

Three Cords Strong ROSC Alliance  
PRESENTS: Multiple Pathways to Recovery

GUEST SPEAKER: Markita Mitchell  
Meeting Notes- 08/29/24

Meeting Begins at 9:30 am Virtually and In-Person

Meeting Summary: **ROSC** Multiple Pathways to Recovery

**Purpose:** In today's meeting, Marjorie Howard aimed to educate participants about Recovery Oriented Systems of Care (ROSC). She started with a thorough explanation of ROSC, emphasizing its main objectives of raising community awareness and promoting understanding. To reinforce these ideas, she presented a video clarifying the core principles of ROSC, ensuring everyone had a solid grasp of the concept. Marjorie also introduced the guest speaker, Ms. Markita Mitchell from Family Guidance.

**Participant Comments:** There were a few people who felt very passionate about the subject and felt confident in sharing their past and current experiences in their recovery journey. One woman discussed her concerns on whether ROSC was a non-judgmental and inclusive community for those currently facing a substance use disorder while also facing dual diagnoses. She seemed intrigued by the thought of joining but was hesitant due to the lack of support she experienced in past healthcare systems. Ms. Oklah reassured her that ROSC invites anyone regardless of what they are struggling with since they provide a sense of community that combats stigmatization and healthier coping mechanisms. Toward the end of the meeting, many others conversed their hardships and past experiences. Although their discussion was not scheduled into the meeting, their conversation was humble, understanding, and supportive.

### **Introduction of ROSC Council (Three Cords Strong)**

Ms. Oklah introduces "Three Cords Strong" as three sources of support in the terms of personal, family, and community. She discussed how ROSC's mission is to empower individuals on their unique journeys to recovery, regardless of where they are in life. Ms. Oklah connects with the audience by expressing the fears and feelings those in recovery may be experiencing, like isolation and shame. Her efforts instilled a sense of community and trust to the audience and instilled curiosity and hope in creating a better future. She also explained how committed ROSC is to recruiting their community by offering a means of transportation and assistance to those who face external challenges in wanting to get involved.

## **Guest Speaker Presentation:**

**Markita Mitchell:** Associate with Family Guidance

In her introduction, she provided background on the organization Family Guidance and its services. She explained how the organization supports individuals and their families affected by substance use disorders, offering resources for those in recovery and educating families about their loved ones' experiences. She recounted a specific instance when she met with a daughter whose mother was actively in recovery. Her role was to offer reassurance, guidance, and understanding—elements known to benefit both the individual in recovery and their family members. A voluntary PLE shared her own challenges of caring for her children while navigating recovery. Ms. Mitchell listened to her concerns and reassured her, emphasizing that individuals are more than their substance use disorders. She emphasized how the label “addict” can be demoralizing and stigmatizing. Ms. Mitchell reassured the mother that, despite her journey, her worth is not defined by her struggles. She praised the mother for her efforts and the work she has put into her life. Ms. Mitchell also explained the science behind how compulsive behaviors impact the brain's circuitry. She noted that dismissive comments like “Well, why can’t you just stop?” are unproductive and stem from a misunderstanding of the issue. She illustrated how substances causing abnormal dopamine releases can exacerbate a metaphorical “open sore” in the brain, making it more susceptible to harm. The audience responded with nods of understanding. Ms. Mitchell further elaborated on how addictions can be influenced by genetics, unresolved trauma, and untreated mental health issues. In her PowerPoint presentation, she introduced two primary recovery models: the Absence Only Model and the Harm Reduction Approach. The Absence Only Model, akin to going “cold turkey,” involves complete abstinence and is supported by Family Guidance through rehabilitation services. Despite its challenges, this model includes coping strategies and medications to aid in withdrawal. For those for whom this model is impractical, Family Guidance offers the Harm Reduction Approach, which provides some control and manageable steps for individuals struggling with substance use.

## **Discussion Points by Participants**

- One participant in the meeting offered their experiences reducing their dysfunctional cannabis usage from daily and although challenging, served as a form of accomplishment and communal praise.
- The group collectively bonded through self-awareness in their shared efforts to improve their lives while also acknowledging their behaviors and past choices. They also discussed how stigmatization also discouraged their efforts in getting help sooner as well.

## **Guest Speaker Presentation:**

**Markita Mitchells:** Associate with Family Guidance Organization, Understanding Addiction, Absence Only Model, and Harm Reduction Approach.

**Closing:** As the presentation reached the end, she closed by expressing compassion and understanding to struggling individuals by acknowledging setbacks and even relapses are a sign of progress in one's journey and while reassuring them that their efforts do not go to waste.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned promptly at 11:30 am, marking a productive session where personal narratives, expert insights, and community-driven solutions converge to create a more compassionate and effective approach to recovery.

Members were informed about next steps, volunteer opportunities and the next meeting date.

This detailed summary encapsulates the enriching discussions and personal stories shared during the ROSC MAR meeting, emphasizing the importance of community support, holistic recovery strategies, and personal empowerment through positive habits and mentorship.