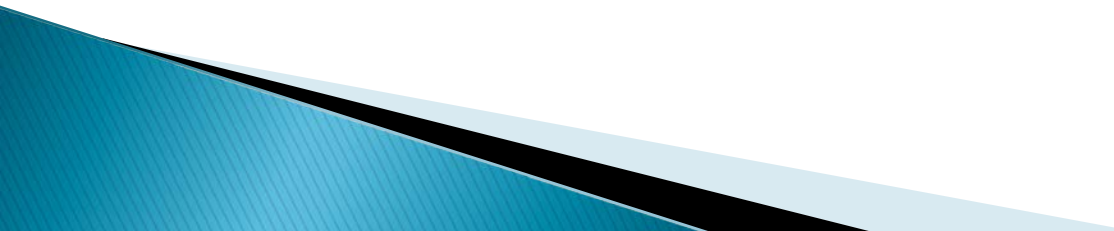


# Overcoming Stigma to Thrive: A Presentation at the 2017 Annual Nebraska Behavioral Health Conference

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Mary Ahern CPWS  
Jen Hazuka CPWS

# Order of events

- ▶ Introductions –Presenters and Panel (8–10min)
  - ▶ Slides and comments (1–9) to Panel (15–20min)
  - ▶ Panel (T–M–J) (10–10–10 min)
  - ▶ Summarizing and Strategies (15–20min)
  - ▶ Wrap-up questions (10 Min)
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# Objectives

- ▶ Participants will :
  - Learn how to Identify the experiences that led to personal biases about themselves and others with Mental Health Challenges (MHC)
  - Hear the real life experiences of self stigma and recovery from a peer panel and
  - Learn about strategies to manage self stigma

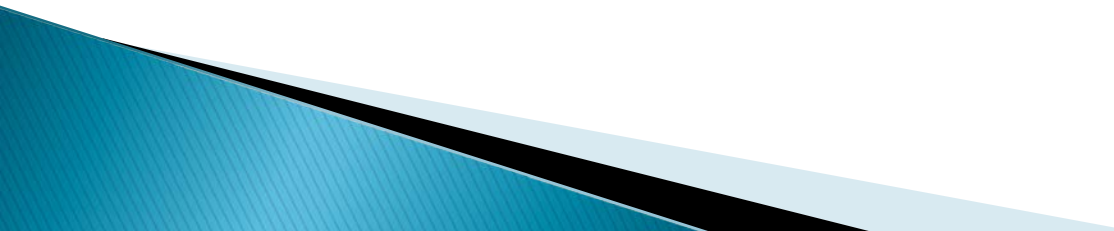
# Defining Stigma in MH/DD

- ▶ (*archaic*): a scar left by a hot iron :
- ▶ brand : a mark of shame or discredit
- ▶ An identifying mark or characteristic;  
*specifically*: a specific diagnostic sign of a disease
- ▶ **Examples of *stigma* in a sentence**
- ▶ *There's a social stigma attached to receiving welfare.*
- ▶ *the stigma of slavery remained long after it had been abolished*

# Types of Stigma in MH/DD

- ▶ **What is mental health stigma?:** Mental health stigma can be divided into two distinct types: ***social stigma*** is characterized by prejudicial attitudes and discriminating behaviour directed towards individuals with mental health problems as a result of the psychiatric label they have been given.
- ▶ In contrast, ***perceived stigma*** or ***self-stigma*** is the internalizing by the mental health sufferer of their perceptions of discrimination (Link, Cullen, Struening & Shrout, 1989), and perceived stigma can significantly affect feelings of shame and lead to poorer treatment outcomes (Perlick, Rosenheck, Clarkin, Sirey et al.,
- ▶ CLD Graham Ph.D. (2013 post). Mental Health and Stigma.

# Personal Bias and stigma

- ▶ **Bias** ('baɪəs) *n*1. mental tendency or inclination, especially an irrational preference or prejudice
  - ▶ 2. (Knitting & Sewing) a diagonal line or cut across the weave of a fabric
  - ▶ A conviction that a point of view or belief is right for one's life's circumstances.
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- ▶ Free Dictionary by Fablex
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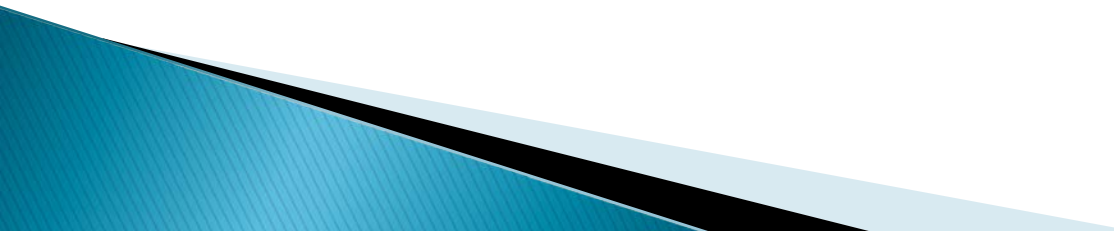
# Specific biases in social stigma

- ▶ Belief or conviction that persons with MH/DD challenges are:–
  - Dangerous
  - Unproductive
  - A burden on Society
  - These convictions can be held by members of one's family and by oneself.

# Specific biases in Self Stigma

- ▶ *Being part of a Culture , family and support network of friends and practitioners who are benevolent but have personal convictions that persons with Mental Health Challenges (MHC) are dangerous, chronically unproductive and a burden.*
- ▶ *Persons with MHC have personal convictions that their Mental Health Challenges (MHC) makes them permanently damaged and dependent and they cannot be responsible for themselves .*
- ▶ ***perceived stigma*** or ***self-stigma*** is the internalizing by the mental health sufferer of their perceptions of discrimination. (Link, Cullen, Struening & Shrout, 1989), i.e. the public, support persons and persons with MHC accept that the discrimination is warranted.

# Personal stories of self Stigma and its resolution.

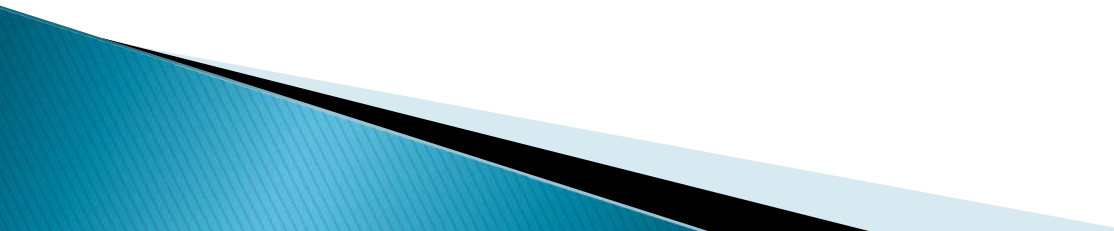
- ▶ Describe the beliefs and feelings of self stigma and how they were acquired. What impact did they have on motivation to become responsible for self.
  - ▶ We want to show how one acquires the skills to manage or end these convictions and –
  - ▶ What effect –impact ending self Stigma can have on Recovery and Thriving.
  - ▶ (Let me introduce our Panel who will introduce themselves and tell their stories).
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# Disclosure types:–Selective, Indiscriminate or Broadcasting.

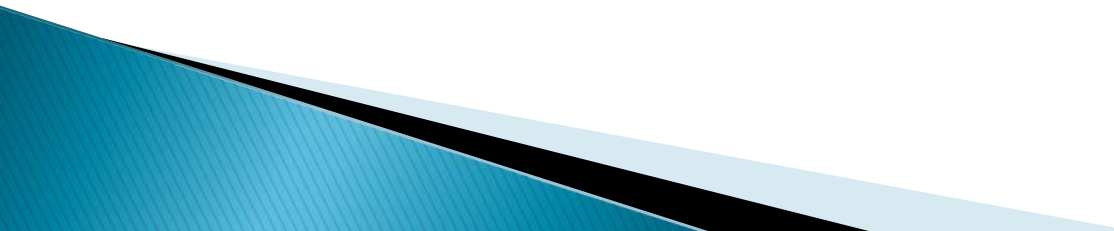
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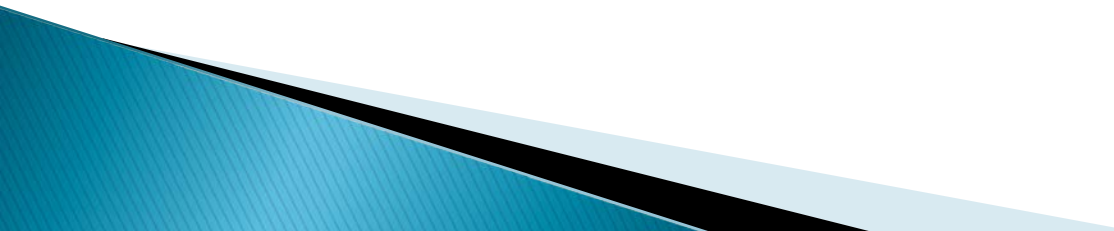
# Victoria O.

- ▶ Having MH challenges –what did I believe about myself ? How did I come to these beliefs? What impact did they have on me–my self image, esteem, social interactions, my motivation to learn and work, my wellness?
  - ▶ How did I overcome self generated obstacles to Recovery and wellness ?
  - ▶ How do I define thriving beyond self stigma?
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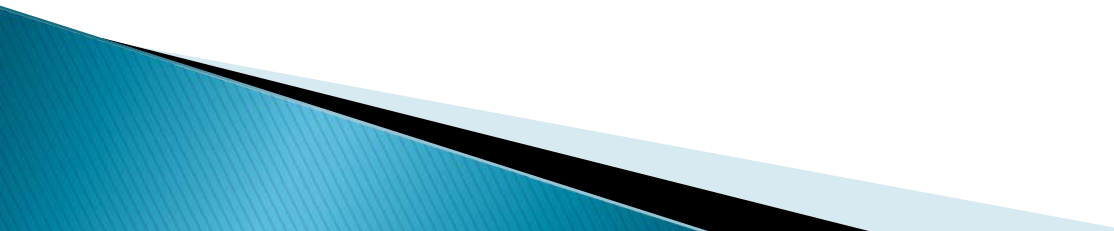
# Mary A.

- ▶ Having MH challenges –what did I believe about myself ? How did I come to these beliefs? What impact did they have on me–my self image, esteem, social interactions, my motivation to learn and work, my wellness?
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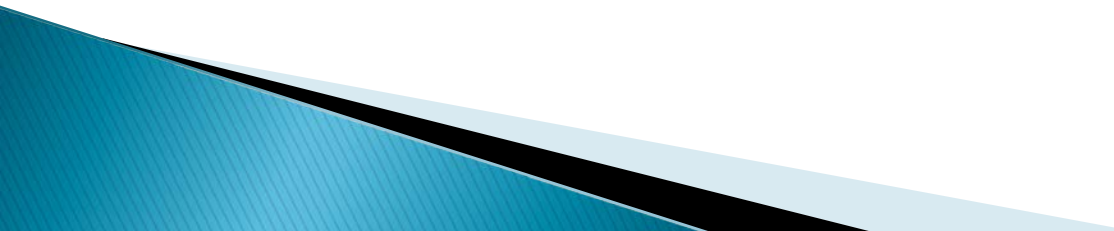
# Jennifer H.

- ▶ Having MH challenges –what did I believe about myself ? How did I come to these beliefs? What impact did they have on me–my self image, esteem, social interactions, my motivation to learn and work, my wellness?
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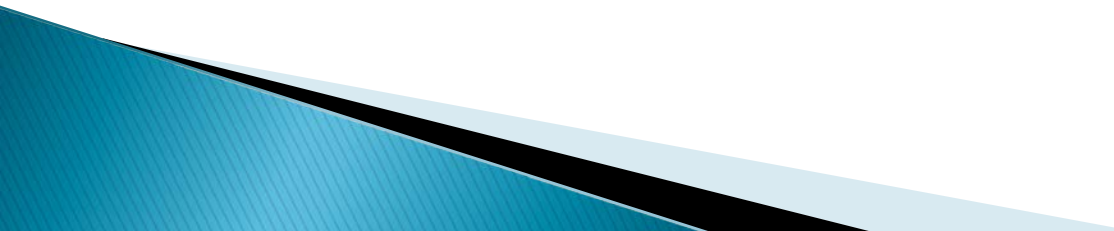
# Group work: strategies to evaluate self stigma reduction

- ▶ Attendees will be divided into four working groups each facilitated by a presenter to :
  - ▶ Evaluate one of the strategies proposed and
  - ▶ Discuss at least three approaches to implement in one's life and
  - ▶ select a member to report suggestions to all attendees.
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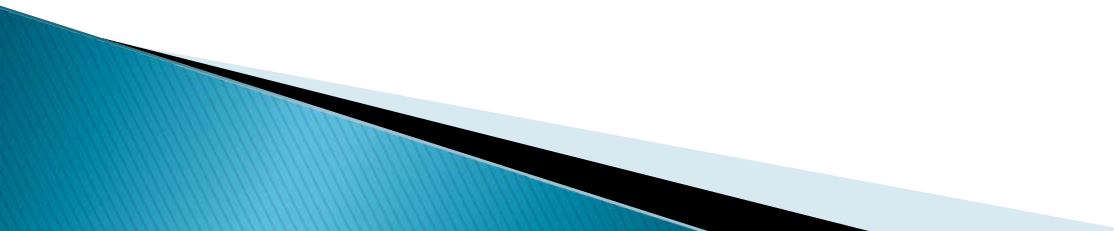
# Strategies

- ▶ Develop Self awareness and self monitoring skills towards expanding one 's vision of one's life
  - ▶ Identify Self empowerment routines and outcomes
  - ▶ Disclosure–Selective, indiscriminate or Broadcasting.
  - ▶ CBT strategies –self monitoring irrational self statements and replace with adaptive self talk
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# Health and Work

- ▶ Become as fit as you can– Brain health program.
  - ▶ Acquire a safe place to live independently.
  - ▶ Learn skills to prepare for volunteering or work.
  - ▶ Find a job– become a certified Peer and Wellness Specialist in Nebraska.
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# Summarizing Steps for self stigma resolution

- ▶ Self awareness
  - ▶ Self disclosure
  - ▶ Empowerment
  - ▶ The role of therapy
  - ▶ Health and work
- 

# Wrap up

- ▶ Questions and followups
- ▶ Contacts : L. Sookram PH.D.

# References

- ▶ Corrigan, P., Watson, A. Understanding the impact of stigma on people with mental illness. *World Psychiatry*. Feb. 2002. 16–20.
- ▶ Mittal D, Sullivan G. Chekuri L Alee E Corrigan P, Empirical studies of Self Stigma reduction strategies; a critical review of the literature (2012) *Journal of Psychiatric Services* Vol. 63 No. 10
- ▶ Corrigan P, Mueser K, Bond G, Drake R, Soloman P (2016) 2nd Ed. Principles and practice of Psychiatric Rehabilitation, *Guilford Press*, New York, NY.