

Recovery Support Specialist Newsletter



Contents

Page 2

In This Issue

Page 3

Changes Lives

Paige Maier, CRSS

Pages 1, 4 & 5

Experiences of Hope

Mark Bellini, RSS

Jessica Olivas, RSS

Sara M. Powers, RSS

Sharon Hulin, RSS

Meghann Johnson, RSS

Pages 6 & 7

RSSI 22 Graduates

Page 8

Seven Life Tools

Kari Joys

Page 9

One Sacred Nation

Healing

Ray Mattia, RSS

Sheila Claw-Starr, RSS

Page 10

Hearts Opened

Providing Empathy

Shawn McIff, RSS

Page 11

Word Search



Mark Bellini

My personal experience of hope begins with me living in a dilapidated motor home while going through my divorce, being heavy into my addictions and after my mom had just died.

I remember walking into an AA hall and asking the first person I saw to “help me”. This gentleman spent the next hour listening to me and had said, “Yep. Follow me.”

He took me to a half-way house and introduced me to the manager. It was right then that HOPE was there... I had found an extended family of men who had to attend meetings, had a curfew, ate together, and spent down time together.

I lived at that house for one year and in that time my hope had grown from being lonely, hungry, tired and depressed to staying clean and sober, and to challenging myself in the clean and sober environment. I learned how to eat dinner without alcoholic beverages, learned how to dance sober, learned how to have BBQs sober—to experience life sober in the finest detail.

As I have grown, my hope has grown as well. My hope extends to all facets of my life and there are no boundaries. Hope followed by action equals goals being met.

- Mark Bellini, RSS, currently working at COMPASS

“My hope extends to all facets of my life and there are no boundaries.”



In this Issue...

Personal Experiences of Hope

Mark Bellini, Jessica Olivas, Sara M. Powers, Sharon Hulin and Meghann Johnson share their experiences with hope.

One Sacred Nation Healing

Ray Mattia and Sheila Claw-Starr share their vision for “Wellbriety” for everyone.

Hearts Open Providing Empathy

A poem by Shawn McIff

“I was under arrest, handcuffed and in the back of a squad car. I had never felt so grateful for anything as I felt right then...It came to me as an end to the insanity I had been living; a start to a new life without the use of drugs and alcohol. It was the best moment of my life.”

- Sara M. Powers, CRSS

Advisory Committee

Julie Croteau, CRSS

Kathy Lewis, CRSS

John McElroy, CRSS

Dan Steffy

Patricia Porras, CRSS

Beth C. Stoneking, PhD, MSW, CPRP - Publisher

Beverly McGuffin, RN, MSN, CPRP - Editor

Andrea Burke - Page Designer

Changed Lives



Paige Maier

Greetings, my name is Paige Maier, I was drawn to the behavioral health field many years ago, as I am a person in recovery from a serious addiction that held me captive for over 30 years. Upon moving to Tucson, I was blessed to get hired into the behavioral health field, and having numerous years clean could relate first hand to the folks coming in the door asking for help for their addiction. I had a passion for sharing with others that by taking certain steps to make changes in my life, then they could too!

Members would always ask me, “Paige, how can I do what you are doing?” That is when I would share with them about staying clean and sober, then applying for the RSS Institute. For years I had been referring folks to RISE/CPSA RSS Institute and hearing such wonderful things from all those I referred that I just knew that it was something that I had to check out. And even though I was already working in the field as a BHT, I felt that further investigation was needed into the RSS Institute. I was accepted, and attended #19 Institute. I learned so many new things, met so many special people, and changed my views on quite a few issues, and quite frankly, it opened my eyes to stigma that goes on in the behavioral health field.

I had a couple of friends who kept calling me about a position that was open at Camp Wellness, and that they felt it would be a perfect fit for me. It has been quite a journey indeed, and worth the wait! Due to my determination to go back to college to further my education and knowledge, taking every training that came my way, AND attending the RSS Institute, I was blessed to have been hired by the U of A R.I.S.E. at the Health and Wellness Center’s Camp Wellness “Outreach Alumni Coordinator”.

I am happy to share my experiences and time with those who have completed the program at Camp Wellness. The only reason I have the life I have today, is by staying clean, and staying engaged with my support system!



- Paige Maier, CRSS

Experiences of Hope



Jessica Olivas

My personal experience with Hope occurred when I attended my first meeting at the VA with the Cognitive Support Therapy Group. I realized that I was not alone in my struggle with PTSD. This played a huge role in my recovery because I wanted to continue to go to vent my problems and feel the relief I felt at the first meeting. I believe all the women in the support group, along with the counselor and psychologist who were there, played a role because they helped me to see what others see in me, and gave me a positive outlook. Working with the other women who had PTSD and Military sexual trauma helped me get through my own recovery because we bonded and had a common goal to bet better together.

-Jessica Olivas, RSS, currently volunteering at the Veterans Administration

My personal experience of Hope began the evening of April 12, 2006. I was under arrest, handcuffed and in the back of a squad car. I had never felt so grateful for anything as I felt right then. I knew that by the grace of God, my addict lifestyle was over. The relief I felt was immense. I knew then and there, I was going to prison at least for a couple of years. It came to me as an end to the insanity I had been living; a start to a new life without the use of drugs and alcohol. It was the best moment of my life. Some might say that sitting handcuffed in the back of a police car would hardly seem great, however I new my life was about to start a fantastic journey in the world of recovery.



Sara M. Powers

- Sara M. Powers, RSS, currently working at HOPE





I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder in May of 2006. At first I was devastated. I was confused about what to do with this information. I was in the hospital when I was diagnosed and was given some literature about bipolar disorder. There was a sentence that surprised me and though I don't recall the exact wording it said something about recovery. I rejected the notion of recovery from mental illness until April of 2007 when I was again hospitalized. While there, I participated in every group; having decided I wanted to "get well". My first real moment of Hope came during art therapy. I had been very depressed and had been obsessing on painful things. The art therapist had me draw a box. She said that I could put all of my pain in the box and close it. Then, for 15 minutes every hour I could open it and dwell, wallow, etc., but I had to close it again. This exercise was



Sharon Hulin



hard at first, but before long I needed to open the box less and less. I discovered that I had control over these painful, stressful thoughts. I finally had hope that I could continue to learn how to manage my illness and truly begin my recovery. To this day I keep a drawing of a box to remind me that I can put away negative thoughts.

- Sharon Hulin, RSS, currently working at COPE



Meghann Johnson

Hope for me began when my mother took me off the streets and to SAMHC. They diagnosed me, gave me medications and set me up with CODAC. The case manager really helped me through a lot of my sadness and anger. From there, my experience of Hope got bigger by going to the rooms of NA. There, I got a sponsor, and started working the steps. She gave me an insight to my life that I thought would never come back to me. The fact that I am human and do make mistakes, but more than anything I'm worth it. From that

point on I have always felt hopeful to succeed at anything in my life.

- Meghann Johnson, RSS, currently working at HOPE

RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST INSTITUTE XXIII

Top Row (left to right):

Robert Carillo
Catheryne Marcott
Shawn McIff
Sheila Claw-Starr
Veronica Quezada
Sharon Hulin
Raymond Mattia
Mark Bellini
Kimberley Noble
Meghann Johnson

Front Row (left to right):

Tracey Thompson
Ashley Ray
Marni Sier
Melody Glassbrook
Jessica Olivas
Lindsay Henderson
Sara Powers



Congratulations

Graduates!



CRSS Panel



Front row:

Terrance Watkins, Fernando Duran

Back row:

Julie Croteau, Monique J. Roybal

Seven Life Tools

How to Stay Lighthearted in Challenging Times

By Kari Joys

In today's tough economic times, many people are facing very difficult life situations. Mounting uncertainties seem to permeate the atmosphere of thought because so many have already lost their jobs and their homes. It's not easy to stay cool, calm and collected when you don't know what to expect tomorrow.



You may feel that staying lighthearted is impossible in today's world. But in working as a psychotherapist for 30 years, I have found that, again and again, employing these seven simple tools enables individuals to come through the darkness to a more lighthearted way of living.

1. Cry the tears that need to be cried—tears clean the windows of your soul. If there's no one to talk to, write your feelings in a journal until your body relaxes and you feel a sense of relief.
2. See every challenge as an opportunity to grow. Ask for divine help to face challenges in the best way possible and to find a positive solution that feels good to you.
3. Choose a new reality. Affirm to yourself "I'm choosing a new reality." Then change your negative thoughts and beliefs about your challenges to positive thoughts and beliefs.
4. Imagine in living color what it would be like if a total miracle happened in your life. What you would see, hear, feel, smell and taste if, by some miracle, your life took a definite turn for the better?
5. Brainstorm possible solutions until you find one that feels good to you. Take some positive action today towards changing your life for the better.
6. Practice showing love to every person you come in contact with. Remember that when you give love, love also comes back to you.
7. Look at the funny side of life and find things to laugh about. Share your sense of humor with everyone around you, so that they can laugh and have fun, too.

Repeat this process every day until things get better. Once you get started, you may want to continue doing it for the rest of your life.

Spokane psychotherapist Kari Joys is director of the Center for Creative Change and the author of Choosing Lightheartedness. A lighthearted seminar leader, she is a member of the American Counseling Association and a certified Yuen Wellness practitioner. Learn more at www.Kari-Joys.com.

<http://www.naturalawakeningsmag.com/natural-library/february-2010/seven-life-tools>
Accessed July 22, 2010



One Sacred Nation Healing

One Sacred Nation Healing is a Native American Spiritual Recovery Program that interconnects our tribal Tohono O'odham and Dine' (Navajo), cultural, traditional and ceremonial, principle, laws and values into the 12 steps White Bison Wellbriety Movement.



Ray Mattia

We are Ray Mattia Sr. (Tohono O'odham) and Sheila Claw-Starr (Dine'). We are certified White Bison Facilitators called Firestarters, Peer Support Specialists, Recovery Support Specialists, and Artists.

We began our program 2 years ago here in the Tucson area by doing service work for different facilities in which Native Americans were staying. Our focus was Wellbriety for each individual, their families, and the communities by means of traditional principles, laws, and values of our ancestors. Our ancestral teachings of the sweat lodge, talking circle, cultural, arts, and knowledge of historical trauma, medicine wheel, and other teachings are used for tools in recovery.

Today, we are contracted by Compass Behavioral Health Care and work as in-patient facilitators, facilitating the White Bison, Talking Circle, Sweat Lodges, and Arts. We facilitate trainings for facilitators who want to bring culture or understand it more into the 12 steps of Wellbriety and how traditional principles are helping in recovery.

Any questions contacts us anytime. Always Walk in Beauty.

How to get in touch with us:

520-312-6205

OneSacredNationHealing@yahoo.com



Sheila Claw-Starr



Ray Mattia, RSS
and
Sheila Claw-Starr, RSS

Hearts Opened Providing Empathy

*The ability for us to relate
creates an opportunity to be an open ear.
We may fear our vulnerability
or a potential disconnect
yet we've effected one another immeasurably.*

*Treasured by a rapport
many of us swore at some time
would never be imaginable.
Availed of an archway
of mutual support.
A collective cornerstone
set rock steady.*

*Already,
the seeds we've planted
cannot ever be discounted,
as intrinsic to all we are
as the pinnacles we've surmounted
and the storms we've weathered--*

*Through strife and
skids
a life amid closing
doors,
stigmatized sores
salted
by statutes and
cold compliance.
Withered at times
but never
To be wiped out completely.
Whether together
Or apart,
blood flows with wisdom
through unity,
a circulatory gyre
unmired by diagnosis
driven triumphant
by hearts
opened, providing empathy.*



Shawn McIff

*- By Shawn McIff, RSS,
currently working at LFC East*

Word Search

v p y o g a t m e l a e l
m e t s y s t r o p p u s
a e i s a r o v h y i o r
s s n o o f e o r b e o h
n p u i e e v v b a r v p
r g t e g u y n o h y c t
a g r m u a n i n c g n n
p e o a o e m h d p e l e
e m p a t h y i i g b r o
h p p e t e g h n e a i g
o a o e u p f a g g o o e
m a t h r n h u e t p b d
c m o n e c t t l e y s e



bonding
empathy
hope
love
recovery

change
grateful
imagine
opportunity
support system

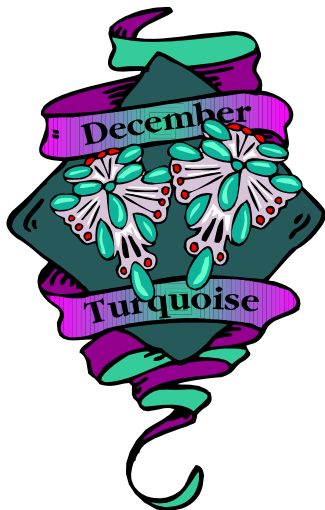
RISE promotes recovery and expanded opportunities for people with mental illness, substance use, and dual diagnosis by employing a collaborative approach to advocacy, service, education and research.



Recovery thru Integration, Support & Empowerment (RISE) is located in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the University of

Make Sure You Get Our Next issue!

Visit www.fcm.arizona.edu/outreach/rise to view this newsletter online. If you would like to receive our newsletter electronically & help our environment , please email sandreab@email.arizona.edu.



**1450 N Cherry Avenue,
Tucson, Arizona 85719-4207**

Telephone: **520-626-7473**

Fax: **520-626-7833**

This newsletter is for anyone interested in the ongoing and growing RSS Program. To receive your own quarterly copy, please complete and return the form below to RISE.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____