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### **Mental health activism as identity transformation**

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There is a growing body of evidence suggesting that mental health activism has had an impact on policy and care system changes as well as in the creation of peer support networks. Additionally, some researchers have explored the effect that mental health activism and peer support has on the identity of its participants. One of the most innovative frameworks for studying the process of identity transformation in people with mental health problems is the 'Citizens—Community Enhancement Project' developed at the Yale Program for Recovery and Community Health. In this presentation we will summarize novel findings of this project regarding identity transformation among mental health activists. By using participatory and mixed methodologies combining interviews and focus groups, as well as a Citizenship psychometric measure, we have analyzed how the strength of a person's connection to their rights, responsibilities, roles, resources, and relationships shapes the process of identity transformation that characterizes enduring recovery. We will argue that the use of these bottom-up, source-embedded, mixed methodologies is suited to the participatory nature of mental health activist groups also enabling us to depict common rituals and processes such as group identification, identity fusion and differentiation.