

THE VOICE

June 2009

CONSUMER VOICES ARE BORN
CVAB

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Editor Brad Berry	The VOICE is a monthly newsletter produced and distributed by CVAB, Inc.
The VOICE Contributors Margo O Carolyn M Paul M Kim H	The content of articles are the opinions of the writers and are published in the Voice so they may exercise their right to say something, and for your reading pleasure CVAB is a consumer-run non-profit organization

The Voice welcomes all original contributions related to your recovery experience that you may want to share with our community. We'll treat each with respect and we'll try to print them as submitted but may need to edit for space. Our deadline is the 15th of each month. Thank you.

Choose

One of the key components to recovery is self-direction. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provided 10 Components of Recovery. Someone else was kind enough to give it to us in language that is clear and direct:

You as the consumer have the control to choose which path you would like to follow. You decide what steps you would like to take when you are ready to begin your own independent recovery process. You define the goals that you plan to achieve and the path you will take to get there.

"You decide...." These two words are powerfully dynamic equaling two others, "I am." The freedom and ability to "be" and to "choose" are fundamental to who we are as humans. There are times when facing challenges to our mental health we lose hold of our ability to be and to choose.

The connection of being and choosing are illustrated by Viktor Frankl, who after experiencing the horrors of Nazi concentration camps writes:

We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread.

They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.

Though it may seem like a leap to suggest a few, if any, of us have had to endure experiences nearing the atrocities of concentration camps, it is less of a leap to suggest some of us have been stripped of all dignity and many, if not all, have faced the indignity of stigma, discrimination, unfair practices, uncertain futures, and even our ability to "be." In the face of such challenges, you can choose your attitudes, you can choose your own way.

What does this have to do with recovery? Everything. It easy to be dissatisfied with the way things are. It is easy to be unhappy about life's circumstances. It is easy to complain. It is easy to take the road that leads to little recovery because it is easy. On the other hand, you can choose the path to follow, the actions you will take, the goals you will achieve, the way you will celebrate achieving hard earned and well deserved success. The choice is yours. V



Legislature by Carolyn M

A few months ago Brad Berry and I went to Olympia, Washington to talk to Senator Pridemore. I presented the fact that people in the state hospital will hopefully get well. But, afterward, when they left the state hospital they were homeless. Housing and funding were presented. Also GAU was mentioned and the fact that there were going to be money cuts. I asked Senator Pridemore to please help find solu-

tions. Senator Pridemore was very open to finding solutions to these issues. Brad and I both wrote him a thank you note. A lot of funding is being cut. It was a growing experience for me. It was about advocacy and helping people. It was all about recovery and taking care of ourselves. Never be afraid to ask for help. It takes the State and communities working together. Never give up hope. *V*

Potluck by the Park by Margo O

It turned out to be a good day. A little nippy in the morning, but sunny by noontime. Everybody had a very good time. The food was good. Everyone

cleaned up after the event was over, and had lots of eggs to take home. It was a great day to hang out with friends away from CVAB. *V*

"MY EXPERIENCES

AT THE SPRING

FLING STARTED

WITH

ACCIDENTALLY

RUNNING INTO ..."

We will be posting photos soon of these events and more in the Center...look for them in June!

My Experiences at the Spring Fling by Kim H

My experiences at the Spring Fling started with accidentally running into Scott and Lynn. Scott helped with the directions to the spot where the Spring Fling was held. There were about 25 people that showed up including MAC members (Karen, Margo, Scott, Bridget, and myself). My goodness there was plenty of food to eat. Also there was a very good amount of boiled eggs. Stacy did a good job with getting the right amount of eggs for

the picnic. Also, I was impressed that the scavenger hunts. Not one person complained about not getting prizes. One of the funniest events was coloring the eggs. Mostly, I enjoyed the socialization of the event. I had a tremendously fun time. The cleanup was done perfectly. The area of two picnic tables was pristinely cleaned. I would say that Karen and Margo were great facilitators. Job well done to all that attended. *V*

Recovery Theme

CVAB is committed to the reality of Recovery. We encourage you to look for a Recovery Concept posted each month and enter into the dialog we enjoy around the new theme at each CVAB Community Gathering. The June theme is *Self-Direction*. *V*

CVAB by the Numbers

Jul 07—Mar 08

1084 1st Time Visits

9684 Total Visits

48 Daily Visits Avg.

Jul 08—Mar 09

1099 1st Time Visits

13951 Total Visits

60 Daily Visits Avg.

Equaling a whole lot of Recovery!



Self-Education by Sara N

Learn all you can about yourself so you can make good decisions about your: Treatment, Lifestyle, Career, Relationships, Home Life, Hobbies and other interests that you may have.

You can also educate yourself by:

Attending workshops, lectures, and support groups.

Reviewing educational resources (articles, books, newsletters, audio, videos, CD's, etc.)

Check out some of the mental health sites on the Internet. You can also check out the Network of Care for Behavioral Health website at www.clark.wa.networkofcare.org/mh

Contact some of the mental health

organizations such as NAMI-Clark County, Val Ogden Center, and CVAB. Consider making donations to such organizations.

This of course, can lead to your talking to others who have similar experiences and those who have expertise in a particular field.

Check out all perspectives and decide which ones feel right to you.

www.mentalhealthrecovery.com has articles and lists of helpful resources and organizations that may be helpful to you.

And finally, develop a Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP). That is one of the best things I ever did! V



Perspectives...

The story is told of an argument between the sun and the wind, each claiming to be stronger than the other. One cold day, they decided to hold a contest to settle the matter. They observed a man in a thick winter coat trudging along a road, and determined that whichever of them could make him remove his coat would surely be the stronger. The wind said, "That will be easy for me," and began to blow with great force and determination. Amazingly, the coat did not come off, because the man buttoned it up more tightly against the stormy

blasts, and turned the collar to cover his ears. Finally the wind gave up.

"I can't do it, and if I can't do it, you won't be able to do it either."

"At least let me try," the sun replied, and began to shed its warmth on the wind-blown man, soon he turned down his collar, and much to the dismay of the wind, he removed the coat and carried it, basking in the warmth of the sun.

Much more can be accomplished with kindness and compassion rather than harshly demanding our own way. V

The Third of May by Paul M

The third of May

It was quite a day

Today was one of the finest days

that are in the month of May.

Good things of every kind

in every kind of way

it was quite a day.

In the park

the band played

in a way I like

The lady singer

she sounded good

just like she knew she would

The band it played

while the guitars they brayed

it was such a pretty day

Sunshine all around

it shown warmly onto the ground

in downtown Vancouver.

And the patrons

they came from here and there

with the singer, her song to share

while I sit and enjoy it in my chair.



**YOUR RESOURCE FOR WELLNESS
AND RECOVERY**

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CVAB Hours !

9–7 PM Monday through Saturday

*Please enter the Building on 1st Floor on
Saturdays.*

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Executive Direction from Brad Berry

It's June and the summer is finally here (at least for today). CVAB continues to be a busy hub of activity and we know that though not perfect, great things are happening.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank some peers who have been long time contributors and short term employees (due to temporary funds). They have been making a huge contribution and we hope they continue because they help make CVAB all that it is. Karen, Cat and Brian, we greatly appreciate your service—past, present and future—in any and every capacity.

CVAB is coming to the end of the fiscal year and we know next year will bring continued growth, significant challenges, and good times. So let's begin by enjoying our summer. *V*

