

THE VOICE



March 2008

CONSUMER VOICES ARE BORN
CVAB

Volume 2, Issue 9

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The VOICE is a monthly newsletter produced and distributed by CVAB, Inc.

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.

A Story of Freedom and Recovery by Cindy F

In 1995 I could no longer work. My mental illness was out of control and I was in and out of hospitals.

In 2002 I was deep in debt. I was on SSDI and I had 8 credit cards and a car payment. I was making the payments OK until my car needed major repairs. I could no longer make the minimum payments and then there were the late fees and higher interests. This was the second time in my life I had gotten myself in big debt.

After calling around, I found a company in the phone book. They are a non-profit and only charge \$15 a month. They get the creditors to lower the interest rate and no additional interest was charged on some of the cards as long as I kept with the program. March is six years later and I am out of debt.

I have many things to be thankful for. I started working part time at disAbility Resources and was able to

get a Medicaid coupon for a small monthly premium. Before that I had a huge spend-down to deal with before I could get the medicine and mental health services I needed (some of my debt was medications I had to put on credit cards). This Medicaid program is called Health-care for Workers with Disabilities or HWD. This was one of the things that started my recovery.

I am now a Peer Support Specialist and Benefits Specialist trained in work incentives for SSDI, SSI, and other government programs. I volunteer at CVAB every Thursday from 1:00-4:00 PM to help folks learn how to get out of debt and about work incentives. V

Note: Cindy volunteers each Thursday afternoon for WITH Benefits (Work Incentives To Help Benefits). It is on a first come, first served basis but you can sign up to let her know you want to meet with her by contacting CVAB. Thanks Cindy!

Mental Health Advance Directives

A Mental Health Advanced Directive (MHAD) is a written document that describes your directions and preferences for treatment and care during times when you are having difficulty communicating and making decisions. It can inform others about what mental health treatment you want or don't want, and it can

identify a person called an "agent" who you trust to make decisions and act on your behalf. We think Advance Directives are vitally important and want to assist anyone desiring to complete them. Everyone is welcome to attend the monthly workshops or contact CVAB staff for details. V



KESSLER'S

We apologize to Nick for misplacing his wonderful March Kolumn. We look forward to reading him next month. -Editor

There are many discoveries for each of us on our journey of recovery and one will include finding and using our voice. CVAB is where you can begin to exercise your voice through words and actions, to express your recovery by what you do and what you say.

You can safely express yourself through the following:

Monthly Community Gatherings

The third Monday of each month offers you a chance to participate in the process of shaping our community. The CVAB Community Gathering is where you can hear what is happening behind the scenes and in the future;

celebrate the contributions of others; and participate in the town hall style so you can ask questions or offer ideas. We often invite an outside speaker to our gatherings to inform us or hear from us.

Members Advisory Council

CVAB has a Members Advisory Council (MAC). We are seeking *members* who will participate in helping CVAB staff and Board make decisions that impact the Recovery Center, Warm Line, and future plans.

CVAB 101

CVAB 101 explains these and more. V

On the Road by Brian

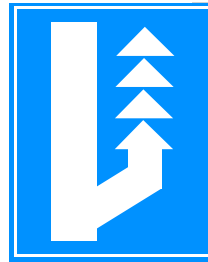
C'mon, jump in lets go for ride. Sometimes it's a little hard to find the way, but I know a road that a friend showed me a while back and the more I use it the easier it is to find. I gotta warn ya though, it's gonna be kinda scary and dark at first, but trust me I've been using this road for a while now and I know the way.

Ready!!! Good, let's go.

Hey, you know the person that really smokes you, the one who makes you so mad that every time you hear their name or see their face you just want to explode!!!! Yeah, that one. Old what's their name. You're just so angry with them that you just want tooooo???

But you don't have to, and you'll never have to if you if you try this. The next time you hear their name hear name or see their face use the f word. Whoaa, no, not that f word. This one. Forgiveness. Let me say that again in case you had something stuck in ear.

Forgiveness. Yeah, I know what your thinking. How can I possibly forgive ol whats their name for what they did to ME. ME, why did they do that to Me! It doesn't matter. What's important here is that you're hurting and that can change. I understand that they



hurt you and you feel that they need to suffer and be punished for what they did to you. I used to feel that way too.

Then somebody showed a new road, one I hadn't tried before and I was willing to try it. It wasn't easy. I had become so blinded by my anger and rage that I couldn't see the way, so He drove me and after a while

my vision began to clear. Try this. Turn them and your anger over to GOD. Let Him punish them, if He chooses. Now let go of it and say (speak the words don't just say it in your head) I forgive ol whats their name for----. It's that simple. I didn't say it was easy. I said it was going to be scary and dark, remember.

The next time you see or hear their name and that anger begins to flair remind yourself that you have already turned them and your anger over to God and say I have already forgiven them. You may not want to do this but try it anyway. I'll make you this guarantee, it will change your life. I know because it changed mine. Not quickly, but slowly, over time with practice. I'll make you one more guarantee. If you try this road, and decide to go back the other way, your misery will be returned to you with interest. Hey, thanks for ridin with me. Hope to see ya soon on the road to recovery. V

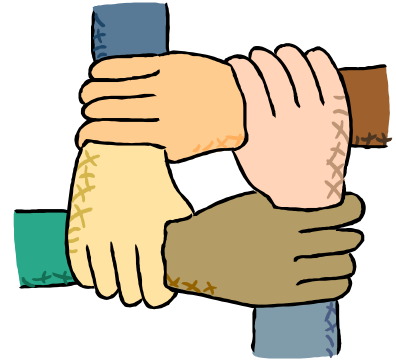


I am thankful by Carolyn

I'm thankful for family. In 2007 I met a granddaughter and great grandbaby. I'm thankful for my brother and wife who have helped me in many ways. I'm thankful my brother has been an attorney. He has helped me through tough spots, and helps me with business affairs. I'm thankful for my 4 daughters and grandchildren. Lots more of them. I'm thankful for friends. Friends enjoy each others company. Friends don't stick together, friends stay together. Friends support and encourage each other. Friends take up for each other.

**"FRIENDS DON'T
STICK TOGETHER,
FRIENDS STAY
TOGETHER."**

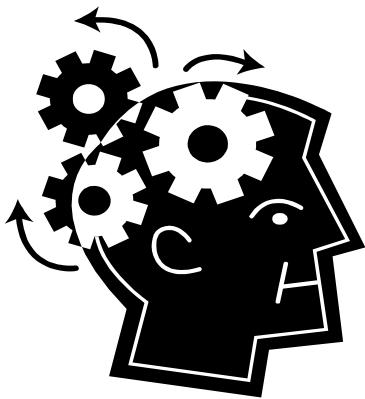
Friends don't beat each other up. Friends say what they think, but friends don't hurt each other with words or actions. A friend is someone you can talk to and they never tell anybody else. Sometimes all we need is one friend. I am thankful for CVAB where I can socialize and meet new people. When my parents died I needed a safe place to go. There was CVAB. I'm thankful for CVAB staff in the ways they have reached out and helped us. I'm thankful for life itself. We can breathe and enjoy the sunshine and be happy. 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. March's theme is *strength-based*. V



CVAB by the Numbers

<u>Jul 2006-Jan 2007</u>	<u>Jul 2007-Jan 2008</u>
262 First time Visits	646 First time Visits
3901 Total Visits	6032 Total Visits
28 Daily Visits Avg.	42 Daily Visits Avg.

Equaling a whole lot of Recovery!

Inside My Head by Bill

Inside my head were words like: help me, rescue me, poor me, why me, enable me, fix me, use me, no one cares. I am useless, helpless and scum of the earth.

I guarantee this: God will never enable an addict.

I also guarantee this: God will help anyone out of their pit of self destruction and misery when the willingness comes.

When I have let go of my old behaviors and let go of my excuses and do the foot work and feel the fear and do it anyway, that is when the miracle happens. V

The Word Game by Bill

The object of this game is to rearrange the letters and add one letter to make a new word. Some words have more than one answer.

1. Strobe
2. Acts
3. Doom
4. Chit
5. Coat
6. Place
7. Yam
8. Hop
9. Jinn
10. Kiln

A PERSON-CENTERED, RECOVERY-ORIENTED, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

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Executive Direction from Brad Berry

March 20, 2008 will mark my second anniversary as CVAB's Executive Director. I think we can all agree that there have been many changes during this time and though change isn't a bad thing, it can sometimes feel very difficult.

For those who have been around a while, think about all the changes you have experienced and I appreciate your willingness to stick with us throughout all of them. For those of you just finding or returning to CVAB, thanks for being a part of it.

During the past two years we have restarted a monthly CVAB community gathering and honoring of volunteers, moved to a new location, continued to see staff and Board of Director changes, added a website, adopted eight strate-

gies, added the Members Advisory Council (MAC) and continued to see tremendous growth in all areas of CVAB.

One of the early changes that I implemented was the 3 R's: Respect, Responsibility and Recovery. These three R's have been embraced as values along with consumer leadership within our community and we now have a growing reputation as a place where people are accepted for who they are, provided the chance to make responsible choices, and supported by a caring community. CVAB truly is a person-centered, recovery-oriented supportive community.

Thank you for letting me be a part of it.... V

