

# PATHWAY HOME™

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Barry Granek,  
Senior Director

## “Might as Well Face It, You’re Addicted to Love”

Of the various challenges that behavioral health providers look to address, substance use is one that is fraught with failure and frustration. Addiction oftentimes appears to affect decision-making skills and providers describe an incongruity between talk and behaviors. One minute, to the best of our detectors, one is fully motivated with a clear plan to remain substance free. Hours later, in a substance induced state, poor decisions lead to aggression, medical complications, and psychiatric emergencies. A [U.S. Surgeon General publication](#) revealed that addiction is on the rise. Providers are increasingly seeing more people drinking, gambling, binge eating, and misusing opioids. The assiduousness of the disease and a recovery journey that is marked with many relapses pushes the behavioral health community to seek novel approaches to treatment.

I would like to share a story about a man whom I will call Alan. Alan used alcohol and drugs daily. He was living on the street and had alienated any potential social support network, including his family. In the previous few years he had spent much of his time in hospitals or jail, arrested for petty crimes like possession of illegal substances and shoplifting. According to his most recent police report, Alan was “acting wild with scissors,” clearly as a result of symptoms related to his unaddressed behavioral health needs. After courts deemed him unfit to stand trial, he was diverted to a hospital for psychiatric treatment.

While inpatient, a peer visited him daily. Describing one conversation, the peer said, “we talked about wanting more out of life and he went on to say his life goals cannot be accomplished if he is in and out of the hospital because of not taking care of himself.” Alan’s lifestyle, focused on survival, left Alan not participating in treatment, unemployed, and living on the streets without any family connections or social supports. He stated to peer, “I want to take back control of my life.”

The next six months consisted of incremental change; small steps in the right direction. First, finding a clinic and doctor that Alan was comfortable with, one he trusted so he would consistently attend. Then, Alan navigating the NYC shelter system and understand the process of obtaining housing. Next, obtaining all of his IDs and applying for benefits like Medicaid and food stamps, while using community resources to fill in gaps for food, clothes, and other essential items, as all of Alan’s possessions were lost during the incarceration. Alan found seasonal jobs, first in a department store, then in a clothing store. All the while, signing up for GED classes and connecting to employment services.

I caught up with Alan months later, to see how he was doing and curious to understand his recovery journey. He had moved into an apartment with two roommates-- his first home in years. No re-arrests or readmissions occurred, Alan was actively participating in his behavioral health treatment, has remained substance free, and is well connected to his care coordinator. Alan works for the Parks Department and is working with his employment specialist to find another job when this one ends. The hard work was done by Alan, though he credits the relationships with his formal supports, the clinicians, care managers, and peers that helped him hope and believe in a better life. More notably, he credits the community support that he met along the way-- the friends, coworkers, roommates, and his family, whom he reconnected with.

Attachment Theory illuminates how humans require others to achieve psychological stability. Initially written about in context of the infant/parent relationship, John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth later expanded Attachment Theory to explain adult behaviors and relationships. People need others to regulate their emotions. Absence of socialization and human support consistently cause anxiety and loneliness. For some, the effects are minor, yet still present. For example, even when separation with a loved one is short, researchers have found changes in behavior and physiology such as increased activity and heart rate. Longer separation or lack of positive social support is significant and can cause despair and may lead to decreased activity, socialization, play, food intake, heart rate, sleep, and growth.

Disruption in attachments are painful. Just like physical injury causes pain, as the body evolved and created a mechanism for

# “I want to take back control of my life.”

safety. So too the body evolved responses to emotional harm, like loss of loved one. Meaning, the body is affected by emotional harm just as it is harmed by physical injury. This is why one feels bad when confronted with a loss, a trauma, or prolonged loneliness. According to research by Dr. Philip Flores, without human contact and nourishing relationships, some use drugs or resort to other harmful behaviors to soothe and relax, emotionally and physiologically. The solution is familiar - human contact and nourishing relationships!

The PH program acts early, engaging individuals during inpatient treatment. This is a time when momentum is achieved due to likelihood of motivation, clear thinking to develop life goals, and possibility of creating a social support network. Energy is spent building rapport and fostering relationships through reconnecting with family or creating new social support networks. By utilizing the natural community supports, not only are gaps in care able to be closed, but attachments are created, and the brain builds new pathways founded on friendship, love, and hope. Progress is iterative, and over time, with an increase in socialization, there is an increase in recovery.

## EDITORIAL

This past month, Pathway Home™ launched a team that will provide care transition services to individuals transitioning from Rehab and Detox. The goal is to increase access to Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) and reduce overdose death through prevention, treatment and recovery activities. The services will include addressing immediate needs, linking to community services, accompanying to initial appointments, and resolving the barriers and challenges that may arise during a transition to community care.

Addiction is a difficult disease to overcome. “It is not enough to just stop drinking,” Dr. Flores says, “to achieve long-term wellbeing, those struggling with addiction need opportunities to forge healthy emotional attachments.” The more we can help connect participants to community resources that offer opportunities to meaningfully connect with others, the more we are facilitating an invaluable tool towards recovery. In the words of [Johann Hari](#), “[the opposite of addiction is not sobriety. The opposite of addiction is connection.](#)”

## Call Me First!

Daniel resides in a NYC shelter. He mentioned to his Pathway Home™ team that he sometimes is confused and anxious. His IDs were stolen from his last apartment, leaving Daniel frustrated and angry. Although there are staff on-site at the shelter, Daniel expressed discomfort talking with shelter staff when feeling upset, worried they might call EMS on him.

The Call Me First Campaign is Pathway Home™’s efforts to encourage participants to know that they can call their team. Symptoms happen - we want participants to call and be able to talk to someone right away. When someone doesn’t feel well, is anxious, frustrated, feels down, or even feels lonely, there is someone they can call - The Pathway Home™ team.

Marlon (Case Manager) when accompanying Daniel to DMV to assist with obtaining his ID’s back, discussed the Pathway Home™ Call Me First Campaign.

Daniel called and talked to Ariane (Clinician) to process when he was feeling upset and triggered about his belongings getting stolen. Ariane processed with Daniel his feelings and helped him calm down and identify practical steps he can take to obtain needed items. Daniel stated, “I feel comfortable being able to contact and speak with someone when I have an issue and am feeling anxious.”



L to R: SCM Marlon P and Daniel F at the DMV filing for his ID the hospital.  
CALL ME WHEN YOU:  
• Just don't feel well  
• Feeling anxious or depressed  
• Feeling lonely  
PH Staff: MALLON  
Phone #: 646-314-3141  
24 hours a Day 7 Days a Week

# Pathway Home™ Training Institute

## Introducing: Emily Grossman

CBC welcomes Emily Grossman as the new Pathway Home™ Training Institute Training Manager. Emily has Masters in Education from Columbia University and has extensive experience developing training curriculums and offering trainings at non-profits including NYAPRS, Columbia Center for Practice Innovation and most recently The Jewish Board. Before becoming a trainer, Emily worked as a mental health peer provider in New Jersey for several years.



Hi everyone! My name is Emily Grossman, and I'm so excited to be the new Training Manager at CBC's Pathway Home™ Training Institute. Since beginning in this role, I've been busy preparing to train you all. Thank you to everyone for welcoming me and helping me to feel at home. I've had the honor of visiting some teams and look forward to visiting more of you. You all amaze me! I'm so thrilled about the enthusiasm and commitment that you all have for your work. As a peer myself, you have no idea how much this touches me, both personally and professionally. I've also began collecting information about which trainings you all would like to see more of, and I'm going to make sure

that you receive the trainings that are important to your work. Right now, we have added a Person-Centered Engagement and De-escalation Training that will be part of the new staff orientation, and then open the full training up to all Pathway Home™. This training focuses on how to better engage participants around the goals that are important to them, and how to manage a crisis with a participant. I can't wait to get to not just train all of you, but to learn from you as well, which is the most fun part of my job. If you have any training needs or ideas, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at [egrossman@cbc.org](mailto:egrossman@cbc.org). Thrilled to be learning alongside of all of you!

Keep growing,

*Emily Grossman*

# Specialty Meetings: Be in the Know

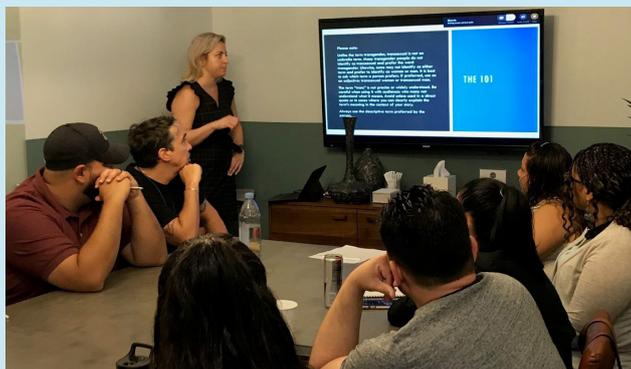
## Health is Wellth™

Pathway Home™ RN's convened on August 9th to review staff and participants experiences with Wellth™. The group of "Wellth Champions" discussed importance of training participants on basics of smart phone usages, though as one RN eloquently put that a notable amount of time is being dedicated to training and re-training on smart phone/application. The room was in consensus that success depends on the user. RN's agreed that some demographics including those not necessarily tech savvy aren't the best users. The group also discussed solutions to such obstacles such as assessing a participant's capability for Wellth™ during Pathway Home™ Physical Health Assessment or tapping into providers such as Home Health Aides to assist members on use of Wellth™ app (help member takes pictures of meds). For those ambivalent or unfamiliar with the app, training/educating before hospital discharge was suggested so that participants are primed to use app.



## Warriors of Love

What can we do to better serve one of the world's most vulnerable groups? Sarah Abramson (CBC) and Edward O'Dowd (CA Peer) facilitated a group discussion on **Working and Supporting with LGBTQIA+ Individuals** for the Pathway Home™ Case Managers. Presentation led to a discussion on internal biases and supporting those who identify differently from ourselves. The group asked poignant questions regarding identity and the difference



between "cis-gender and non cis-gender." Resources were shared for working with LGBTQIA+ in the community. The idea of a group email chain between case managers was suggested as a way to continue communication on this topic and continue to share ideas and resources.

## Leaning on Us

While indulging on coffee and pasteries, the Pathway Home™ Peers conversated in a creative dialogue about strategy and support when working with PH participants. The main theme that evolved during this lively discussion was sharing resources and how to assist each other with this sometimes-difficult work. Discussion included how to utilize self-care options when working in high stress environments like inpatient units, to utilizing resources like [The Hearing](#)

[Voices Network](#) for those that experience

auditory hallucinations. Emily Grossman, Pathway Home™ Training Institute's new Training Manager joined the meeting to offer her insight to the Peer resources available in the city. Emily shared the [NYC Peer Workforce](#)

[Coalition](#) which is an NYC professional organization for peers rights and salary increases. Noah Phillips (CA), shared an

exceptional resource on [The Institute for the](#)

[Development of Human Arts](#). This group of mental health workers, specifically peers, run trainings on transforming the mental health system. Next Peer Meeting will be September 24th at 10am at CBC.



## Sex-Ed

Pathway Home™ promote participants to obtain ongoing knowledge of all aspects of their health. Toni Collins (SUS RN) presented on **Sexual Health & Psychopharmacology** to Pathway Home™ Clinicians. Toni and the group discussed the various STIs, signs & symptoms, & treatment. More importantly they went over how to discuss these difficult topics with participants and knowing when to probe and back off. Training switched gears and finished off with discussion and information shared on the various psychotropics used for individuals with behavioral health conditions.



L to R: Daisy V and Carmen C posing in her living room

By Daisy Velazquez

# Carmen's Winning Team

“One day I got up and couldn’t deal with people dying in my life and had to make a decision to take care of myself” is what Carmen said right before she admitted herself into a Fordham rehab where she remained for 13 years. Carmen was unfortunately no stranger to loss and trauma. She migrated to the US from Puerto Rico at the age of 6 with her parents, with some ups and downs over the years. Carmen worked in a glass factory, a cigarette factory, and a clothing factory. She loved to dance and cook but she also had a troubled upbringing. She was raped multiple times, has been in domestically violent relationships, and has been in and out of hospitals many times. It got so bad that Carmen even made an attempt on her life... “I couldn’t deal with my past and ended up on drugs and attempted suicide by taking a whole bottle of pills”.

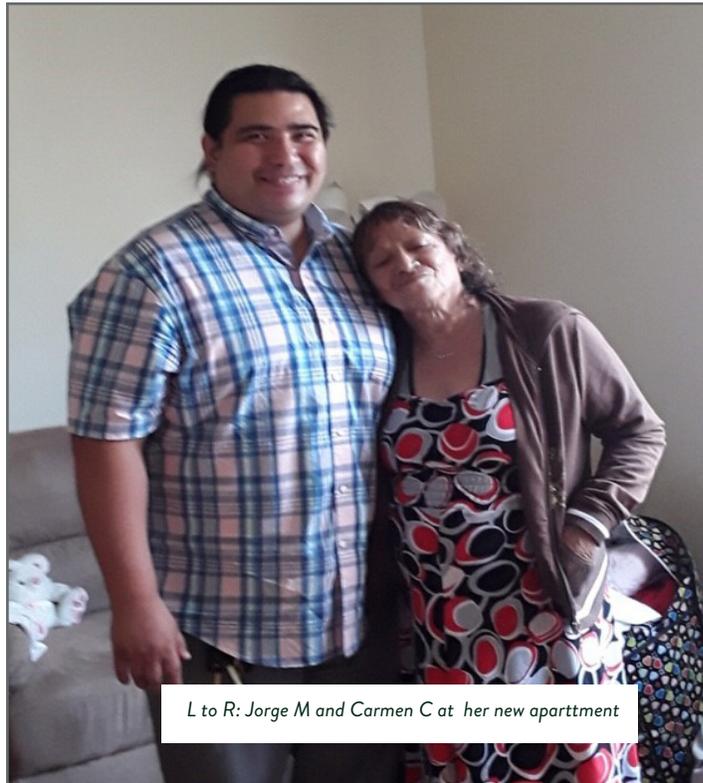
Carmen was also resilient and never gave up on herself, she got married and had children. But just when life was starting to take a positive turn her husband died from suicide. Over the years Carmen also lost a brother and a sister and she turned to drugs to cope. The drugs led her to a point where she couldn’t care for herself and lost touch with her children. After some years, her resilience shined through, and she decided to get sober. Fast forward to today, Carmen has been abstinent for 13 years and has been attending a methadone program for 10 years, waking up at 5:30am to be at her program on time. abstinent for 13 years and has been attending a methadone program for 10 years and wakes up at 5:30am every morning to be at her program at 7:00am.

Along this journey she started to rebuild her relationship with her daughter and speaks to her 2-3 times a week. Carmen is now 70 years old and has been residing in Sandford Adult Home since August 2018 and dreams of dancing and cooking for herself again in her own apartment. She joined Pathway Home™ WellLife team in May 2019 and with the help of her Senior Case Manager, Daisy Velazquez and the rest of the team she finally moved into her own studio apartment in July! She attends all her medical and mental health appointments and is beyond happy that she had someone whose helped her in transitioning into the community.

Prior to move she was working closely with the Pathway Home™ Team RN, Jorge Maldonado to ensure she understood her medication regimen and how to administer properly. Carmen admits to being anxious about being in the community on her own but also believes part of that is just excitement. She now listens to music and dances when she wants to and even reported that the first thing, she did in her apartment was “cook real scramble eggs”.

Carmen’s aware that to successfully stay in the community she has to stay connected to her providers, attend appointments, and take her medication independently. “I’ll do what I have to do in order to live the way I know my parents wanted me to live when they sent me to come to New York from Puerto Rico. All I want is to succeed in life and have my daughter proud of me.”- Carmen.

“All I want is to succeed in life and have my daughter proud of me.”



L to R: Jorge M and Carmen C at her new apartment

# Yes, You CANine

By Ariane Ernst



After spending a year in a Bronx Children’s State Hospital, Angie joined Pathway Home™. Only 18 years old, Angie needed extra community support upon transition to community due to her self-harming behavior and chronic suicidality, attempting multiple suicide attempts. At first shy and anxious, she lacked the confidence to return to school, find a job, or engage in community activities. The PH clinician focused on rapport building and confidence boosting to help Angie feel comfortable when communicating struggles and working towards her education and vocational goals. Once rapport was established, Angie felt comfortable enough to reveal to her clinician that she still experiences daily with intrusive suicidal thoughts and impulses, barriers to studying and working. Clinician counseled Angie regularly, especially in real time when in crisis, assessing for suicide risk and helping Angie obtain a psychiatric treatment. Utilizing mindfulness skills and reinforcing self-soothing technique, Clinician assisted Angie in honing her ability to regulate emotions and minimize self-harm. Helpful to Angie was creation of community linkages to services specializing in personality disorders and connection to a social network through psychosocial clubhouses. Angie is due to graduate Pathway Home™, successfully earning her GED during her time with PH and now working full-time as a dog-groomer. She plans to take college classes in the fall and aspires to be a social worker or peer counselor so that she can help others with similar problems.



# A Birthday Surprise

By Edward O'Dowd

This summer, Serge was visiting Community Access PH director, Lauren Acri and myself. He makes frequent visits since he is now familiar with traveling within Manhattan and some of Brooklyn. It's always great to see him and he always comes equipped with his wonderful smile. Serge told us he has been patiently waiting for his birthday and since he had seen us celebrate other participants' birthdays, was hoping he could do something really different from his usual daily repertoire. I asked him what he would like to do on his special day. At first, Serge said he wanted to go hunting, but then quickly changed his mind and exclaimed FISHING!



I had a hunch this would be pretty easy to achieve as I had been fishing on the Atlantic Ocean before. There are numerous boats docked at Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn that do both day and night fishing trips and the best part was that it wasn't so expensive as to being out of reach.

We departed around 3:30pm and arrived at the port just in time to get on the boat. The crew were all very nice and helpful. On the boat they offer a lottery for whomever catches the biggest fish of the night. Serge and I both declined from gambling with our cash and decided to skip it. Who would have believed that Serge caught the biggest fish that evening!

The weather was somewhat turbulent. We got rained on a few times as the captain attempted to change locations to gentler areas. This only served to make the trip more fun because as dusk was setting in, the sky became this incredible painting of clouds of various sizes, colors and textures. At one point there was even a rainbow!

The other passengers weren't catching too many fish. I was surprised within the first hour I caught two porgies. Then Serge's fishing rod began to bend wildly. Reeling in the line, the bunch of us gathered around could see the enormous porgy Serge had hooked!

After the 4 hour trip came to a close, Serge and I went in search of food and a subway to get us home. He had a big smile on his face and was full of jokes. We both agreed that the best part of the evening was breaking our individual routines to see the outside world at a different time of day.



# BOOTS ON THE GROUND

By Angelo Barberio

Summer is coming to close, but not before I got a chance to sit down with Toni Collins, Registered Nurse with SUS Community Pathway Home™ Team working with individuals transitioning from State Psychiatric centers back into the community. We talked all things Pathway Home as well as life outside of work.



TONI COLLINS

## DID YOU KNOW?!?

Toni has working in the medical field for 10 years! She loves dogs and between her and her family she has 3 dogs (Morty, Sandy, & Piper).

**Strengths:** “Empathetic and open-minded”

**Weakness:** “Emotionally invested and sometimes get too attached if things don’t go to well with members.”

**Outside of work:** Toni is trying to work out more and travel more. She’s planning on going to Turkey in August! (Enjoy your trip!) She loves kids and she’s close with her sister, mother, & aunt.

**Greatest Achievement:** “Getting her Nursing License”

**Me: So, Toni How long have you been working for SUS? Pathway Home™?**

**Toni:** “I actually have been working with Pathway Home SUS team for the last 8 months.”

**Me: That’s Incredible! So why did you decide to join the Pathway Team™?**

**Toni:** “I received my nursing license in Nov 2017 and prior to this I was working in a subacute post operation rehab. This is my first field-based position, but I was always drawn towards working with individuals with behavioral health needs.”

**Me: How do you like working for the Pathway Team™?**

**Toni:** “I like the team-based approach and the support the team brings. I’m not afraid to ask for help because of it.”

**Me: What do you find challenging working in Pathway Home™?**

**Toni:** “This is my first time working with the SMI population so sometimes communicating with member can be hard as I may have to redirect the conversation and try to keep them on track. The other challenging part is trying not to get too attached to the member and their needs.”

**Me: One lesson you’d give to new Pathway Home™ members?**

**Toni:** “Be patient with your members. Get to know your team members and work together.”

# Cooling Off PH Style

By Joan Sass



August brought the heat but what better way to cool off by attending CCNS' annual BBQ! The Pathway Home™ program along with CCNS' other Care Coordination programs held their BBQ in Brooklyn. In utilizing Uber Health, PH participants were able to attend this year's event. Over 10 participants enjoyed playing Uno with staff, eating barbeque, playing games like musical chairs and a dance off. Participants were offered ice cream provided by Mr. Softee and given take away to bring home. It was a great day to all come together and celebrated the end of the summer with a bang!



Participants and CCNS Team