

Leveraging Community Engagement to Address Alcohol Use Disparities in the Deaf Community



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DEAF YE 

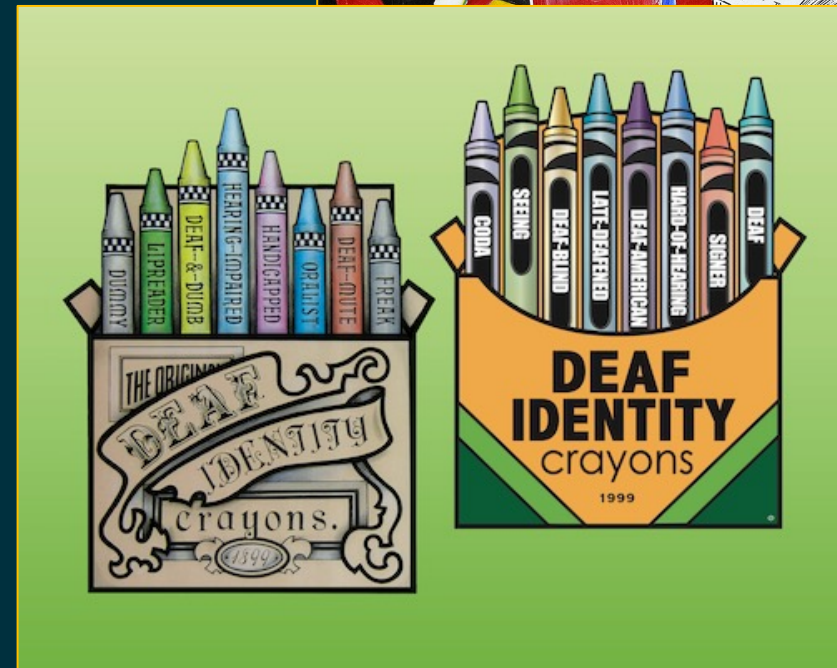
Center for Deaf Empowerment and Recovery



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MEDICAL SCHOOL

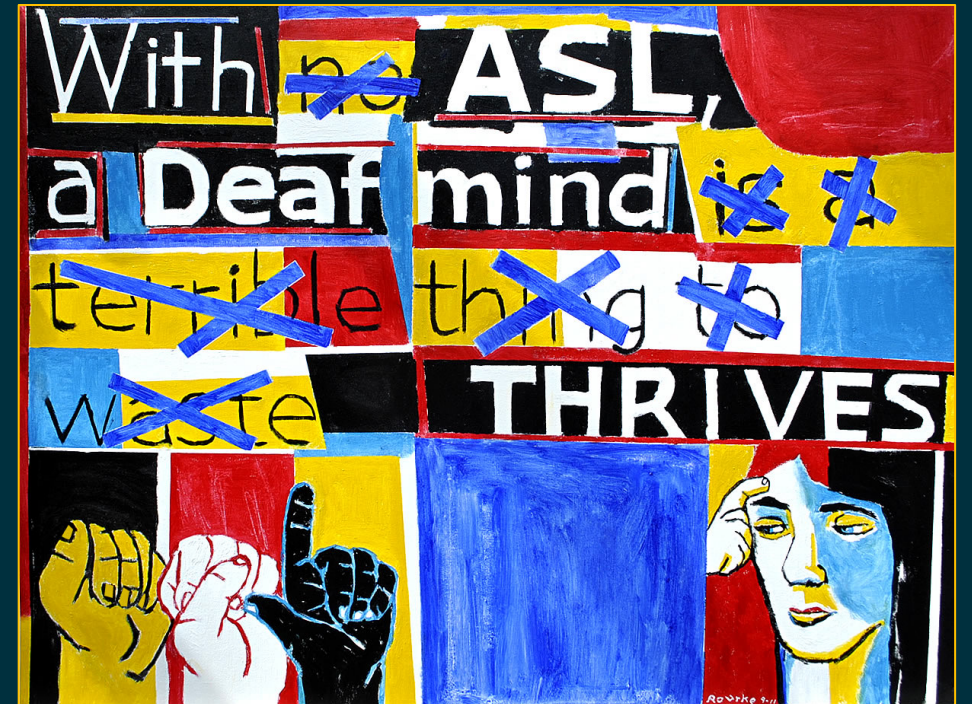
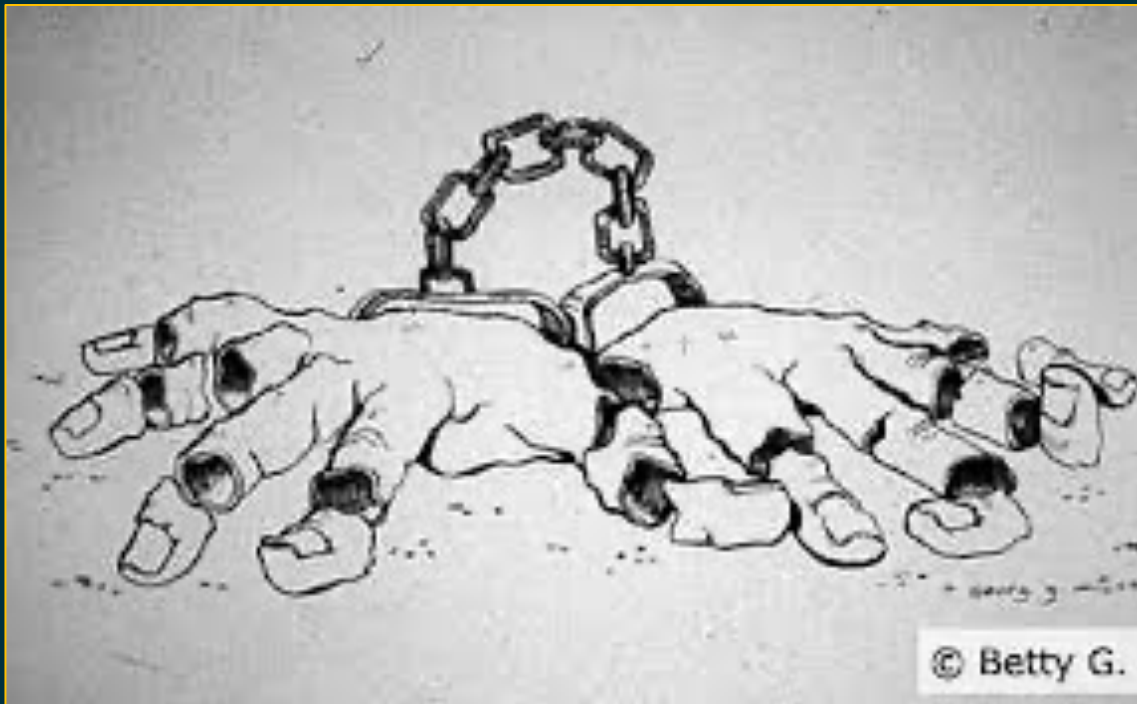
U.S. Deaf Community

- 500,000+ individuals who communicate using American Sign Language (ASL)
- Cultural view of embracing **Deafhood** versus medical view of curing/fixing **deafness**



U.S. Deaf Community

- History of **oppression** within majority hearing world, especially around freedom to use ASL



Social Determinants of Health

- Compared to hearing populations, Deaf people experience higher rates of:
 - Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
 - Under- and unemployment
 - Public insurance or lack of insurance
 - Limited educational attainment

Behavioral Health Disparities

- Increased rates of mental health conditions and substance use disorder. Examples:
 - **Mood and anxiety disorders** = 2 - 2.5x the general population
 - **Trauma exposure** = 2x the general population
 - **Problem drinking** = 3x the general population

Language Barriers

- Deaf clients' **primary language = ASL**
 - Limited number of ASL-fluent professionals
 - Limited access to, willingness to provide, or funds to support certified ASL interpreters
 - English (written) is acquired as a 2nd language

Health Literacy

- Many Deaf clients also present with **fund of information deficits** and **low health literacy**
- Health-related vocabulary among Deaf ASL users parallels non-English-speaking U.S. immigrants
- “Many adults deaf since birth or early childhood do not know their own family medical history, having never overheard their hearing parents discussing this with their doctor” (Barnett et al., 2011)

Cultural Considerations

- Most available healthcare professionals are hearing and, therefore, represent the majority oppressor group
- History of **oppression**, especially within healthcare settings, can lead to:
 - Increased mistrust and fear
 - Reduced cooperation with hearing professionals
 - Complete avoidance of the healthcare system

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE



DEAF YE



Center for Deaf Empowerment and Recovery

Our **mission** is
to partner with the Deaf community
to develop innovative
addiction and mental health resources
that are uniquely and expertly tailored
for Deaf signing people.

Examples: Therapy Tools

Signs of Safety

Deaf-accessible therapy toolkit for trauma and addiction – supplement to the Seeking Safety treatment model.

- **Current Status**

- Pilot feasibility trial (R34) completed in August 2022

- **Engagement Methods**

- Deaf Community Advisor on research team
- Deaf-engaged intervention development team

- **Primary Outcomes**

- Past-month PTSD symptoms; past-month drinking days

- **Next Steps**

- R01 to support nationwide clinical trial in collaboration with Deaf-owned agency National Deaf Therapy

Signs of Safety



Deaf MET

Adaptation of Motivational Enhancement Therapy for Deaf clients.

- **Current Status**

- Analyzing qualitative interview data collected from Deaf people in recovery and providers

- **Engagement Methods**

- Deaf-led intervention development team
- Pilot intervention cycles (3) with Deaf participants

- **Primary Outcome**

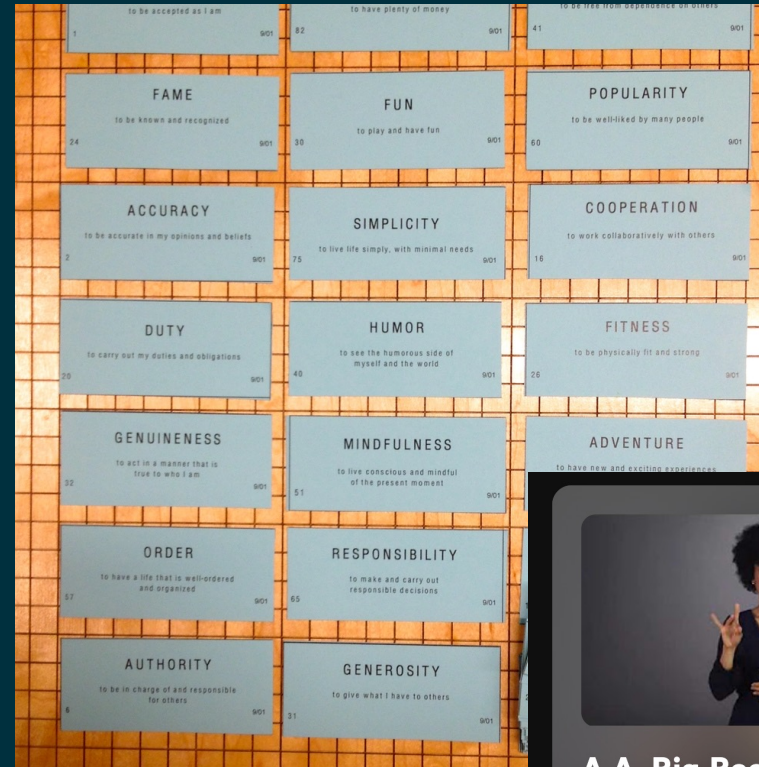
- Stage of change readiness

- **Next Steps**

- Intervention development

Deaf MET

- Value Card sort in ASL
- Sharing of personal stories by people in recovery
- Visual/non-linguistic version of rulers
- Manual identifying change talk in ASL (video manual?)
- Identify helpful assessments



A.A. Big Book in ASL: Full Book

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.
25 videos Last updated on Mar 18, 2021

Play all Shuffle

The complete fourth edition of the Big Book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," the basic text of A.A. in American Sign Language.

- 1 A.A. Big Book in ASL: Full Book 7:10
- 2 A.A. Big Book in ASL: Full Book 3:40
- 3 A.A. Big Book in ASL: Full Book 18:57
- 4 A.A. Big Book in ASL: Full Book 2:54
- 5 A.A. Big Book in ASL: Full Book 3:43
- 6 A.A. Big Book in ASL: Full Book 20:03
- 7 A.A. Big Book in ASL: Full Book 1:01:06
- 8 A.A. Big Book in ASL: Full Book 42:22



SUPPORTING RECOVERY

Deaf people are 2 to 3 times more likely to experience mood and anxiety disorders, trauma exposure, and addiction compared to hearing people. The DeafYES! team is tackling these disparities head-on.

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