



Peers Perspective Newsletter

Break the stigma, peers helping peers

+Vol. **9**



My Story

In my Grade 12 year I had big dreams. I planned to be a pediatrician. I had good grades, did lots of volunteering and had started applying to universities. I had awesome friends and a wonderful, loving home.

It started with pain in my jaw that was followed by constant nausea and vomiting. My mood started going downhill and by the end of fall I was crying all the time. My life just stopped. I started spending my days at home, in bed, crying and feeling guilty about everything. It has been a long battle with Major Depressive Disorder since then. I will turn 40 this year and, to be honest, I'm amazed I made it this far. My journey has involved several doctors, psychiatrists, and many counsellors. Some of these supports were great, some not so great. I have been on many medications and had ECTs. I expect to be on medication for the rest of my life. I self-harmed by cutting and pulling out my hair. I attempted suicide by overdosing on various pills, ending up in emergency a dozen or more times. In total I have spent almost a year on the psych ward.

Through all the ups and downs, I have continued to grow and learn new coping skills. I have been without crisis for 8 years. I have an amazing job that I love; I work with children but without having to go to school for 10 years. I focus on self-care every day. I take my medication, pay attention to what I eat and how I sleep, I get exercise and practice mindfulness. I have also learned to accept my bad days and spend the day in bed without guilt.

Almost 5 years ago I began volunteering on the CMHA Board of Directors. What I see is a much greater understanding of mental illness. But society, it seems, is becoming more unwell and our mental health is suffering for it. However, resources to treat and support those suffering are grossly inadequate. I never would have survived and made it to where I am without the support of my family and friends. I realize many people don't have that support, which is why I am passionate about services like CMHA. I see how the staff work every day to support those who need it. I dislike when people tell me that overcoming difficulty makes you a better, stronger person. I think I could have been a pretty awesome person without depression. But I am a pretty awesome person now too. Mental illness is hard and unfair but there is hope. I will continue to work to share that hope with others.

By Kelly Mould

Just the Facts

By age 40, about 50% of the population will have or have had a mental illness. Almost one half (49%) of those who feel they have suffered from depression or anxiety have never gone to see a doctor about this problem.

Humour


What did the duck say when she bought lipstick? "Put it on my bill." - What is the difference between a teacher and a train? One says "Spit out your gum," and the other says, "Choo choo chew!"

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The Concept of Feedback

What is the concept of Feedback?

Feedback is simply the return of valuable information to the input from the output of a system for the purpose of evaluation! The evaluation of this information might be important because one might learn what may work with better results and/or what may not work as desired!

Feedback is everywhere! Remember a certain smart guy in history saying, “For every action there is a reaction”. (Sir Isaac Newton’s 3rd Law of Motion, 1687, states that: “To every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.”) Feedback is necessary in life and that is why some living things are blessed with five, sometimes six, rarely with seven senses! Life thrives when it can sense, feel, and respond to its environment. Some examples of Action to Reaction are:

Driver Action to Vehicle Reaction

Mindful Action to Body Reaction

Doctor Action to Patient Reaction

Smarter Action to Better Reaction

From here I want to keep things simple and just describe the concept of a car drivers input action, to a car’s output reaction.

Simply a car’s driver tells a car what to do! When to go, when to stop, when to turn, when to brake, faster, backwards, park, engine off and even when to go see a mechanic!

A car driver maneuvers his car as he may wish! Yet once in a while his car may tell him without words that the car does not like the driver’s maneuvers. This is clearly feedback!

Imagine a worst case scenario with an intoxicated, sleepy, on the cell phone, distracted driver operating a car with bald tread, over inflated tires, on black ice near a cliff with no suspension!

Does the driver want the car to be better? – Yes!

Does the car want the driver to be better? – Yes!

With the concept of feedback, both can be!

Maybe we can all be better with respect to the concept of Feedback and “Action to Reaction.”

William McCoy

Quotes

A tree is known by its fruit; a man by his deeds. A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love. Saint Basil.

It is never too late to be what you might have been. George Eliot

Greetings,

At Canadian Mental Health Association Prince George (CMHAPG) we want to share with you, mental health education from those with lived experience in the form of a newsletter.

In this newsletter we hope people may connect with the individuals behind the stories on a personal level and recognize in having similar feelings and thoughts that they are not alone, but more importantly that they can reach out for support to find hope.

Mental health affects everyone - it does not discriminate and affects individuals of all ages, races, and gender. As awareness of mental health becomes more prevalent, so does the need to educate and bring awareness to the public. Depression, anxiety, bipolar, whatever name it goes by, the reality is mental illness is a complex interplay of genetic, biological, personality and environmental factors. Stigma or discrimination attached to mental illness presents a serious barrier not only for diagnosis and treatment but in bringing forth acceptance in the community.

We're hoping to receive support by advertising your business in our newsletter. Any donation to help with the cost of printing will be appreciated. Please support mental health in the workplace.

Our main goal is to shed light on the darkness of mental illness by educating the public, education provided from those who have a mental illness. In conclusion, we hope you will be a part of our project that aims to help others and bring awareness around mental health to the community. Thank You!

Your Opinions Matter

We would love for you to offer your ideas and feedback on the newsletter. If you would like to see a particular story or something we could add to the newsletter please feel free to tell us. The newsletter is about hearing how you are able to find hope in your life. It's about reaching to others who may feel alone in their own lives, and with their own struggles. You're the voice that gives hope to others.

Opinions expressed are solely the individual author's and do not necessarily express the views or opinions of the Canadian Mental Health Association.

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Important numbers

Canadian Mental Health Association Prince
George Branch: (250) 564-8644

Crisis Line: 1-888-562-1214

BC Suicide Crisis Centre: 1-800-Suicide
(784-2433)

Primary Care: (250) 565-2612

BC Schizophrenia Society: 250-561-8033

Ace Activity Centre: 250-564-3396

How would you like to volunteer!

We at Canadian Mental Health Association are always welcoming new peoples who would like to volunteer and give their time and effort to a good cause. We hope to help people with mental illness with all their troubles or problems. Just go on our website

www.princegeorge.cmha.bc.ca for more information

Public Education -- Library and pamphlets available for all at the Canadian Mental Health Association, 1152 3rd Avenue, Prince George.

Peer Support – Offers support to individuals impacted by mental illness who require help in resolving issues or concerns they may have in dealing with areas of their daily lives such as: income assistance applications and appeals, government and agency forms and requirements, tenancy issues, making appointments, finding information, financial matters, or connecting to services. This is by no means an exhaustive list, as we attempt to assist individuals with all their needs as best we can, either directly or through referral. This is an open referral service, with anyone welcome to make appointments and inquires to 250-564-8644 Ext 205

Community Education & Workshops – Providing workshops on mental illness and informational material. 250-564-8644 Ext. 209

Life Skills Support Program – Designed to help those with mental illness develop and learn skills for independent living. 250-564-8644 Ext. 212

Housing Resource Program – To assist in accessing housing. 250-564-8644 Ext. 204

Bounce Back Self Help – For people living with mild to moderate depression with or without anxiety. 250-564-8644 Ext. 211

Questions & Feedback?

Do You Have a Story? We would like to hear it!

We strongly believe sharing real success stories from individuals (you can remain anonymous) can help spark needed conversations about mental wellness.

Contact Ed Lui at Canadian Mental Health Association
Telephone: 250-564-8644 Ext 205
Email: edlui@cmhapg.ca

Word Search

R M P M F Q O L Y C N R U S J	Bipolar
K O D E Q L O I K Q G N S E B	Peace
P U T M A M K G H O D E X M G	Hope
I T P C N C C H E E R G C W O	Light
M Y G W O O E T R T G O W X R	Joy
T N T D B D I S S B R F C A A	Faith
N Q O G M Q T S A F P R H S E	Compassion
L O H D F A P B S U J T Q L F	Caring
M S S E N L L I L A T N E M G	Understanding
J O Y D T S U R T U P Q W F N	Consoling
L T I A F D O X L V S M A N I	Healing
E N C O N S O L I N G I O X L	Health
G Z A G H B M S L G T I H C E	Trust
M Z K W E E A E S H S L B S S	Doctor
G N I R A C P G D S O I G M N	Trust
P O H J L R K O E I P A W A U	meditate
G T F V I G L R H O T B T E O	Depression
B L C O N E P V L U C A X R C	Fear
R M Q S G E I A R Z D X T D L	Mood
G X F C D T R H E A L T H E D	stress

CMHA Newsletter Story

Looking for Volunteer Newsletter Team Members. We are currently looking for people interested in developing their writing and people skills by volunteering part time to become an important part of our mental health newsletter team. Our newsletter is called "Peers Perspective" where people and consumers whom have had personal and/or different views and experiences within the mental health community, are able to offer awareness, ideas and insightful stories to share with others who may be struggling with a mental illness. They are not alone. In many cases someone may be completely new to experiencing for the first time the shocking truth that a mental illness is very real and is now happening to them and/or someone they love. Mental illness can affect anyone, even a spouse, friend, employee, or family member. Many people do not realize that if you do not have mental health currently, then currently you do have a mental illness. Have you ever experienced a simple temporarily migraine headache? What would you do if your new bad headache never really stops or goes completely away now? Truthfully, everyone within the mental health community is actually, constantly learning new things and insights. There is simply and clearly lots more to learn. We can learn lots from the experiences of others! Would you like to join our newsletter team? If so, please contact:

Ed Lui, Peer Support Community Navigator

Tel: 250-564-8644 Ext. 205: Email: edlui@cmhapg.ca