

Excerpts from Faces & Voices of Recovery website:

## **Our Stories Have Power...A Media Workshop for Recovery Advocates**

### **1,056 recovery advocates trained and counting...**

Find out how to use Faces & Voices of Recovery's new messaging to advance our recovery advocacy agenda!

Growing numbers of recovery advocates are in the media – sometimes to give “human interest” to a story or because of growing press attention and coverage to our recovery advocacy activities. The media help us reach policy and decision makers; educate the public and recruit new members to our growing movement.

*Faces & Voices of Recovery is holding Recovery Advocacy Message and Media Trainings around the country so that recovery advocates can learn more about messaging and using our stories to advocate for our issues.*

Media directly affects how people feel, think, and act. Sharpen your skills as a recovery communicator, strategize with other recovery leaders, then take home new tools that you can use in your community.

Here's what people are saying about our trainings...

*"Great format, great material, great facility and host." - Roger Maryatt*

*"This training will be a powerful tool in expanding our advocacy potential and success." - Betty Currier*

*"...this was a very informative training for media, especially the focus on the one voice message of "Long Term Recovery Works and I am a living example." - Carl Matthews*

*"As intended, it will be useful with the media - but I believe it will be useful, as well in working with government groups, treatment providers, etc - techniques for conveying your message, staying on track, using bridging statements to steer conversation. Thanks." - Anonymous*

Faces & Voices of Recovery is very excited to share with you language that you can use to talk with the public and policymakers about recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs. This messaging is a result of in-depth public opinion research with members of the recovery community and the general public. We encourage you to use this “messaging” or language in all of your recovery advocacy – *if you are speaking out as a person in recovery or a family member or friend.*

*This recovery messaging is excellent. Thanks to Faces & Voices of Recovery for its leadership in developing messages to all Americans that clearly and passionately convey the living reality of long-term recovery from addiction - Bill White*

## Why We Want to Speak About Recovery with One Voice

Over the last two years, Faces & Voices of Recovery has been working to find a way to describe and talk about recovery so that people who are not part of the recovery community understand what we mean when we use the word “recovery.” One of the important findings from our groundbreaking 2004 survey of the general public was that people believe that the word recovery means that someone is trying to stop using alcohol or other drugs. We realized that we needed to find a way to talk about recovery that would allow us to be clear and believable when describing it in a way that will move our advocacy agenda forward.

There are some important things that we’ve learned from our research about how to talk with people about recovery:

1. Making it personal, so that we have credibility
2. Keeping it simple and in the present tense, so that it’s real and understandable
3. Helping people understand that recovery means that you or the person that you care about is no longer using alcohol or other drugs. We do this by moving away from saying “in recovery” to saying “in long-term recovery,” talking about stability and mentioning the length of time that the person is in recovery
4. Talking about your recovery...not your addiction
5. Helping people understand that there’s more to recovery than not using alcohol or other drugs, but that part of recovery is creating a better life

## How and Where to Use This Message

We hope that you will use this message, day in and day out, in all of your advocacy work. “Staying on message” means using the same message over and over again, until it becomes part of our common understanding. You may get sick of saying it, but a unified message, from the entire recovery community is what we need to do now. This basic message will help us maintain our focus and continuity as it gets integrated into everything that we do. In the future, when there’s greater public understanding of recovery, we will be able to change our basic message.

Potential opportunities to use these messages include:

- With the media on all levels
- In coalition meetings
- With supporters
- In meetings with legislators
- In materials you develop to help you drive your overall strategies

In short, any time you write or speak about recovery, publicly or privately, remember to use these messages.

***Putting long-term recovery messaging in a public policy context:*** There’s a reason that people all over our country are organizing to support recovery – to change local, state and national policies that restrict access to recovery and remove barriers to sustained recovery. This messaging is a key part of recovery advocacy issue campaigns. **For more information about MAAR's plan to offer these training sessions in Maine, please contact Deb Dettor at: (207)458-4366 or [ddettor@masap.org](mailto:ddettor@masap.org)**

## Power of Our Stories Training ~ September 13, UMA

