



# Clubhouse International

Creating Community: Changing the World of Mental Health

## Judge Steven Leifman to Address Clubhouse International Gathering on *“Mental Illness: Urgent Moral Crisis of Our Time”*

**NEW YORK CITY** – September 29, 2015 – [Clubhouse International](#), a pioneering organization that has created a successful model to help those suffering from [mental illness](#) reclaim their lives and realize their potential through work and the support of a caring community, will welcome Judge Steven Leifman as the featured speaker at a private gathering of mental health advocates at 6:00pm on Wednesday September 30<sup>th</sup> at [Scandinavia House](#) in New York City.

Judge Leifman, who is the recipient of the 2015 William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence among other honors, will speak on the topic of *“Mental Illness: Urgent Moral Crisis of Our Time.”* Judge Leifman is at the forefront of a public policy movement in the criminal justice system to reduce the number of people with mental illness in prison, and to develop alternative approaches that offer treatment and support for recovery. He serves as Associate Administrative Judge in the Miami-Dade County Court Criminal Division and Special Advisor on Criminal Justice and Mental Health for the Supreme Court of Florida. He is co-chair of the Council of State Governments/ TAPA Center for Jail Diversion Judges’ Criminal Justice/Mental Health Leadership Initiative and member of the National Leadership Forum for Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Services.

According to the World Health Organization, about 450 million people worldwide suffer from mental disorders – *more than cancer, diabetes or heart disease*. The National Alliance on Mental Illness reports that 1 in 4 people in the U.S. develop some kind of mental illness during their lives, most often in younger years. Mental disorders are a factor in 90% of the nearly 1 million global suicides each year. Treatment for mental illness is inadequate: 360,000 people with mental illness are housed in under-equipped U.S. jails, compared to only 35,000 in psychiatric hospitals.

Joel Corcoran, Executive Director of Clubhouse International, said, “as part of our global advocacy efforts to change the world of mental health, we are extremely pleased to welcome Judge Leifman at Wednesday’s gathering, for an important dialog on how to curb the devastating effects of mental illness on individuals, their families and on society as a whole. Our work has never been more relevant in our world, and our efforts are at the core of recovery.”

Clubhouse International is dedicated to helping communities around the world start and grow Clubhouses, which have proven successful in helping people living with mental illness – who would otherwise be exiled to a life of isolation and despair – turn their lives around. There are currently over 330 Clubhouses in 34 countries, reaching out to over 100,000 people each year.

Clubhouses offer people living with mental illness hope for getting their lives back through friendship, employment, housing, education, and access to medical and psychiatric services in a single safe and caring environment – so they can recover and become valued and respected members of society.

Clubhouse International has compelling data to support the effectiveness of the Clubhouse model, which is listed in the US Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices. Clubhouse



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members have longer job tenure and higher earnings and *double* the employment rate compared to individuals living with mental illness who are not Clubhouse members. It also has clear economic advantages: one year of holistic recovery services are delivered to Clubhouse members for the same cost as a 2-week stay in a psychiatric hospital.

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