



May 12, 2011

***Greetings from the California Mental Health & Spirituality Initiative -***

We are pleased to announce that we are expanding the Statewide Steering Committee for the California Mental Health and Spiritually Initiative. The initiative is a grass roots effort formed in 2006 with the intention to unite diverse individuals in the commitment to expand the role of spirituality in mental health wellness and recovery in the public/private mental health system.

We are proud to acknowledge that we have made significant strides through the Initiative. We have accomplished:

- Two statewide conferences attended by 1,100 people
- The first statewide survey of Mental Health Directors, consumers and families on the significance of spirituality in mental wellness and mental health recovery
- Publishing a full report of findings which have national significance and were presented at statewide and national conferences
- Established and maintain a web site with a wide array of print, audio, and video resources on mental health recovery and spiritually
- Several web casts on the subjects related to mental health recovery and spiritually
- Offering high-quality and recovery-oriented training for mental health providers, faith communities, and consumers & family members that can be customized to meet local needs
- Established a statewide stakeholders group with county liaisons which meets monthly to drive the work of the initiative

There is much work ahead and therefore, we would like to recruit new members to join us. We are seeking to expand our ethnic and cultural diversity as well as geographic representation across the state. We are looking for members with any of the following qualifications:

- Passion and commitment for this cause
- Lived experience as a client/consumer of public mental health services
- Lived experience as a family member

- Ethnically and Culturally Diverse, Latino/Hispanic, Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander
- Muslim, Native American, Jewish
- Superior, Rural and Small County Region representation

The application for membership to the California Mental Health and Spiritually Initiative Steering Committee is enclosed. If you have a passion for this field and would like to work to expand the role of spirituality in the public mental health system, ***please complete and submit the application by post mail, fax or email to May Chan:***

May Chan  
2125 19<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95818  
Tel: (916) 379-5328  
Fax: (916) 556-3483  
[mchan@cimh.org](mailto:mchan@cimh.org)

***Deadline for submission is May 31, 2011 at 5pm.*** All applications will be reviewed and a response will be issued within the next 60 days.

You are welcome to forward this letter and the enclosed application form to anyone else who may be interested.

Respectfully Yours,  
The CMHSI Steering Committee  
Membership Committee



# *California Mental Health and Spirituality Initiative*

## **Application to be considered as a Statewide Steering Committee member for the California Mental Health and Spirituality Initiative**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY RESIDE IN: \_\_\_\_\_

**Experience working with/representing the following communities/populations (check all that apply) :**

- Faith-based or practice-based spiritual communities
- Consumers of mental health services
- Family members of consumers
- County or state mental health agency
- Community-based provider of mental health services

**Your Racial/Ethnic Identification (optional) (check all that apply) :**

- African American
- Pacific Islander
- Latino/Hispanic
- Asian
- American Indian/Native American/Alaska Native
- White/Caucasian
- Biracial
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Languages spoken (other than English): \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Gender (optional):**

- Male
- Female
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please indicate)

**Affiliations (check all that apply):**

- Personal Religious or Spiritual Practice: \_\_\_\_\_
- Participate in a Faith-based/Practice Based Religious Organization: \_\_\_\_\_
- Lay leader, chaplain, spiritual leader/elder, pastor, or congregation leaders
- Consumer
- Family Member
- Mental Health Board/Commission Member
- Consumer Advocate and/or Family Advocate
- County MH Manager or Administrator
- County Direct Service Provider or County MH Therapist
- CiMH Board Member
- Health Policy/Advocacy Organization
- Mental Health Contractor/Community-Based Provider
- Grassroots Community Organizer
- Research/Academia
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your interest in serving on the Steering Committee of the California Mental Health and Spirituality Initiative. To help us better understand your relevant experiences; please provide responses to the following items using no more than 2 typed or handwritten pages:

Please briefly describe your work, community and/or personal experience related to spirituality and mental health:

1. Please explain why you have a desire to become a Steering Committee member of the California Mental Health and Spiritual Initiative.
2. Please describe your personal experience pertaining to spirituality and mental health.
3. Please describe the personal, professional, and other attributes you would bring to the Steering Committee.
4. Please describe your personal, advocacy, professional, and/or research experiences promoting spirituality and mental health. Include voluntary experience on advisory committees and other groups.
5. Please list relevant organization membership and affiliations, including faith organizations and consumer/family/recovery groups.
6. Are there other things and/or experiences you would like to share about yourself? Please do so.

Please provide two references including name, organization, relationship to you, and daytime telephone number and/or e-mails.

Name	Organization	Relationship	Telephone Number & e-mail address

Please complete the form and return it no later than 5pm on May 31, 2011 to:

May Chan, Center for Multicultural Development, California Institute of Mental Health, 2125 19th Street, 2nd Floor, Sacramento, CA 95818, Phone 916-379-5328, Fax (916) 556-3483, Email [mchan@cimh.org](mailto:mchan@cimh.org)

For questions please contact May Chan or Khani Gustafson at 916-317-6230 or [kgustafson@cimh.org](mailto:kgustafson@cimh.org).

***Thank you for your commitment to mental health & spirituality!***



## **VALUES STATEMENT**

*“...a greater appreciation of the whole person is emerging in the mental health field...”*

The California Mental Health & Spirituality Initiative was established in June 2008 at the Center for Multicultural Development of the California Institute for Mental Health. It developed out of a grassroots movement founded in 2006 by Jay Mahler and other consumers, family members, and service providers. The purpose of this document is to state the values that guided the formation, and now operation, of this initiative.

**RESPECT FOR ETHICAL AND LEGAL BOUNDARIES.** We advocate for the inclusion of spirituality as a potential resource in mental health services. None of our work should be construed as advocating that mental health providers should “push religion” on the people they serve. There are barriers (including political, legal, and cultural) between the public mental health system and spirituality/religion that need to be addressed carefully and respectfully. We are committed to helping service providers understand these barriers so that they can make informed choices about policy and practice. In particular, we believe that mental health providers should never promote a particular religion or proselytize. They should, however, be receptive and responsive to the expressed interests of their clients and potential clients, including their requests for support with the spiritual aspects of their wellness and recovery.

**SPIRITUALITY INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, RELIGION** – There are many ways to define “spirituality” and “religion.” We utilize the following definitions: Spirituality is a person’s deepest sense of belonging and connection to a higher power or life philosophy which may not necessarily be related to a religious institution. A religion is an organization that is guided by a codified set of beliefs and practices held by a community, whose members adhere to a worldview of the holy and sacred that is supported by religious rituals.

**SPIRITUALITY IS A CORE COMPONENT OF CULTURAL COMPETENCY** – The public/private mental health system in California recognizes that cultural competency, including the ability to understand different worldviews, is necessary for effective practice. Spirituality represents a core value within many ethnic and cultural communities and is often considered a primary resource. Faith-based organizations are a vital source of community leadership for individuals, families, and neighborhoods. Therefore, spirituality can be regarded as an essential connector for ethnic and cultural communities and for understanding wellness, illness, intervention, and recovery. We are committed to the inclusion of multicultural voices that represent California’s broad array of faith traditions and practices.

**SPIRITUALITY IS PART OF A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH** -- We know that physical health can influence an individual’s mental health. The same is true for spirituality. Understanding spirituality as an element in wellness promotion and mental health recovery brings us closer to dealing with the whole person. Many persons from diverse, multicultural communities utilize spiritual and/or faith-based organizations as a source of social support and hope in their wellness promotion and healing process. Spirituality can be a powerful tool to inspire hope, create motivation, and promote healing. By integrating spirituality and multicultural factors into prevention and treatment, a greater appreciation of the “whole person” is emerging in the mental health field.

**SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES CAN OCCUR DURING ALTERED STATES** -- Some people experience altered states with a spiritual component that can support the journey toward wellness and recovery. For some, this

can be a life-changing event. Too often, this spiritual component has been ignored, labeled, or confused with delusions or other symptoms. Providers should respond respectfully and appropriately when clients ask for assistance with these experiences.

**ENGAGEMENT OF FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS** – Faith communities and spirituality can be a source of coping and social support for those struggling with the impact of mental health issues: poverty, homelessness, loss of meaning and purpose, stigma, isolation, etc. Some faith communities have become “welcoming congregations” to people with mental health issues, and others have adopted mental health advocacy as part of their social justice agendas. Mental health agencies are better able to reach unserved, underserved, and inappropriately served populations when they invite collaboration with local faith-based organizations.

We acknowledge that some individuals and families have experienced traumatic interactions with religious communities. In these instances, it is important to provide a safe environment for talking about these experiences in an open and accepting way.

**THE PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE OF CLIENT CHOICE** – We are passionate about choice – including individuals’ and families’ choice *not* to engage with spirituality and/or religion. Mental health services are enriched by an open, welcoming, and non-judgmental stance toward spiritual, religious, and cultural beliefs, practices, rituals, values, theologies, and philosophies – including non-belief or non-practice -- that may be different from one’s own. We welcome the opportunity to be enriched by the wisdom that others have gleaned from their own spiritual path and/or life experience.

**NEED FOR NETWORKING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** -- County mental health authorities and community-based organizations already interact with spirituality and faith-based organizations in numerous ways. We believe they can benefit from knowing more about what other individuals, agencies, and systems are already doing and what results they have had. It is the role of the California Mental Health & Spirituality Initiative to facilitate this technical assistance.

This values statement was revised and adopted by the Initiative’s Statewide Steering Committee (then called “Work Group”) on January 20, 2009. Because we are always learning, this values statement will be updated over time as needed.

#### **STATEWIDE STEERING COMMITTEE, CALIFORNIA MENTAL HEALTH & SPIRITUALITY INITIATIVE:**

- Patty Blum, PhD, CPRP, Crestwood & Dreamcatchers, Sacramento, CA, 209-481-8203, [pblum@cbhi.net](mailto:pblum@cbhi.net)
- C. Rocco Cheng, Ph.D., Corporate Director of Prevention and Early Intervention Services, Pacific Clinics, Irwindale, CA, 626/960-4020 x 208, [rcheng@pacificclinics.org](mailto:rcheng@pacificclinics.org)
- Gigi Crowder, MSW, Ethnic Services Manager, Alameda County Behavioral Healthcare Services, 510-777-2118, [gcrowder@acbhcs.org](mailto:gcrowder@acbhcs.org)
- Khani Gustafson, MSW, Project Manager, California Mental Health & Spirituality Initiative, Center for Multicultural Development, California Institute for Mental Health, 916-317-6230, [kgustafson@cimh.org](mailto:kgustafson@cimh.org)
- Manuel J. Jiménez, Director, Merced County Mental Health, 209-381-6805, [Manuel.Jimenez@co.merced.ca.us](mailto:Manuel.Jimenez@co.merced.ca.us)
- David Lukoff, PhD, Professor of Psychology, Institute for Transpersonal Psychology & Founder, Spiritual Competency Resource Center, 707-763-3576, [david.lukoff@gmail.com](mailto:david.lukoff@gmail.com)
- Jay Mahler, Consumer Relations Manager, Alameda County Behavioral Healthcare Services, Oakland, CA, 510-567-8135, [jmahler@acbhcs.org](mailto:jmahler@acbhcs.org)
- Rev. Laura L. Mancuso, MS, CRC, Interfaith Chaplain & Consultant, Goleta, CA, 805-886-9193, [mancuso@west.net](mailto:mancuso@west.net)
- Kumar Menon, MSPA, Chief, Community & Government Relations, Office of the Director, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Los Angeles, CA, (213) 639-6757, [KMenon@dmh.lacounty.gov](mailto:KMenon@dmh.lacounty.gov)
- Minister Monique Tarver, Mental Health & Spirituality Events Planning Consultant, Peers Envisioning and Engaging in Recovery Services (PEERS), Oakland, CA, 510-552-5284, [mtarver@peersnet.org](mailto:mtarver@peersnet.org)