

## **Allegheny County Coalition For Recovery Universality of Recovery Principles**

Regardless of what people are recovering from (mental illness, addiction, physical disability, loss of loved one, isolation, victimization, etc.), individuals must come to the realization that while there may be circumstances beyond their control (over which they are powerless, such as an illness), they *do* have the power to manage their lives and make them meaningful and satisfying through the choices and efforts that they make. The idea of recovery is often a personal one, and the meaning of the word may vary between individuals. When one surveys those who have engaged in a recovery process, or reviews the writings on this topic, some basic elements emerge that consolidate this topic and provide insight into its universal applicability. Central to all of these concepts is the idea of change. Recovery is about doing things differently, and recognizing that certain personal choices and behaviors contribute to the level of distress that individuals experience. In order for change to occur, people must recognize the magnitude of the challenge and have the courage to confront it. They must come to believe that they have the capacity to influence the course of their life and future circumstances. It is in this belief that people develop hope and can accept responsibility for change and how they function in the world in which they live. As recovery is defined in this broad sense, it becomes a unifying concept that brings together all people who are striving to grow and make their world fuller as they reach for their greatest potential. It erases the distinctions between provider and patient, addiction and mental illness, young and old and between people's differences in skin color, language, religion, or education by leading to a recognition that everyone must engage in this process, which is at the core of our common humanity. It is through a connection with this understanding that people become part of a recovery community and develop a sense of belonging in the world. Ultimately, recovery is a spiritual journey that is manifest in a wide variety of forms, but is always driven by values that offer hope, autonomy, communion and peace.

[www.coalitionforrecovery.org](http://www.coalitionforrecovery.org)