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This newsletter is for anyone interested in the ongoing and growing RSS Program.

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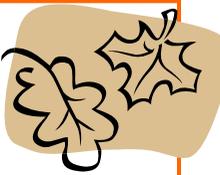
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Recovery Support Specialist Newsletter

Issue #14
October 2007



Supporting Recovery at Presidio

By John M'Elroy



In all my experience in these thirty three years of life, there have been two constants; God and change. My life has been consistently inconsistent. I came to Tucson with hope and confidence that I could make a life for myself here.

The first year and a half things went remarkably well. I got a great job and quickly became a successful business analyst for a well known commercial credit agency. However, at the height of my business career, I felt ironically unfulfilled. I asked God to show me those who

were really in need and give me the tools to help them.

Within six months I was out of a job, living in my car, and alone. I had been proud and arrogant about the way I saw myself and others. It was not until a DUI, a possession charge, and committing a crime that was beyond anything I would ever have imagined myself committing, that I realized I had more to lose than I had previously thought. My honor, integrity and honesty were jeopardized through my addictive behaviors.

I underwent a dramatic change for the better after being admitted to Los Altos. The first thirty days of treatment involved my depression and anxiety, dealing with urges and stimuli were daily occurrences. Having to cope with my emotions of anger, fear, guilt, shame, and confusion became a continuous struggle. Had it not been for a promise I had made to someone who helped me get into treatment, I may not have stuck it out.

Brian Anderson, the program director at Presidio, asked me if I would be interested in a position as a Recovery Support Specialist. At first I was apprehensive and I worried that I might be overwhelmed with the responsibility. But, I realized that I had the opportunity to do exactly what I had prayed for.

The trainings at COPE and CPSA support a holistic and therapeutic approach to recovery. My co-workers treat me as their equal and support me in my position, as well as in my own recovery. Members have accepted me into their support system as a friend and professional. I continue to express the full width and breadth of my gratitude toward God, COPE, its employees and members; I have a unique opportunity to be a part of this wonderful and supportive community of truly incredible people.

Advisory Committee

Salma Ballesteros
CRSS Institute 8

Linda Hicks
CRSS Institute 1

Kathy Lewis
CRSS Institute 5

Ken Rogers
VP RSSAG
CRSS Institute 1

Tyrone Scercy
CRSS Institute 3

Patricia Porras
CRSS Institute 9

Dan Steffy

All Certified Recovery Support Specialists are invited to join the Advisory Committee.

Please call RISE at 520-626-7473 for the date and time of meetings.

News of Note

Celebration of Recovery September 6, 2007 Compass Health Care

Dan Steffy, Patricia Porras, Fred Ortega



Dan and Fred were both nominated for the Robert Moore Award. This is the second year of the award and five others were nominated.

Barbara Montrose received the award this year for her work in housing for people who are homeless.

Robert Moore was an incredible person and his belief in the unending power of human beings to change for the better was an example for all of us. He was part of the original group at CPSA that created the under pinning's for the Recovery Support Specialist Institutes. We are delighted that Compass has continued Robert's work through the inspiration of this award. I'm sure that Robert would be delighted that Dan and Fred were two of the nominees.

Next RSS Institute

- The dates for the November Institute are the 12, 13, 20, 21, 26, 27 and 28th and the deadline is **October 15th**.

RSS Alumni Guild

- The meeting of the RSS Alumni Guild are held on the third Wednesday of each month from 8:00 to 10:00 at the CPSA/Dodge Training site. The next meeting is October 17. You can call Christina Jasberg 320-6275 or Ken Rogers 618-8832.

Beth C. Stoneking, PhD, CPRP
Beverly McGuffin, RN, MS, CPRP
Brittany Martell

Publisher
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Word Search

Find all 16 words

AWARD	INSTITUTE	MADDEN	RECOVERY
BROADCASTER	JOURNEY	MILAGRO	SKILLS
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CONFIDENTIALITY	LIGHT	OPPORTUNITY	WORKING

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HOLDING THE LIGHT

by Linda Hicks, CRSS

We can move forward with our life and recovery, even though people we love are not yet ready to leave their addictive behavior.

Picture a bridge. On one side of the bridge it is cold and dark. We stood there with others in the cold and darkness, doubled over in pain. Some of us developed an eating disorder to cope with the pain. Some drank; some used other drugs. Some of us lost control of our sexual behavior. Some of us obsessively focused on addicted people's pain to distract us from our own pain. Many of us did both: we developed an addictive behavior and distracted ourselves by focusing on other addictive people. We did not know there was a bridge. We thought we were trapped on a cliff.

Then, some of us got lucky. Our eyes opened, by the Grace of God, because it was time. We saw the bridge. People told us what was on the other side: warmth, light, and healing from our pain. We could barely glimpse or imagine this, but we decided to start the trek across the bridge anyway.

We tried to convince the people around us on the cliff that there was a bridge to a better place, but they wouldn't listen. They couldn't see it; they couldn't believe. They were not ready for the journey. We decided to go alone, because we believed, and because people on the other side were cheering us onward. The closer we got to the other side, the more we could see and feel what we had been promised was real. There was light, warmth, healing and love. The other side was a better place.

But now, there is a bridge between those on the other side and us. Sometimes, we may be tempted to go back and drag them over with us, but it cannot be done. No one can be dragged or forced across this bridge. Each person must go as his or her own choice, when the time is right. Some will come; some will stay on the other side. The choice is not ours.

We can love them. We can wave to them. We can holler back and forth. We can cheer them on, as others have cheered and encouraged us. But we cannot make them come over with us.

If our time has come to cross the bridge, or if we have already crossed and are standing in the light and warmth, we do not have to feel guilty. It is where we are meant to be. We do not have to go back to the dark cliff because another's time has not yet come.

The best thing we can do is stay in the light, because it reassures others that there is a better place. And if others ever do decide to cross the bridge, we will be there to cheer them on.

Today, I will move forward with my life, despite what others are doing or not doing. I will know it is my right to cross the bridge to a better life, even if I must leave others behind to do that. I will not feel guilty. I will not feel ashamed. I know that where I am now is a better place and where I'm meant to be.

UNKNOWN

Working for Good Monique Roybal, CSS, CRSS

My name is Monique Roybal and I am a Community Support Specialist at CODAC Behavioral Health. I just celebrated my one year with CODAC in July and I can honestly say I enjoy my job. I work with the members of CODAC in their homes away from a clinical setting. The members I work with have been diagnosed with a psychiatric and/or substance use disorders. They complete service plans with goals that they have developed with their Clinical Liaison.

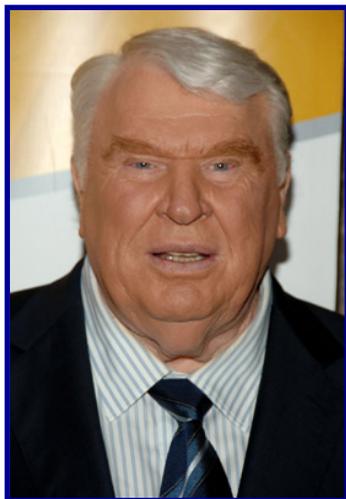


I help them learn the skills to reach those goals aiding them in their recovery. These skills include peer support, budgeting, household management, job searching, medication education, advocacy, communication skills, socialization skills, activities of daily living, and WRAP plans.

I also encourage members to attend groups at the CODAC Recovery Support Center where they can learn additional skills and improve their socialization skills. About five months ago, I also took on a new job as a Housing Community Support Specialist where I support members that have moved into CODAC housing. They may have moved into their own apartment for the first time and often need peer support to help them with their living skills. Some of the CODAC housing consists of people living with roommates and I assist in mediating conflicts between tenants and roommates.

I use the skills learned at the Recovery Support Specialist Institute, that I completed in November, 2006 on a daily basis. Although I had already started my job as a CSS before the RSS Institute, I learned additional skills that helped me become a better employee and a better support person for the members I work with. When I have the honor of seeing the members reach their goals, I see how rewarding my job is and am grateful to My Higher Power for placing me in a position where I can use my experience to help others.

Did you Know...



John Madden **1936-Present** By Tyrone Scercy, CRSS

John Madden is most known for his current TV personality and celebrity as a very knowledgeable National Football League broadcaster analyst for both ABC and CBS. He is also well known for his graphically real video game series on college and professional football. However, his career in football was a little more extensive than these successful accomplishments.

Madden was a well-respected AFL head football coach for the Oakland Raiders at the age of thirty-three and he was the youngest coach in the league in 1969. In his rookie season he posted a record of 12-1-1 and was named coach of the year. However, he did not win a Championship that year.

Madden's best seasons was 1976-1977 when his team posted a 13-1 regular season record, winning the AFC championship against the Pittsburgh Steelers, and winning the Super Bowl XI against the Minnesota Vikings. Madden became the youngest NFL coach to win a Super Bowl. Coach Madden posted a record of 103-32-7 career record and this mark was the first time any NFL coach spent ten years with the same team and won more than 100 games.

Madden retired from coaching due to stress and wanting to get close to his family. He still had an interest in football and decided to enter broadcasting. Travel was a big issue in Madden's life because he did not like to fly in airplanes. He was diagnosed with claustrophobia after a plane accident killing many football players from his alma mater, on which he was supposed to be a passenger. Madden suffered anxiety attacks while flying as a coach and chose not to fly as a broadcaster. Claustrophobia may have kept John away from airplane travel, which was the quickest way to get to football venues for his jobs, but he never allowed this to keep him from his career in broadcasting. He became famous for his travel to televised games by bus.

He was able to make it all work even with limitations, and has become known as one of the best football analysts in the business that can make the game understandable to almost anyone who has an interest. Madden is loved and adored by all who follow the NFL.

La Frontera Center's Milagro Unit "A Miracle"

George M. Perez, CRSS

La Frontera's Milagro Unit is a short-term, step-down residential facility for people who are usually transitioning from an inpatient hospitalization back to the community. People may be admitted to Milagro from a hospital, La Frontera's Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF), or a similar inpatient treatment facility. Milagro also serves as an alternative to hospitalization for individuals in outpatient treatment, if they are referred through their Recovery Facilitator. The length of stay at Milagro is usually a number of days, giving the person time to stabilize and prepare for return to the community.

As a Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS) on Milagro, I assist individuals in developing their own Individual Recovery Plan. This plan allows the individual to identify people in their lives who can act as a support network, make plans for proactively addressing any potential future crises, and identify specific short-term personal recovery goals. I also provide both individual and group peer support. I facilitate two art expression groups per week as well as two relaxation groups per week.

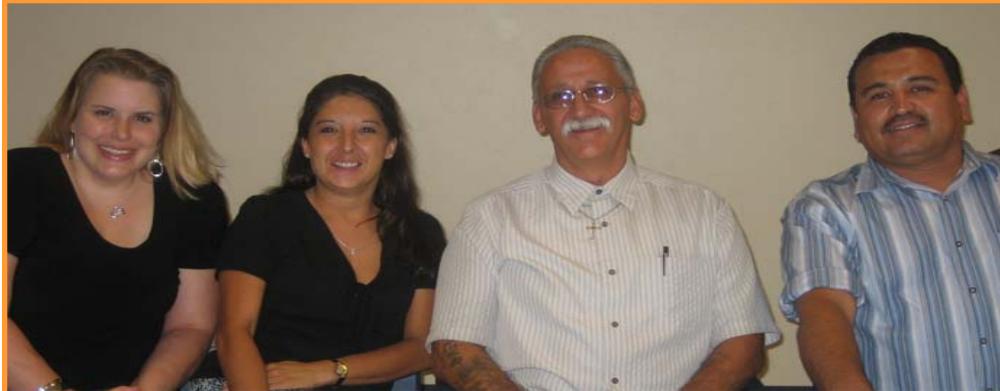
A staffing with the individual's Recovery Facilitator and Milagro's Discharge Planner is held within a few days. As the CRSS on the unit, I often participate in the staffing. The individual is also welcome to invite anyone else they want to have involved in the staffing. The staffing is to provide the individual the opportunity to create a discharge plan and put any needed outpatient behavioral health services into place. An appointment is also arranged with the individual's medication provider.

When discharged from Milagro, individuals may return to their own home, enter a board and care facility, enter a long term substance abuse treatment program, or enter other community residential programs. A follow-up appointment is scheduled with the individual's Recovery Facilitator, medication provider, and any other identified community social services. La Frontera also provides follow up peer support services by additional CRSS staff on an outpatient basis.

The overall Milagro goal is successful transition from in-patient hospitalization to appropriate community residence, with supportive out-patient mental health services and community social services.

Milagro is the Spanish word for Miracle. Many individuals have utilized La Frontera's Milagro unit to embark on a miraculous new life for themselves, where they are able to succeed in the community.

CRSS Panel



Christina Jasberg, Monique Roybal, Fred Ortega, Arnold Aguila

"Lessons Learned"

I arrived at CPSA on the thirteenth day,
With great anticipation of excitement held at bay.

I walked into the room with trepidation filling me,
But comforted by a welcoming smile from Beth that I did see.

As we all settled into place, the class was ready to start,
I sensed that the three of them were coming from their heart.

They taught us, they empowered us, it all went by so fast,
With all this new found knowledge, I can't believe it's passed.

Though you worked with diligence and inserted it with light,
I must admit the homework kept me up all night!

The lessons that we learned were sometimes filled with strife,
We thank you for bringing us to this new chapter in our life.

Now I would like to thank Beth, Dan and Bev
and the crew from CPSA,
For the patience in bringing us to this graduation day.

By Joy Forgang, Institute 11

Institute 11



Top Row: Rashid Malekzadeh, Joseph Blanco, Cynthia Conner, Bernadette Unterbrink,
Gary Sipe, Christine Metheny, Tony DiGuardia, Penelope Vetta, Lea Dumire
Front Row: Stefanie Chapp, Nina Koch, Laurie Wisnia, Aida Sorenson, Joyce Forgang
Not Pictured: Fernando Duran and Laura Olin

What is Confidentiality?

By Patricia Porras, CRSS

Have you ever told someone something that was very private and personal then they took it upon themselves to relay that information to other's? If you answered yes, you probably severed the friendship and/or relationship or never trusted that person again.

Confidential conversations are very personal and private. Breaking them can cause mistrust and resentment in a friendship and possibly end it. On the other hand, confidentiality can make a friendship or relationship stronger. You know you can trust that person to keep what is private - **private**.

When I was a child, whatever was verbally shared in our family, was open for discussion with others. I grew up keeping the things that were private to me inside. I did not share them with anyone. Time passed and I had so much frustration and anger pent-up inside, that I was unable to handle the emotional pain. So, I turned to drugs to "escape" from my emotions. When I came into recovery the hardest thing for me was trying to get off drugs, because I needed them for my "escape" from the real world so I did not have to "share" anything.

I am off drugs now and am learning to trust others. Whatever is said to me in private stays **private**.

I work in the Behavioral Health field as a RSS and am gaining knowledge from others everyday. Members come to me and share their feelings and private words. I remember coming into this stage of learning to trust someone and how hard that was. This has given me the opportunity to have close relationships with others so they can feel comfortable sharing and trusting.



SOSTENIENDO LA LUZ

por Linda Hicks, CRSS
traducido al Español por Salma Ballesteros, CRSS

Podemos ir hacia adelante en nuestra vida y en nuestra recuperación, aunque la gente que amamos aún no estén listas para finalizar su conducta adictiva.

Imagina un puente. En un lado del puente es frío y oscuro. Estuvimos parados allí con otros en el frío y oscuridad, doblados de dolor. Algunos de nosotros desarrollamos un trastorno alimenticio para poder sobrellevar el dolor. Algunos bebieron, otros usaron drogas. Algunos de nosotros perdimos el control de nuestra sexualidad. Algunos de nosotros nos enfocamos obsesivamente en el dolor adictivo de otras personas para distraernos de nuestro propio dolor. Muchos de nosotros hicimos ambos: desarrollamos una conducta adictiva, y distraímos a nosotros mismos enfocándonos en otra gente adictiva. No sabíamos que había un puente. Pensamos que estábamos atrapados en un precipicio.

Después, algunos de nosotros tuvimos suerte. Nuestros ojos se abrieron, por la Gracia de Dios, porque ya era tiempo. Vimos el puente. La gente nos dijo lo que había en el otro lado: calor, luz, y alivio para nuestro dolor. Apenas podíamos vislumbrar o imaginar ésto, pero decidimos de cualquier modo comenzar el recorrido fatigoso a través del puente.

Tratamos de convencer a la gente a nuestro alrededor en el precipicio que había un puente a un lugar mejor, pero no escuchában. No podían verlo; no podían creer. No estaban listos para el viaje. Decidimos ir solos, porque creíamos, y porque gente en el otro lado estaban alentándonos a seguir adelante. Entre más nos acercábamos al otro lado, más podíamos ver, y sentir, que lo que nos habían dicho era real. Había luz, calor, alivio, y amor. El otro lado era un lugar mejor.

Pero ahora, hay un puente entre aquellos en el otro lado y nosotros. Algunas veces, puede ser que seamos tentados a volver atrás y arrastrarlos junto con nosotros, pero no puede ser. Nadie puede ser arrastrado o forzado a través de éste puente. Cada persona debe ir por su propia desición, cuando el tiempo sea correcto. Algunos vendrán, algunos se quedarán en el otro lado. La desición no es nuestra. Podemos amarlos. Podemos saludarlos. Podemos gritarles de un lado a otro. Podemos alentarlos, como otros nos han alentado y animado. Pero no podemos hacerlos venir con nosotros.

Si nuestro tiempo ha llegado de cruzar el puente, o si ya cruzamos y estamos parados en la luz y calor, no tenemos porque sentirnos culpables. Es donde debemos estar. No tenemos que volver al oscuro precipicio porque el tiempo de otro aún no ha llegado.

Lo mejor que podemos hacer es quedarnos en la luz, porque al hacerlo, ésto asegura a otros que hay un lugar mejor. Y si otros alguna vez deciden cruzar el puente, allí estaremos para alentarlos.

Hoy, seguiré adelante con mi vida, a pesar de lo que otros estén haciendo o no haciendo. Sabré que es mi derecho el cruzar el puente a una vida mejor, aún cuando tengamos que dejar detrás a otros a que lo hagan. No me sentiré culpable. No me sentiré avergonzado. Yo sé que donde estoy ahora, es un mejor lugar y donde debo estar.

DESCONOCIDO