From Recovery to Discovery: An Innovative Peer Support Program

Stephen Ayer, Ph.D.
Laura Burke, MA
Lisa Corra, MA
Vince Daigle
• The basis of the Your Recovery Journey program is that **recovery from mental illness is possible!**

• That is, a person living with mental illness can accomplish goals, reconnect with self and others, and recapture meaning and purpose in life.

• *Your Recovery Journey* is based on the experiences of people who have a mental illness and who know there is hope, who are well and doing the things they want with their lives.
The session topics are:

• What is recovery?
• Quality of life
• Self-management
• Medication as tool for recovery
• Moving forward: Personal action planning.

www.your-recovery-journey.ca
From Recovery to Discovery: Nine Guiding Principles

1. The group will be discovery focused.
2. Group meetings will be topic directed.
3. There will not be any written meeting ground rules.
4. The group will be co-facilitated by two people who are both well along in their recovery journeys, and who have experience facilitating support groups.
5. If possible, the meetings will be held in partnership with the Healthy Minds Cooperative.
From Recovery to Discovery: Nine Guiding Principles (continued)

6. The co-facilitators and I will meet every week for one hour, just prior to the meeting.

7. Each meeting will start with an icebreaker.

8. Liquid refreshments such as coffee, tea, and juice will be provided free of charge to the meeting participants.

9. Meeting announcements will include a photograph that in some way corresponds with the topic for the meeting.
From Recovery to Discovery:
The First Co-Facilitators

Laura Burke
Nadine Jacquard
Stephen Ayer
From Recovery to Discovery: The Current Co-Facilitators

Lisa Corra
Peer Support Facilitator
Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia

Vince Daigle
Senior Peer Specialist
Healthy Minds Cooperative
From Recovery to Discovery

Group Photograph
12 June 2012
From Recovery to Discovery: Meeting Icebreakers

A few examples:

• Name one thing you really like about yourself.
• Name a gift you will never forget.
• If you could talk to any one person, living or dead, who would it be and why?
• Do you have a pet? If not, what sort of pet would you like?
• What was the best thing that happened to you this past week?

Source: http://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf
The *From Recovery to Discovery* Mental Health Peer Support Group

**presents**

**Establishing Supports for When the Going Gets Tough**

**Thursday, August 29th, 2013**

6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

The Hub Halifax
1673 Barrington Street, 2nd Floor
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Join co-facilitators Lisa Corra and Laura Burke for this week’s peer support group meeting focusing on who we allow into our space while we are not feeling mentally well.

Organized through a partnership between the Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia and the Healthy Minds Cooperative, the *From Recovery to Discovery* Mental Health Peer Support Group is open to anyone affected by any type of mental illness, and this includes family members and friends.

**Free!**

Photo credit: http://www.flickr.com/photos/michaelbarkowski/5152031611/
Herbal and Relaxation Techniques for Dealing with Stress

with

Zenovia Ursuliak, MD, PhD

Department of Psychiatry, Dalhousie University
Staff Psychiatrist, Capital District Health Authority

21 January 2010
26 April 2012

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/vector_tf/7045507681
An Introduction to Drama Therapy

with

Laura Burke

Peer Support Worker
Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia

26 July 2012
18 July 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/deebeeandswivel/7278659280
Music, Poetry, and Mental Health

12 July 2012
6 December 2012
6 June 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/gilj40/6913069963
Spirituality and Mental Health: Making Spirit Work In Our Daily Lives

with

David Burke
Spiritual Care Specialist
Capital Health

21 June 2012
Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/ldcross/2164848567
A Dose of Humour Mixed with Courage to Help Get Through the Holidays

"While the evidence at this time of year screams the opposite, to be alone is more normal than you think." - Liz Jones

1 December 2011

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/curiouskiwi/502452945

Quotation source: www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-1237311/LIZ-JONES-Wish-lonely-Christmas-spare-thought-millions-women-like-me.html
Join members of the *From Recovery to Discovery* Mental Health Peer Support Group, and group facilitators Vince Daigle and Lisa Corra, to discuss strategies and techniques, as well as a unique perspective, for getting through the holidays, either on your own, or within the context of your circle of family, friends, and support. Bring your ideas with you and enjoy an interactive peer support meeting that will provide you with the tools for managing your mental health during the holiday season.

As an example, Lisa Corra’s newfound recipe for alleviating anxiety is:

Cut out caffeine (hard but so worth it)

When you have an anxiety attack:
- run the hot water in the bath (with oils if you have on hand)
- dim the lights or light candles
- put on a pot of Camomile or Calm tea (honey optional)
- play old jazz music
- take appropriate medication if prescribed
- sit in hot tub for an unusually long period (until the “pain” subsides and your body and mind are re-relaxed)
Recovery Dialogues: Hope as the Beginning of Recovery

with

Irene Skehen
Wellness and Recovery Educator
Healthy Minds Cooperative

7 June 2012

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/28096801@N05/3525799414
A Parent’s Journey to Recovery

A Conversation

with

Donna Methot

Vice President

HRM Chapter of the Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia

14 February 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/catikaoe/224422244
Dating and Mental Illness

2 May 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/thomasleuthard/7186832081
http://search.creativecommons.org/
How is your Leisure Life?

with

Robert Baird

Recreation Therapist
Recreation Therapy Professional Practice Leader
Capital District Mental Health Program

20 September 2012

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/ilja/506955414
An Open Discussion

with

Dr. Nick Delva

Head, Department of Psychiatry
Dalhousie University

8 November 2012

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/digitali/5170649654
An Overview of the Capital Health Addictions and Mental Health Program

with

Trevor Briggs

Director
Capital Health Addictions and Mental Health Program
Capital District Health Authority

20 June 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/nicolebratt/7575061624
Looking Back, Looking Forward – A Discussion on Inpatient Mental Health Care

with

Dr. Jason Morrison
Deputy Clinical Director
Acute Care Services
Capital District Health Authority

21 February 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/marko_k/91761454
Gifts, Goals, and Dreams

30 May 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/adamkr/3951153849
Making Changes

13 December 2012

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/brandонcwarren/4172990687
Your Mental Health Care
An Conversation About Transitions Between Services

4 July 2013
Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/sidm/7026077961
An Interactive Presentation on the 250 Homes Pilot Project

with

Elizabeth Cleary, RN, CPMHN
Program Coordinator
Mental Health Program
Capital Health

19 April 2012
Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/katietower/4471874848
Making Friends and Maintaining Friendships

7 March 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/ferranp/317125624
Supporting Someone Who Is Struggling

3 January 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/pagedooley/2494191157
A Conversation on Understanding Boundaries

with

Ms. Tana Woodward, MSW
Clinical Social Worker
Mood Disorders Program
Capital District Health Authority

28 February 2013
Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/lecates/2768859537
An Interactive Presentation

on

The Report & Recommendations of the Mental Health & Addictions Strategy Advisory Committee

with

Cecilia McRae

Member

Nova Scotia Mental Health & Addictions Strategy Advisory Committee

17 May 2012

Reflecting on the Value of Peer Support

6 September 2012
www.flickr.com/photos/dexxus/3996683276
The Nova Scotia Certified Peer Support Specialist Program

with

Roy Muise

Peer Mentor
Nova Scotia Certified Peer Support Specialist Program
Healthy Minds Cooperative

13 June 2013
Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/wildwickedbeads/2736257248
Medication as a Tool for Recovery

16 May 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/88534689@N08/8722572987
Medications & Mental Health

with

Jamie Flynn
Pharmacist / Owner
The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy
Fairview/Clayton Park
Halifax, Nova Scotia

and

Samantha Saucier
Undergraduate Pharmacy Student
College of Pharmacy
Dalhousie University

27 June 2013
Recovery in Mental Health
An Interactive Conversation on What Works and What Hinders

with

Dorothy Edem
Program Leader
Recovery and Integration
Capital Health Addictions and Mental Health Program

7 February 2013
Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/certified_su/229016531
People who have experienced or are living with mental illnesses have a profound understanding of recovery; including individual meaning, and what works and what hinders. Co-facilitated by Vince Daigle and Lisa Corra, this session is will be a dynamic, interactive conversation on recovery – participants will share their experiences on what works and what impedes progress, followed by a conversation about supporting others on their recovery journeys.

**About Dorothy Edem**

Dorothy Edem is an occupational therapist and a program leader with the Capital Health Addictions and Mental Health Program. She has extensive experience in the provision of mental health services, with specialty in recovery and psychosocial rehabilitation. Dorothy has presented nationally and internationally on recovery and psychosocial rehabilitation principles, practice, design and implementation; and has provided consultation to several organizations across Canada interested in introducing recovery-oriented approach of care in their programs.
Stereotyping, Prejudice & Discrimination as Barriers to Recovery

23 February 2012
10 January 2013

Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/yourdon/2573762303/in/photostream
Definition of *PREJUDICE*

1 : injury or damage resulting from some judgment or action of another in disregard of one's rights; *especially* : detriment to one's legal rights or claims

2  

a (1) : preconceived judgment or opinion (2) : an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge

b : an instance of such judgment or opinion

c : an irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics

Source: www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prejudice
Findings from a recent research study “suggest that workers with psychiatric conditions can be subjected to prejudicial and discriminatory practices that can affect not only their professional confidence but their sense of worthwhileness as a person as well.”

Link to full paper: http://iospress.metapress.com/content/n637226h15511413/fulltext.pdf
The following questions will be used to guide the group discussion, and lead into talking about ways of improving workplace inclusion and employment outcomes for folks who have experienced serious mental illness.

1. Have you experienced psychiatric prejudice in the workplace, or elsewhere, involving verbal expressions of negative attitudes:
   a. Towards mental illness in general?

   For example:
   
   “... Definitely no compassion with mental health issues, only discussion in the context of cruel jokes or negative stereotypes.”

   “I was at a workshop with other teachers, we were learning about the brain. Since then, some teachers keep joking about the amygdala and emotional problems people have.”
1. Have you experienced psychiatric prejudice in the workplace, or elsewhere, involving verbal expressions of negative attitudes:

b. Towards individuals whose lives have been affected by mental illness?

For example:

“They all expected me to be violent and my boss said, ‘let me know if you’re going to blow us all away.’”

“Another orthopedic surgeon told a doctor I was sharing the clinic with that I was ‘crazy’ and the doctor should not share the office with me. Fortunately, the second doctor did not listen to the stigma.”

“The worst I saw was the disrespect mental health ‘professionals’ displayed regarding their patients – poking fun of them behind their backs, referring to their patients using derogatory terms.”
2. Have you ever experienced references being made to your psychiatric condition – by supervisors, co-workers, family members, or friends – and used as leverage so that they can gain power or win an argument in an unrelated professional or interpersonal context?

For example:

“... My boss will say ‘don’t you need more medication?’ when he disagrees with me.”
3. Has anyone at your workplace, or elsewhere, used mental illness as an overriding explanation of your behaviour, even though you were actually distracted or upset due to other reasons?

   For example:
   
   “I was experiencing some grief over [the] loss of a family member, and it was suggested to me [that] I be hospitalized.”

4. Have you ever experienced prejudicial beliefs about compromised work capacity which led to ongoing micromanagement by supervisors as well as differential assignment of work-related tasks and responsibilities which made you feel you were being treated differently?

   For example:
   
   “Recently, some of my work has been very critical of a division of state government. In a meeting, several managers implied to a Commissioner that the real problem was my inability to control my negativity. There was a clear implication that it was psychiatric issues involved.”
Thank You!

Bernie

8 August 13

The *From Recovery to Discovery* Mental Health Peer Support Group’s Summer Picnic