

# CLEARINGHOUSE CONNECTIONS

YOUR QUARTERLY E-NEWSLETTER UPDATE FROM THE NEW JERSEY SELF-  
HELP GROUP CLEARINGHOUSE.



**THE NEW JERSEY SELF-HELP GROUP CLEARINGHOUSE IS A  
PROGRAM OF THE MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION IN NJ**

## *Self-Help During the Holiday Season*

**THE HOLIDAY SEASON CAN BRING  
ON A LOT OF DIFFERENT EMOTIONS;  
GOOD, BAD, MAYBE A LITTLE BIT OF  
BOTH. NO MATTER WHAT YOU ARE  
FEELING, YOUR PRIORITY SHOULD  
ALWAYS BE YOUR SELF CARE.**



**THE NJ SELF HELP GROUP  
CLEARINGHOUSE IS HERE TO PROVIDE  
YOU WITH RESOURCES AND SUPPORT TO  
GET YOU THROUGH THIS HOLIDAY  
SEASON. TAKE A LOOK THROUGH THIS  
NEWSLETTER TO LEARN WHERE YOU  
CAN GO TO GET SUPPORT DURING THIS  
TIME OF THE YEAR.**

**-Seasons Blessings from  
The NJ Self Help Group Clearinghouse**



## QUARTERLY SPOTLIGHT!



**United By Wellness (UBW)** is a virtual wellness center, within the Mental Health Association in New Jersey, where peers offer hope and skills for recovery to people living with mental health and/or substance use disorder(s). This is accomplished by providing no-cost support, education and advocacy, in a safe and diverse community which embraces the uniqueness of its members and their chosen path towards recovery. The NJ Self Help Group Clearinghouse had a chance to speak with one of the Senior Leadership Members about this innovative resource for the community.

### **Where did the concept for UBW come from?**

During Covid- we noticed that geographical barriers were no longer an issue, and that we were seeing individuals come from all over the state (even the country at times). When the pandemic started people were feeling lonely, isolated, and feeling feelings that they never felt before. Supporting people is what MHA does & being virtual gave us the opportunity to support more people. So MHANJ's 3 Community Wellness Centers (Atlantic: Individuals Concerted in Effort/ICE, Ocean: Journey to Wellness/JTW, Union: Esperanza Wellness Centers) united to help individuals, statewide, find linkages & resources, a sense of connection, understanding, support, and overall wellness. And that is when MHANJ's Statewide Virtual Wellness Center was created... United by Wellness (UBW)!

### **How does a virtual wellness center operate?**

United by Wellness (UBW), MHANJ's Statewide Virtual Wellness Center, operates just like MHA's other 3 Community Wellness Centers, offers free peer support groups to the communities in which the wellness centers are located. MHA's wellness centers provide an environment of mutual support and empowerment that promotes wellness & recovery. UBW however is completely virtual, meaning there is no physical location. Instead UBW offers peer support groups via zoom (live video conferencing & audio conferencing). The virtual platform gives you the benefit of being able to join a support group from the comfort of your own home, taking away any barriers of transportation, childcare issues, or other challenges. Being virtual can be an incredible resource for those who find it difficult or impossible to attend in-person groups.

If someone is interested in attending a group offered by UBW they would need to complete the membership form: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VXP2K8>

Once the membership form is completed – all the group details including zoom info plus any other United by Wellness information will be emailed. It's that simple.



## What kinds of groups/programming are being offered this holiday season?

The Holiday Season can be a magical time but being that we are all peers here at UBW, individuals with lived experience, we know difficult the holiday season may be for some. Therefore United by Wellness (UBW) will be offering a variety of wellness & recovery-oriented support groups throughout December.

40+ FREE support groups, giving folks choices & options, as well as connection & some additional support needed during the holiday season.

Some groups are Holiday Hangouts, Winter Wonder Wellness, Holiday Unwrapped, Lets Have Some Laughs, Music to My Ears Holiday Addition, Holiday Balance/Focused on Food, Christmas Jamboree, Coping with Holiday Blues, Home for the Holidays, and so many more.

## How does someone get involved with UBW?

There are a few ways to get involved with United by Wellness (UBW).

- Register to become a member
- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VXP2K8>

The registration is a simple 3 question survey. Once registered you will have access to the newest & most update UBW info, including zoom information to all UBW groups.

- Call 609-652-3800 & someone will assist in the registration process.
- Email [unitedbywellness@mhanj.org](mailto:unitedbywellness@mhanj.org) with any questions
- Or check out <http://www.mhaac.info/ubw.html>



## Do you have to be a “member” to attend groups?

Yes, to attend a United by Wellness (UBW) group you must be a member & it's FREE.

The process is a super simple 3 question survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VXP2K8>)

You can either click the link & fill out the survey or if you need some assistance you can call 609-652-3800 / email [unitedbywellness@mhanj.org](mailto:unitedbywellness@mhanj.org)

## What makes UBW so unique?

- United by Wellness (UBW) is unique because at a time when people needed to be socially distant- UBW gave people the opportunity to stay emotionally & socially connected & supported.
- United by Wellness (UBW) is a space for individuals to feel accepted, respected, & connected to others who have similar life experiences.
- United by Wellness (UBW) bridges the gap & helps individuals find resources & support in their own county.
- United by Wellness (UBW) is unique because being virtual affords the opportunity for individuals to work on their wellness & recovery from anywhere, at all different times, offering a variety of groups allowing for choices in options. Truly meeting people where they are at.

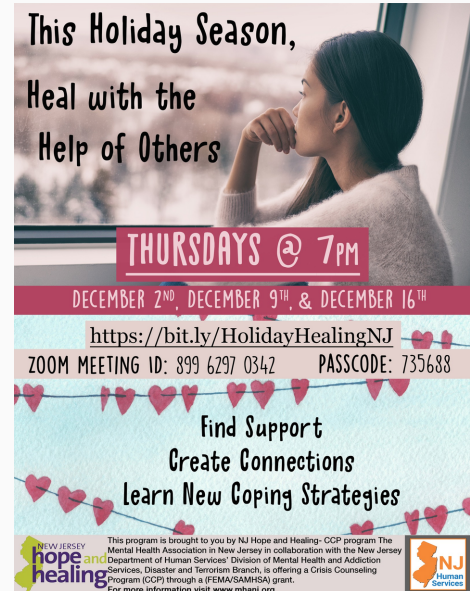
## How can I find out more information?

Call 609-652-3800 or Email [unitedbywellness@mhanj.org](mailto:unitedbywellness@mhanj.org) for more information.



## HOLIDAY RELATED SUPPORT GROUPS BEING HELD THIS DECEMBER

- **Samaritan** is providing a virtual Coping With the Holidays support group through the month of December
- **The Eating Disorder Foundation** is providing a virtual support for individuals at least 18 years old who are struggling or in recovery from an eating disorder, disordered eating, or body image concerns.
- **GriefShare** is holding several "Surviving the Holidays" meetings in person and online throughout NJ.
- **Elderwerks** is holding a Caregiver Support Group: Coping with Holiday Stress



This Holiday Season,  
Heal with the  
Help of Others

**THURSDAYS @ 7PM**

DECEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>, DECEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>, & DECEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>

<https://bit.ly/HolidayHealingNJ>

ZOOM MEETING ID: 899 6297 0342 PASSCODE: 735688

Find Support  
Create Connections  
Learn New Coping Strategies

NEW JERSEY  
hope and healing This program is brought to you by NJ Hope and Healing: CCP program The Mental Health Association in New Jersey in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Human Services' Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Disaster and Terrorism Branch, is offering a Crisis Counseling Program (CCP) through a FEMA/SAMHSA grant. For more information visit [www.mhanj.org](http://www.mhanj.org)

NJ  
Human Services

## MHANJ CALL LINES



CALL 877-292-5588  
TTY: 877-294-4356

CALL FOR SUPPORT AND  
INFORMATION  
MONDAY-FRIDAY 8AM TO 10PM  
SATURDAY-SUNDAY 5PM TO 10PM  
HOLIDAYS-3PM TO 10PM

PEER RECOVERY WARMLINE  
(PRW) IS A PEER-RUN SERVICE  
PROVIDING ONGOING  
TELEPHONE SUPPORT TO  
MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMERS  
AS THEY WORK TOWARDS THEIR  
RECOVERY. ALL CALLS ARE  
ANSWERED BY PEERS WHO ARE  
TRAINED, SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE  
WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE WITH  
MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER.



CALL 855-652-3737  
TTY: 877-294-4356

THE NJ CONNECT FOR  
RECOVERY CALL LINE  
FOCUSES ON HELPING  
PEOPLE WHO ARE  
EXPERIENCING DISTRESS  
RELATED TO THE  
SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER  
OF A FAMILY MEMBER OR  
FRIEND.



CALL 1-866-202-  
HELP(4357)  
TTY: 877-294-4356

NJMENTALHEALTHCARES  
IS NEW JERSEY'S  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
INFORMATION AND  
REFERRAL SERVICE. THE  
STAFF OF SPECIALISTS  
USE THEIR EXPERIENCE  
AND UNDERSTANDING OF  
THE BEHAVIORAL  
HEALTH SYSTEM TO  
PROVIDE CALLERS  
INFORMATION AND  
CONNECT THEM TO THE  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
AND SERVICES THEY  
NEED.



# WRAP CORNER

## COMMON HOLIDAY WELLNESS TOOLS

THE WELLNESS TOOLBOX IS THE CORNERSTONE OF WRAP® (WELLNESS RECOVERY ACTION PLAN).

THE WELLNESS TOOLBOX IS A LISTING OF THINGS YOU HAVE DONE IN THE PAST, OR DO NOW, TO STAY WELL. IT ALSO INCLUDES THINGS YOU ALREADY DO OR MIGHT DO TO HELP YOURSELF FEEL BETTER WHEN YOU ARE NOT FEELING WELL. WELLNESS TOOLS ARE SAFE, SIMPLE, FREE OR LOW COST THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!

A KEY TO WELLNESS DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS TO MAKE SURE YOUR ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES DON'T TAKE AWAY ALL YOUR "ME" TIME.

- DECORATING
- EXTRA TIME WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY
- TAKING A TRIP TO VISIT RELATIVES OR NOT
- SIMPLIFYING RESPONSIBILITIES
- LISTENING TO HOLIDAY MUSIC
- PLANNING A HOLIDAY RITUAL
- INVITING FRIENDS FOR A POT LUCK MEAL
- POSITIVE SELF-TALK
- SETTING TIME LIMITS TO PREVENT SITUATIONS FROM BECOMING OVERWHELMING
- KNOW THAT IT'S OK TO SAY "NO, THANK YOU"
- BAKING
- BUILD A SNOWMAN
- VOLUNTEERING
- GETTING A FLU SHOT
- SENDING HOLIDAY EMAILS OR CARDS
- SELLING OR DONATING UNWANTED HOUSEHOLD AND PERSONAL ITEMS



Watch the Webinar "WRAP for the Holidays with Mary Ellen Copeland" [HERE!](#)

- ATTENDING HOLIDAY CONCERTS AND SING-A-LONGS
- MAKING PLANS TO BE WITH OTHERS FOR A HOLIDAY MEAL
- REFLECTING ON THE POSITIVES FROM THE PAST YEAR - WHICH CAN INCLUDE LOOKING AT PICS & DIARY NOTATIONS
- SUNSHINE AND WALKING
- LEARNING TRADITIONS FROM OTHERS



# FUN FACTS



December is also a time to celebrate some other, not as well known holidays. Festivus is a secular holiday celebrated on December 23 as an alternative to the pressures and commercialism of the Christmas season. It was popularized after being featured on a 1997 episodes of the sitcom "Seinfeld".

"Airing grievances is so healthy, there's a whole holiday for it with family. But during the COVID-19 crisis, our grievances may be toward absolutely everything around us: loved ones, the universe, the world, the economy, and the coronavirus itself..."

-Supportiv.com

## Why Airing Your Grievances is Healthy

"While a comedic holiday, Festivus has psychological utility. The airing of grievances provides catharsis, a release from pent-up emotional energy. It also encourages openness, progress, or apology; and it emphasizes the acceptability of mistakes..." -Supportiv.com

Want to learn more about how to structure your airing of grievances and make complaints effectively, [Click Here!](#)







## WHAT IS THE NJ SELF HELP GROUP CLEARINGHOUSE?

The NEW JERSEY SELF-HELP GROUP CLEARINGHOUSE was started in 1981 as the first statewide operation of its kind in the country. The mission of the Clearinghouse is to help people find and form all types of self-help support groups in order to provide hope, strength and experience to those in need in order to not feel alone.

### WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

- Information on Self-Help Support Groups
- Assistance with Starting New Support Groups
- Trainings and Workshops
- Support Provided via the MHANJ Call Center to those in need of immediate support

## LOOKING TO START A SUPPORT GROUP?

The NEW JERSEY SELF-HELP GROUP CLEARINGHOUSE staff can help!

**Step 1:** Attend a Quarterly "How to Start a Support Group" Webinar.

**Step 2:** Schedule a meeting with one of the NJ Self Help Group Clearinghouse staff to discuss what was learned in the webinar and how to put what was learned into action.

**Step 3:** Keep in touch with the Clearinghouse for any troubleshooting once the group is up and running and update on any group detail changes to be reflected in the Clearinghouse Database.

**Step 4:** Attend regular webinars offered by the NJ Self Help Group Clearinghouse to enhance your support group!



## UPCOMING CLEARINGHOUSE HAPPENINGS

### NJ SELF HELP CLEARINGHOUSE UPCOMING TRAININGS/ WORKSHOPS

#### **"How to Start a Support Group"**

##### **Webinar**

Support Groups offer people who face common challenges the opportunity to meet with others and share their experiences, knowledge, strengths and hopes.

This webinar will offer participants with a basic knowledge of how to start their own support group when they see there is a gap in support for a particular population in their area.

Tuesday December 21st @ 12pm



REGISTER HERE

#### **Digital Peer Support**

This training is intended for peer support specialists working with any population.

This certification is designed to promote rapid uptake of digital peer support and is designed specifically to address the needs of the current COVID-19 crisis. This certification does not assess a person's ability to use technology such as zoom, but rather incorporates the latest scientific evidence of digital peer support.

This 4-hour certification includes dyadic training on: Digital Communication Skills; How to Engage Service Users with Technology; Technology Literacy and Usage Skills; Bonding and Connection through Technology; Available Technologies; Privacy and Confidentiality; Monitoring Digital Peer Support; How to Address a Digital Crisis.

Wednesday January 19th @ 10am



REGISTER NOW!



## UPCOMING CLEARINGHOUSE HAPPENINGS

### NJ SELF HELP CLEARINGHOUSE UPCOMING TRAININGS/ WORKSHOPS

#### **WRAP for Support Group Facilitators**

This workshop will walk facilitators through the WRAP Plan in the scope of maintaining wellness while facilitating support groups

Facilitating support groups is incredibly rewarding and meaningful work, but it can also be stressful at times. Are you looking for ways to stay well and stay on course with your wellness while facilitating your support group(s)? Then this is the workshop for you!

Wednesday February 16th @ 10am



[Click here to view the most recent Key Update Newsletter of the  
National Mental Health Self-Help Clearinghouse](#)

