

Tonja Myles is an ordained minister, community activist, peer counselor, veteran, subject matter expert in mental health, untreated trauma, a faith-based approach to substance abuse recovery and sought-after counsel for community based and system approaches. She promotes mental health awareness and rehabilitation with sharing her life experiences being in recovery from addictions for over 36 years, suicide survivor, victim of childhood and adult sexual abuse and diagnosis of PTSD. Her story is shared in published books, magazines, documentaries, featured talk show guest and national television series. She is a passionate advocate of humane and ethical treatment of individuals with mental illness, substance abuse, sexual trauma, domestic abuse and those formally, and or incarcerated.

Unlike a clinical counselor, Tonja can openly share her lived experience in recovery while helping others change their lives. She is trained in mental health first aid for both adults and youth. Her role of a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist which is an evidence based best practice approach to treatment and recovery. Her role of peer specialist has emerged from reconnecting substance abuse and mental health treatment to the provision of ongoing supports in recovery. She has moved thousands of people to sobriety and healthy self-sustainable lifestyle, with her resourcefulness, passion and peer support services.

As a result of her long-time work in social services, Tonja has developed an extensive network of community leaders, public officials, law enforcement, and community resources. Tonja was recognized by President George W. Bush, during his 2003 State of the Union speech to the nation. He acknowledged her perseverance and expertise in faith-based recovery, and went on to become the face of the faith-based approach to substance abuse treatment for His administration for 6 years. She is currently working for RI International, and does contract and consulting work for the city and state of Louisiana.

Tonja served in The Louisiana Army National Guard for 9 years as military police. Her military training and dedication to serve her state and country enhanced her servant leader skills and ability to mobilize to action quickly is a part of what makes her so successful today.