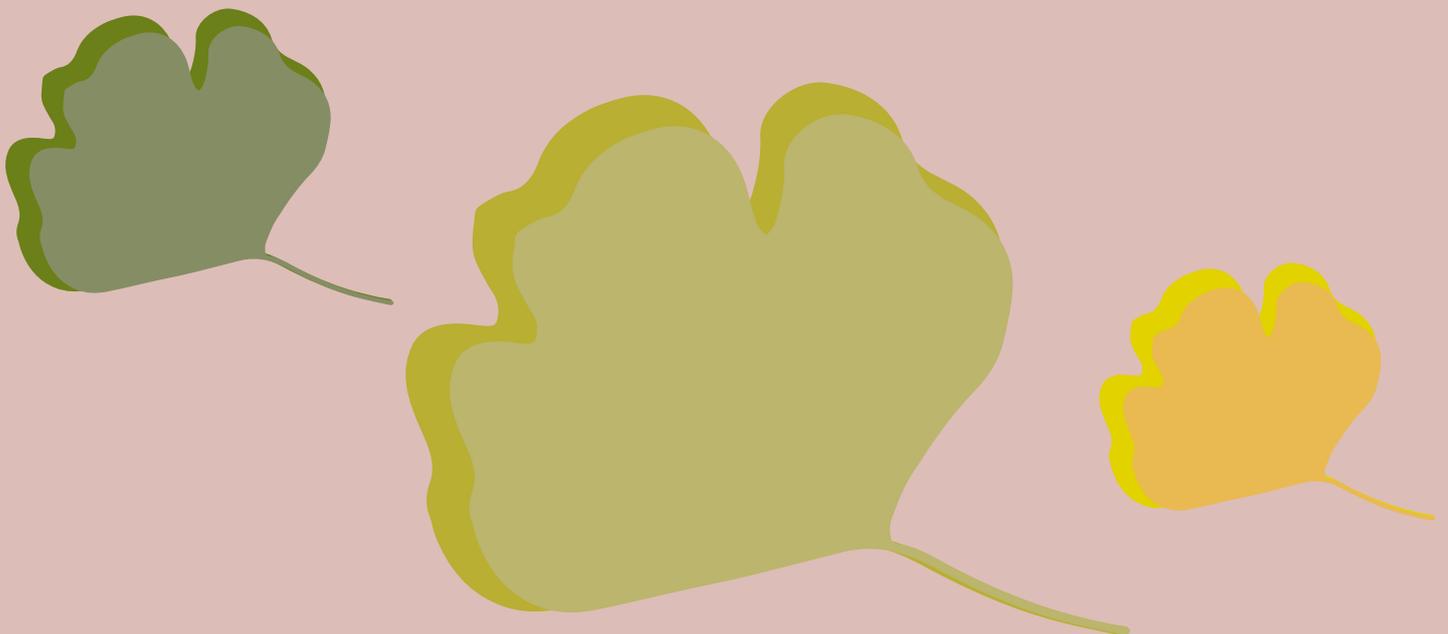
<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5962415564489420035>

# EVENTS & TRAININGS

## **Certified Peer Specialist Training**

The Kiva Centers will be having two virtual Certified Peer Specialist trainings. The first will begin May 26th and will continue until June 25th. The second class will begin May 27th and continue until June 24th.

For more information please visit  
<https://kivacenters.org/trainings/certified-peer-specialist/>



# EVENTS & TRAININGS

## **NAMIWalks Your Way Massachusetts: A Virtual Event**

NAMIWalks is going to be a little different this year. We're not canceling it – we wouldn't think of it when our collective mental health needs are at their greatest. NAMI's programs and advocacy are needed more than ever, and with your help, we are pleased to present a walk for our times, NAMIWalks Your Way Massachusetts: A Virtual Event on **May 30**.

For more information about NAMIWalks or to register please visit

<https://www.namiwalks.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.event&eventID=917>

# EVENTS & TRAININGS

## **Group Facilitation: Bringing Community Meetings to Life**

Dates: **June 8**, 2020 9:00am - 11:30am

Instructors: Jennifer Raitt, Town of Arlington, Director of Department of Planning and Community Development

LOCATION: ZOOM ONLINE

You will receive the Zoom Link for this training after you've registered, closer to the date of the Training.

Do you attend or lead meetings that fail to achieve meeting or project goals? This day-long Meeting Facilitation workshop will introduce participants to effective meeting preparation, including outreach and engagement strategies, meeting facilitation skills, and how to follow-up for success. Workshop participants will have an opportunity to test their meeting facilitation skills in a supportive, learning environment.

[Register Here!](#)

Registration deadline: Friday, March 27, 2020

Registration fee: \$60 Regular, \$30 MACDC Member, \$15 Student/AmeriCorps/Intern



# RESOURCE LIST

**The Consortium** has done a great job making an extensive list of over-the-phone and virtual peer support options available during COVID-19.

## Support Group Themes

- Suicide-Related Support Groups
- Groups for People Struggling with Substances (Prescribed or Otherwise)
- Other "Addiction" and 12-Step Related Groups
- Hearing Voices Groups
- Groups for People Struggling with Food and/or Body Image
- Groups Specifically for Younger People
- Groups Specifically for Older Adults
- LGBTQQIA+ Support Groups
- Groups Specifically for Men or Women
- Grupos en idiomas además de inglés (español, etc)/ Groups in Languages Other than English (español)
- Groups Specifically for Black, Indigenous, and Other People of Color
- Groups for Veterans
- Groups Focused on Faith and/or Spirituality

# RESOURCE LIST

## Support Group Themes (continued).

Groups for People Who've Experienced Sexual Trauma

Grief Groups

Groups for People Who Have Formerly Been  
Incarcerated

Groups Focused on Medical & Physical Challenges

General/Miscellaneous Peer Support Groups

Advocacy & Activism

Meetings Specifically to Support Peer Supporters

Meetings Focus on Employment and/or Benefits  
& Wellness Oriented Groups

Art and Creativity-Oriented Groups  
Groups for Family &  
Friends

Covid-19 Groups

Just for Fun Groups

On-line Community Support and Drop-in Spaces

Other Sources of Support

For more information of specific focus group please go to <https://www.westernmassrlc.org/hidden-community-happenings-fix/888-on-line-and-phone-supports-march->

# RESOURCE LIST

Additionally, **The Western Mass RLC/ The Consortium** has expanded its Phone Peer Support Line (P-PSL) to 7pm to 11pm every day, seven days per week until further notice.



**NEW!**

We're also excited to announce that we are trying out a new text Peer Support Line (T-PSL). The T-PSL is open 3pm to 7pm every day, seven days per week until further notice. Give them both a try today!

Peer Support Line: 888.407.4515

Text Peer Support Line: 413.287.1112

## Peer Support Network

The Peer Support Network has an online Google calendar that allows people to see various different peer support groups occurring daily, weekly, and monthly.

To access it follow this link:

[https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=baycove.org\\_5199cdettj0nfomoc40an0so34@group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/New\\_York&pli=1](https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=baycove.org_5199cdettj0nfomoc40an0so34@group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/New_York&pli=1)

# RESOURCE LIST

Here are the groups offered by **Boston Resource Center**, open to all peers:

## Monday

NAMI Connections 10:30am-12pm

<https://bostonmedicalcenter.zoom.us/j/955331152>

Call: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 955 331 152

DRA 12pm-1pm

<https://bostonmedicalcenter.zoom.us/j/313065661>

Call: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 313 065 661

## Tuesday

Dimensions of Wellness 1pm-2pm

<https://bostonmedicalcenter.zoom.us/j/908518565>

Call: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 908-518-565



# RESOURCE LIST

Groups offered by **Boston Resource Center**,  
(continued)

## Wednesday

LGBTQ 11am-12pm

<https://bostonmedicalcenter.zoom.us/j/596295348>

Call: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 596 295 348

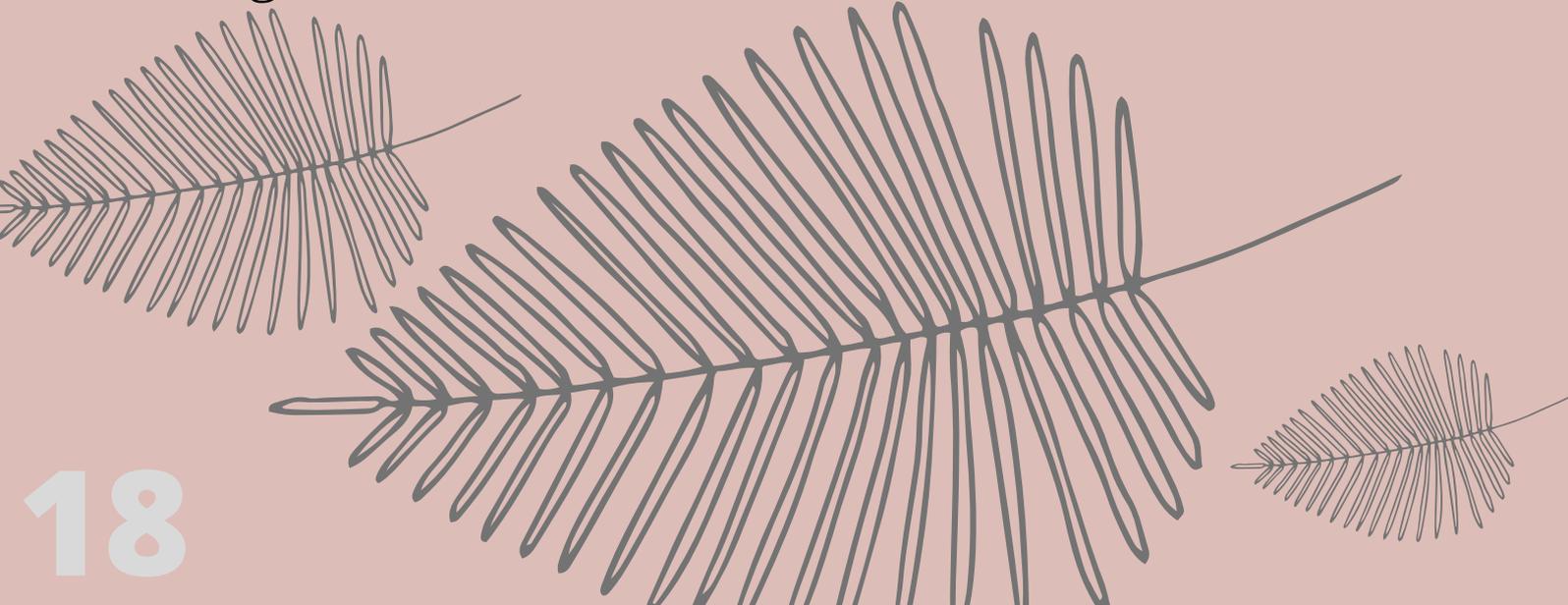
## Thursday

DRA 12pm-1pm

<https://bostonmedicalcenter.zoom.us/j/520449255>

Call: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 520 449 255



# RESOURCE LIST

## The **Cambridge/Somerville Recovery Learning**

**Center** is offering these  
Zoom support groups for  
their members.



### Mondays:

Happiness and Wellness  
1pm

<https://zoom.us/j/853680339>

9

Call: 1-929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 853 680 339

Pathways To Recovery

2:45pm

<https://zoom.us/j/674929972>

2

Call: 1-929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 674 929 972

### Wednesdays:

NAMI Connections 10:30am

<https://zoom.us/j/859002245>

Call: 1-929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 859 002 245

### Fridays:

NAMI Connections 10:30am

<https://zoom.us/j/621974217>

Call: 1-929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 621 974 217

Topic:

Building Connections 1:15

PM

<https://zoom.us/j/593536452>

Call: 1-929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 593 536 452

Please call 617-863-5388 for  
any questions.

# RESOURCE LIST

The **Kiva Centers** are providing a variety of over-the-phone and virtual peer support options across Central Massachusetts.

Virtual groups are offered Monday through Friday beginning at 10:00 am and ending at 9:00 pm. There is also a peer support call on Saturdays at 7:00 pm and mediation on Sundays at 5:00 pm. A variety of groups are offered throughout the week. For a full list of groups please see

<http://www.centralmassrlc.org/calendar/>

You can also find information available on Facebook by looking at the "Kiva Center of the Central MA Recovery Learning Community" page or calling (508) 751-9600. Groups are available for members at the following locations, as well as new members,

*Kiva Center Worcester*

*Kiva Center Metro West*

*Kiva Center Southbridge*

# THANK YOU FOR READING!



If you would like to submit anything to the next newsletter please email Khalil Power at [KPower@kivacenters.org](mailto:KPower@kivacenters.org)