

Recovery Support Specialist News

August 2013
RSS Institute 35

Thank You Everyone!

By Christina Baca



*Christina Baca and daughter,
Heather Darling*

This past year has been a whirlwind!

But let me step back for a moment, I wasn't always the person that you see here today. I am a person with serious mental illness. I was a sleep all day, stay up at night person, crying most of the time I was awake. I left the comfort of my bedroom only to eat. When I ran out of food, I was forced to go to the grocery store, but only at night. I did not want to see or be seen by anyone.

Then the opportunity to attend the University of Arizona's Camp Wellness in July of 2011 was presented to me. At first I was skeptical. Was this something I wanted to leave the comfort of my bed to do? I decided to give it a try. I am so grateful that I did. That was the beginning of my new life. I finished the program and did not want to go back to the old ways. So I volunteered at Camp Wellness as a co-facilitator of the fitness program there. I got great satisfaction helping people who were just like me.

During this time, I was encouraged to attend the University of Arizona's Recovery Support Specialist Institute. I did and I successfully graduated as a Certified Recovery Support Specialist.

This is when my life truly began to change. I continued my volunteer work, but it became apparent to me that it was time to get a job. It was my goal to work for the University as a Recovery Support Specialist.

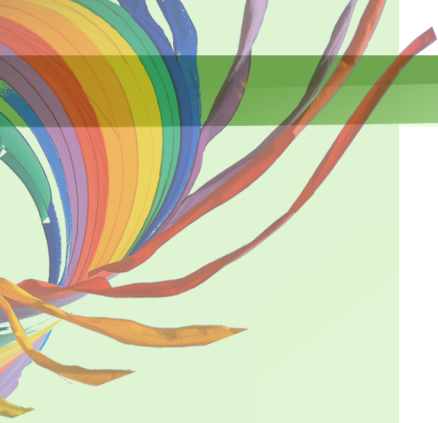
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Linkages held their 6th Annual, Linkages "**Building Bridges**" Awards Ceremony at Westin La Paloma Resort and Spa on October 31st. Linkages is a non-profit organization founded by Jim Click that "links" Tucson employers by helping people with disabilities get jobs.

They recognize Employer of the Year; Job Developer of the Year; Agency/Project of the Year. I had the honor and privilege of being the recipient of the "Individual of the year" Award. This is my acceptance speech after Jim Click and Ron Barber presented me with the award.

I am indeed a blessed individual!

Christina Baca, CRSS



Heather, Christina, Beverly and Shirley Baca at the 2013 Linkages Awards Luncheon.

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And there it was, an opening as an Instructional Specialist Sr. for... The University of Arizona Recovery Support Specialist Institute Workforce Development program!

I applied immediately! Let me tell you, the University should hire you based on the fact that you can successfully go through the application process and submit an application!

3 days later, I got a call for an interview! This is when the whirlwind began.

On October 23rd, 2012 I became an employee of the University of Arizona Recovery Support Specialist Institute Workforce Development Program!

When I started work, my Supervisor, the Director of the Workforce Development Program, Beverly McGuffin said to me, "Christina, we are on a train, and we're going from 0 to 60". Looking back on it Beverly, the train was going from 0 to 80!

Within a week, we were doing Institute #31, my first Institute. In the year that I have worked for the University, we have done 6 institutes and four 2 day trainings, that's approximately 120 students. To date, the Institute has had 600 + graduates, 50% of those graduates have gained employment in Behavioral Health Services.

I have done presentations at nine New Employee Orientations for CPSA, which can be as many as 50 new employees. I've done smaller presentations for CODAC, & La Frontera. I've been a guest speaker on panels, done resource fairs. I even did a presentation at the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association conference in Atlanta, GA.

Beverly and I have figured that I have reached out

to approximately 400 people in a very short amount of time. And the Workforce Development Program continues to grow. We have been adding to our services. We have added a 2nd practicum a week for the CRSS's who are working in the field, and a pre-practicum for the CRSS's who are looking for jobs. We are a Workforce Development Program. We are creating a workforce for people in recovery with Serious Mental Illness and or Substance use disorders.

No longer am I that girl crying in bed, only venturing out at night to buy groceries because there was no more food to eat.

I am a Certified Recovery Support Specialist with a message. It is the message of hope, and that the possibility of recovery is 100%! Let me say that again, the possibility of recovery is 100%!

That's my story, and I'm sticking to it!

I would like to thank Linkages Building Bridges for this esteemed award of Individual of the year, and Mister Carwash for their gracious scholarship. I plan on enrolling in the Pima Community College Behavioral Health Specialist Program to further my education with that scholarship.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Beverly McGuffin for having a vision and faith in me.

I happen to be fortunate enough to have my family here today, thank you Mom and Dad for not giving up on me, thank you Mom, for saving my life. And thank you to my beautiful Daughter, Heather Ann Darling for being my inspiration.

And thank you to my good friend Ralph Romero!

Thank you everyone for being here today!

Yes You Can!

By Bobbie Carroll

I grew up hoping. It's something my dad instilled in me as early as I can remember. Had it not been for this, I could be dead. I could be serving time. Who knows? But I wouldn't be here. My dad posed questions like, "why?" or "why not?" "why can't you?" "who told you that?" "what do YOU think?" He asked things like, "what do YOU want?", "how do YOU feel about it?"

It almost makes me laugh now because really, those are such simple questions. I mean when you break it down, it's as if there's nothing in the world that can stop you. It's not too hard to feel these answers and when I do, it's like a surge of energy shoots right through me and I'm so excited I could just jump out of my own skin. I feel like my mind is going to expand right out of my skull because it is so full of ideas, possibilities and inventions. I have sometimes felt like I was running towards the finish line, the way you see in movies. I was already excited about what I wanted. It was a matter of believing I could have it.

My dad used to tell me, "You can be anything you want". He told me this repeatedly growing up. He said, "If you're willing to work for it and you're willing to have patience, you can get it". He told me this repeatedly. He would get so mad sometimes and say so loudly, "YEESSS YOU CAAAAN!!!!"

It was these questions and these statements that I had heard repeatedly my whole life that came to my mind when I lived on the streets or in my car; when my addiction was at its worst; when I had prison time hanging over my head; when my kids were on the line. I KNEW that "I could"! I had to tell these things to myself over and over and over and OVER again. I had to make myself believe it. I had no reason not to think it was true. I asked myself the same questions my dad would ask. "Why can't I? Why not? What's stopping me?". And I'd think too, "Well...what DO I want? How DO I feel about it?" These were and still are crucial things I feel I need to remember to get me through the unsuccessful times to make me successful.

My role in this lifetime has been expanded because I tried again. And again. And again. And again until I got somewhere I wanted to be. I believe that's just the way it is whether you have a mental illness, or use drugs. I don't think it matters. What matters, I think, is "what do YOU want?".





There is Always Hope

By Jessica Cross



I want to start by saying that I found I had a very hard time trying to figure out how I was going to write this essay on 'hope'. I have never been good at writing essays, but then it hit me, all I had to do was write about the hope that I felt when I got this job as a recovery coach, and how hope was a big part of the fulfillment I felt when I was accepted for this position.

I remember the day that my supervisor Tippy called me and did my phone interview. Tippy asked me why I wanted this job. I told her that I wanted this job so I could give hope to other people, and so that I could be there when they did finally see that hope wasn't just an abused word and that it can actually be a reality for them to reach.

Tippy asked me how I planned on helping people see this. I answered "by simply being there for them and by reminding them every time I see them that there is a light at the end of the tunnel".

I was always told that there was 'no hope' for me and I have a personal mission to prove that those who told me that are wrong. I believe that as I sit here at my desk at work that I have proven them wrong. Every time I see a new member I tell them that there is hope because I don't think that people in recovery hear that often enough.

A Higher Power to Believe In

By Janet Andrews

I was raised to be religious. As I got older I did not like the traditional church, therefore I stopped attending. When I started my recovery I attended AA and MICA (mental illness chemical abuse) where they talked about a higher power. This made me see religion in a spiritual way. I believe in God, but being spiritual rather than in a strict religion made me feel that I had more choices.

I learned that when things were too much for me to handle that I had a higher power to turn things over to and it was out of my hands. This has helped me get through a lot of my depression. Being overwhelmed triggers my depression. So if I believe that I can't handle something, there is a higher power that has a plan for me, and will help handle the situation in the best way it should be handled.

It gives me hope that there is something to believe in when the burden becomes too much.



Beginning of Hope

By Danielle Rohr

When I was 16 years old I thought I had found the love of my life. For two years he and I had an on and off again relationship and at 18 I thought it would be great to have a baby to help bring us together. Unfortunately I was wrong. Three months after turning 18 I was pregnant with my baby boy and after trying for many months to get my son's dad to stay at home and be committed to having a family, I decided it would be best to just move on and become a single mom.

In the next three years my son and I went through a lot of changes and moving around. In 2008 I got into a relationship with a man that I thought was going to be 'the one'. I had been a single mom for three years and was working two jobs and finally had my own apartment and car. This new man was controlling at times but he always said it was because he loved my son and me so much. And of course I was young and naive and started believing everything he said. After just a few months, this man convinced me to leave my son in Tucson with my parents and move to Mesa, Arizona with him and start a new life. I believed this was going to be a great new start at having the happy family that I had always wanted.

Soon after getting to Mesa, I noticed a change in his behavior. He would be very verbally violent. After a few weeks I called my parents to bring my son to me. My mom stated there was NO way she was going to give my son back to me because soon after I left she had looked up my boyfriend's record and found out that he was in fact a violent man. Of course I didn't want to believe this because all I wanted was to have a happy family.

I found myself with a Child Protective Service (CPS) case and no son to care for, which broke my heart. I continued to stay with this man for several months getting beaten and hospitalized frequently. I had hope that this was going to get better and I would eventually get my son back.

After about six months of my son being gone, I started to give up on hope. CPS told me it was either my son or this man. Yes, I made a bad decision that I can never take back. I chose the man who had been beating me up but was also promising me the world (new family). My son was now being put up for adoption and I was going through the same route. Then after a terrifying night and almost losing my life, I had a wake up call. I got out of the abusive



relationship and moved into a shelter. A few weeks later my parents adopted my son, and told me I was never going to be his mother again.

My heart was broken and for the next two years I just tried to cope the best way I knew how (drugs and sex). I was living back and forth from my parents house to a RV park with my motor home and some times couch hopping. I didn't know where my life was supposed to go because all I knew was that I wanted to be a great mother and a wife.

Easter day 2011, I was back at my parent's living in my motor home on their property. My son now 6 years old knew that mommy (me) was having some hard times. My son knocked and knocked at the door telling me to open up or come outside to play with him. I was so disgusted with myself that I had lost my son for abuse and now using drugs to hide the pain.

My new beginning of HOPE was when I got myself into detox the very next day and three days later was in a residential rehab center. I did well for the three months I was there but then relapsed while trying to make new friends.

Finally having hope and believing that something better would come along I found a wonderful man January 2012. He helped teach me ethics and to have respect for my stuff. I cleaned up by getting sober about 6 months later and have been doing great every since.

In February 2013 I finally got a part time job to prove to myself that I could do it. By May of 2013 I had an interview

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Beginning of Hope, continued from page 5

for a RSS position that I had wanted for the past two years. At the end of May my parents were so proud of everything I had accomplished that they asked if I wanted to take my son for the summer.

It is August 2013 and I am keeping hope in my heart. I have my wonderful son Zackary back in my life full time and we live with my wonderful boyfriend David.

Thank you to everyone who helped me along my way to recovery.

Taking Back What Was Mine

By Carmen Gonzalez

My story of hope started over 5 years ago. I had just realized that my husband of 13 years had run off with another woman and my children. They were trying to cross the US/Canadian border and they were stopped. A constable was going through the passports and noticed the different names and questioned my daughters about who the woman with them was. My daughters told a very different story than what was being provided to them by my husband and the woman. I receive the call late at night by the Constable enquiring as to why the children were without me and if I knew that they were going to be taken into a different country. I was relieved that I finally know where they were, however their father had told me after leaving the port that if I did not allow him to go through that I truly would never see them again. In my panic I called this woman's husband (yes she was married too) to ask for legal advice (he is a lawyer). To my surprise he had no issues helping me regain my children and he told me exactly what to do. I followed his instructions and I wrote a letter to Canada explaining the situation and had it notarized with a date stating when the children were to be returned to me. My soon to be ex-husband had no idea what the letter stated, only that he now had access to continue on his journey.

My children were taken from me for a month and I had never felt so hopeless. I received a call from their father stating that he had decided to keep the girls and that there was nothing I could do about it. I reminded him of the letter to Canada and how it had a date that he was to return the children to me. I told him that if he did not comply and meet me in Seattle



(he was in Wasilla, AK) that the FBI would be after him for kidnapping. Needless to say that he met me in Seattle on that day with the girls.

Here is where I found hope. A stranger noticed that something did not seem right and he acted on it. This man listened to my children and did what he could to help them. The lawyer put aside his own feeling to help my children and me. I bought a ticket to Seattle with only a half hour to get back on to the next flight home with my children. The amazing thing was the flight was on time and the gate that I exited from was right next to the one I had to enter. I literally got my children and got back on the plane. I finally stood up to the man who had been abusing me for years and took back what was mine. I continue to remind myself of the kindness of others. I am now with a man who is raising my girls and treats them as his own. He has given more than I could have ever hoped for, unconditional love.

My Experience of Hope

By Lisa Irwin

Although my family has an extensive history of Major Depression Disorder, I had been in denial of my own symptoms for most of my adult life. My most recent break occurred approximately one year ago resulting in feelings of helplessness, isolation, and sadness. My recognition of the extent of my illness transpired when I looked at my five-year-old daughter at the end of the couch begging me to play with her, talk to her, and engage her.

I could no longer ignore the truth, my truth; depression had surfaced again and began to affect the one person with no other choice but to contend with its course of apathy and neglect. My child was my sole reason for reaching out for help so quickly. Knowing full well otherwise I would have lingered in my sickness, denying it's gravity and it's existence.

Hope developed by means of small accomplishments: therapy; advocating for myself; and accomplishing a set goals. Hope took on many guises and appeared when I actively sought it, materializing when least expected in the kind deeds and words of strangers.

Although I continue to struggle at times, my daughter helps me to be mindful of my many blessings and my current position as a Recovery Coach humbles me while confirming a purpose larger than myself.



Healthy Ways to Relax and Recharge

- Go for a walk.
- Spend time in nature.
- Call a good friend.
- Sweat out tension with a good workout.
- Write in your journal.
- Take a long bath.
- Light scented candles.
- Savor a warm cup of coffee or tea.
- Play with a pet.
- Work in your garden.
- Get a massage.
- Curl up with a good book.
- Listen to music.
- Watch a comedy.

Helpguide.org. Stress Management. How to Reduce, Prevent, and Cope with Stress. Authors: Melinda Smith, M.A. and Robert Segal, M.A. Retrieved from: http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm



When Fear is No Longer an Option

By Marian Lockette

I grew up on the Reservation in a little town named Tuba City. My parents were teachers. I was an angry, suicidal, hurt child. When I was 15, I was placed in a hospital in Phoenix, AZ. I spent my time trying to make sense of who I was. My parents played the part of caring and concerned parents. I craved to be heard. I felt ignored and found out soon after my release that my home life had not changed.

I graduated May 1988 an angry, suicidal, hurt 17 year old. Shortly after I was raped by my best friend. My parent's reaction to the events scared me but didn't surprise me. Their reactions were passive as if it was not of a great importance to them. I did not receive any crisis counseling. I was seeing a psychologist for other matters but it wasn't until much later that I received counseling for my rape.

Due to my unresolved issues, I came to be at a hospital in Gallup N.M. I was basically being kept from causing further harm to myself. I received some group and individual counseling. I was managed not empowered. I didn't feel I was being educated on how to cope with my feelings of despair, I was only being taught that it was wrong to want to die. Soon I was back in Tuba attending my father's memorial service. I was 18. I was confused why I felt sadness for a man I hated so much. My oldest brother made it a point to counsel me the night before the service. He stated that; "You need to STOP listening to what the doctors' are saying. You need to STOP taking the medication and STOP being a burden on mom."

A day or two after the service I returned to the hospital to finish out my time. Although I was released I still hadn't felt as if things were any better for me. I went back to my hometown. I volunteered as a teacher's aide at my old primary and intermediate school. I felt I was just there going through the motions. I felt disconnected and my mind fragmented from time and



space. My mom was coping with the loss of my father and the stress that I obviously brought to her. I still willed to end my life. I felt my mother would have been happier without me in her life. Not long after my release from the hospital and not receiving anymore counseling I had made the decision to bring finality to my pain. At the age of 18 I had walked into my local police station with my father's hand gun. I was intent on dying in front of someone. I had felt all the years up to that point that no one had truly heard the pain I was going through and I was determined that this time they would see the pain that I had felt. The gun was wrestled from my grasp, and soon I was in handcuffs being transported to the Coconino police station in Flagstaff. I spent several days in a solitary cell. This is when I first experienced HOPE. The officers listened to me, calmed me and gave me a sense of understanding that I hadn't felt before. I was given the option to return to the hospital in Gallup, N.M. or go to the State Hospital in Phoenix. I opted for Gallup. Going back I had a different sense of myself. I was stronger, more powerful. I felt that people would see me in a different light now.

After I was discharged from the hospital, and a failed attempt at placing me in a group home in Northeastern Arizona, I was dropped off at my grandmother's home in Tucson. I was placed in a day treatment program called SAMHC. That was

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Greek Salad

Ingredients:

- 3 vine ripe tomatoes, cut into chunks
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 European seedless cucumber, cut into bite-size chunks
- 1 small red bell pepper, seeded and chunked
- 1 small green bell pepper, seeded and chunked
- 1 cubanelle pepper, seeded and chunked
- 1 cup Kalamata black olives
- Several sprigs fresh flat-leaf parsley, about 1/2 cup
- 2 (1/4 pound) slices imported Greek feta
- 1/4 cup (a couple of glugs) extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons (3 splashes) red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, crushed in palm of your hand
- Coarse salt and black pepper
- Pita breads

Directions: *Combine vegetables, olives, and parsley in a large bowl. Rest sliced feta on the top of salad. Combine oil, vinegar, and oregano in a small plastic container with a lid. Shake vigorously to combine oil and vinegar and pour over salad and cheese. Season with salt and pepper and let the salad marinate until ready to serve. Serve salad with pita bread blistered and warmed on a hot griddle or grill pan.*

Recipe courtesy Rachael Ray from 30 Minute Meals, Food Network

Retrieved from: <http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/rachael-ray/greek-salad-recipe/index.html>

an interesting experience. I was very much aware that I didn't fit in. As far as I knew I was never given a diagnosis other than depression. I didn't act like the others. I didn't hear voices or become violent with staff. I learned early on that, if I just accept where I am, life would become so much easier. As time went on, I warmed up and became friends with the clients and built connections with the staff. This is where I first advocated for myself in seeking out a place to deal with my rape and earlier sexual molestation. I bonded well with my therapist and worked through my grief and anger relating to my loss of self. This experience led me to my second encounter with HOPE. During my experience with SAMHC and SACASA, I began taking classes at Pima Community College. My world opened up to new faces, new opportunities and a brighter me. I learned a lot about my strengths, weaknesses and capabilities. I began to see myself as the educated one, no longer a victim of my circumstances. My living situation changed, when my grandmother passed. My mother retired and moved to Tucson where I moved in and edged out a life back under her denial and resentment.

I became more involved in school through my classes and where friendships were built. Getting hooked up with a counselor that soon became a friend, I was able to launch my idea of having a peer run support group. For several semesters I co-facilitated an Adult Children of Alcoholics group. At the beginning of every semester I did the necessary paperwork to reserve the room, create and distribute the flyers and do a plug to the group in my social service classes. At home I gathered the necessary material for the group on my mom's computer. She was not happy about the group. Still very much in denial, she adamantly disapproved of my speaking about our family as dysfunctional and my father as an alcoholic. We bumped heads many times, but I hung in there. That group taught me a whole lot of what it meant to be a strong individual. I was still very much my "mother's daughter," but I also grew my own individual identity from that experience. I bonded with 3 pretty terrific people whom I became close friends with. As time went by the group died out, but I was grateful for the experience. I would have to say that my experience with that group and the people that helped make it a success at the time was absolutely pivotal for me. This was my third encounter with HOPE.

Years pass, I learned more about myself. I came out to my mom. People came and went in my life, good and bad. My mom was diagnosed with colon cancer at the age of 60.

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Trying not to fear the unknown relatives and siblings attempting to tell me I shouldn't be who I am. Not feeling, not hurting, not anticipating extreme loss. My mother and I became closer in the time she was living with her cancer. She made the choice to give up the denial; I made a choice to give up the anger. I lived in Flagstaff, when I got the call. My life was turned upside down, inside out. Family came out of the wood work. But, my resentment held strong. They weren't there for me when I most needed them growing up, so I didn't need them now. I surprised much of my family. Rumors floated around that "I was going to fall apart and have to be carried out of the church." That didn't happen. I feared a life apart from what was familiar to me. I missed the mom that became a real mom to me during her years with cancer. I felt alone and abandoned. Although I have siblings our ages separate us. I am 10 years younger than the third child in my family. My family was my mom. Our bond now broken by a devastating disease I now felt orphaned. HOPE left me.

I had made an abrupt move to Virginia. I stayed with my oldest brother and his family. They had said all the right things to bring me out there. I was comforted by their willingness to take me and love me like a brother would. It was a difficult time for all of us, but I felt the most wounded. I began to realize I was becoming a burden on them emotionally. I soon made the decision to pull away from them and find my own way. I lived in Virginia for nearly 4 years. I was so homesick for Arizona, I was not happy in Virginia, although I had a great job and was doing very well financially, I was extremely unhappy. My fear was that I didn't have the confidence to drive myself back to Arizona. I knew I would be making the trek by myself. Fear of the unknown trapped me in its unbreakable web. I felt extreme panic and grief that I wouldn't ever have the courage to move back to my real home. I spent many nights trying to dream myself to Arizona, but every time I woke to the nightmare of my true reality.

Months later the nation and my own personal safety were rocked by 9/11. Just a few hours away from D.C. what foundation I had left was obliterated. Just like so many others the days, weeks and months after that devastating turn of events I resumed my life in a complete fog. I was blinded by fear that my time was up and this was how my life was going to end, killed

because I lived so close to D.C. Trapped in a town I hated, in a life I was miserable in. All I wanted was to embrace my friends in Arizona. I never felt like a "true" Virginian. I didn't fit in here, I didn't belong, and I didn't want to die here.

Talking to a friend in Tucson I realized how much I had to get over my fear. She helped give me the confidence I needed. Shortly after the call with her, I was making all the necessary plans to move back home. There was a lot of planning and coordinating but I was successful. I made the trek alone in an 18 foot Ryder truck, a car hitched to a car carrier, my cat, and without a cell phone. Although I got lost and headed in the wrong direction the first night, I asked the guy at the front desk of my motel how to get back on track. I was only slightly nervous about getting lost and I saw it as an adventure. My focus was on Arizona, I wasn't going to let anything stop me. Fear for me was no longer an option. HOPE for a new beginning in familiar territory was my new freedom from the fear that engulfed me for so long.

Since my fateful voyage across many states in four days I have planted myself back in Tucson. I have had many adventures with several jobs, losing and gaining friendships, deaths of friends and pets all the time gaining a better sense of who I really am. Up to that point I hadn't realized how strong I truly was until I lost my job in 2012. Although I was hurt and angry, I found through La Frontera and Camp Wellness I had choices. Those choices empowered me to see that I no longer wanted to live the life I had. I wanted to live the life I choose to have. February 23, 2013 my wife and I celebrated over 10 years of being together. We own our own home and have five beautiful four legged children and continue to be each other's biggest supporters. When it comes to my past I can honestly say I wouldn't change a thing. I worked very hard to get where I am today and am very proud that I have a loving partner to share many more adventures with. I am very grateful that I didn't give up on the one person that means the most to me, myself. I believe that GOD gives me the opportunities to show myself that I am stronger than I choose to believe at that moment. He has given me something more precious than life, he has given me the opportunity to see HOPE in its truest form.

A New Life and Opportunities

By Bianca Castro

I remember when my children were taken. My son was taken from my arms, my daughter from school. That day was the lowest point in my life.

I spent years using and abusing drugs. I had rage from past hurts, and a carefree attitude that I could do whatever I wanted. I was very much entitled to do what I felt. I soon realized that with my kids gone, I was truly alone. I had never been alone. It was like solitary confinement, or at least that is what I imagined.

Within a matter of months I began to push through all the negative feelings and I wasn't going to be without my kids. I had fears, lost faith, but all I could hold onto was hope. Hope was all I had. Hope fueled my tenacity. The days when I couldn't get out of bed and when I had to walk away after a visit from my children.



Hope kept me strong in all areas of my life. Hope made me appreciate my life, my kids and it humbled me. I went to groups as an intensive outpatient. I have a diagnosis of S.M.I. I've been labeled less than. I have a brain injury (T.B.I.) and I persevered. No label made me who I am because I dug deep from within and I have been able to say "I'm still standing and I'm right here"! That is the glory of hope.

Hope pitched me a new life and opportunities. I am the happiest I have ever been and my kids are beautiful, happy and we are all together.

Fishing for Peace

Fish aren't just the golden-scaled time bombs you won at the state fair anymore. Their boldly colored tropical cousins have suddenly become the hottest fixtures to adorn offices, restaurants, and homes.

Fish sales have increased more than 25% in the past few years, according to the American Marine Life Dealers Association. There are good reasons: studies show that watching fish decreases blood pressure, induces a feeling of calm and, when placed in dentists' offices, reduces the need for novocaine before surgery.

In the past, the impersonal nature of creatures you can't cuddle had led most pet owners to prefer cats or dogs. But serene, low-maintenance tropical fish are the perfect antidote to fast-paced, harried lives. The gentle rush of water in a tank and the slow, soothing strokes of fins have the strange ability to mesmerize even the most stressed among us. Which is why fish have suddenly become both the decor and the pet of choice in our increasingly busy world.

Retrieved from: PsychologyToday.com.

By Camille Chatterjee, published on March 01, 1999

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/199903/fishing-peace>

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Back Row (L to R)

Susan Rasmussen, Marian Lockett, Robin Sandler, Frank Armendarez, Yara Perez, Gordon Brooks, Bianca Castro, Gregorio Canelos, Carmen Gonzalez, Kenneth Hogner, Lisa Irwin, Trisha Marell, Bonnie Woodward, John Lowry and son

Front Row (L to R)

Heather Darling, Janet Andrews, Constance Smathers, Bobbie Carroll, Danielle Rohr, Jessica Cross

RSSI Panel of CRSSs

Back Row (L to R) Kyle Long, Floyd Linton

Front Row (L to R) Shanna Moore, Norma Castaneda



The Recovery Support Specialist Institute is administered by the Workforce Development Program in the Department of Family and Community Medicine (DFCM) at the University of Arizona. The Institute is funded by the Community Partnership of Southern Arizona (CPSA). CPSA receives funding from the Arizona Department of Health Services/ Division of Behavioral Health Services (ADHS/ DBHS), Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).



Beverly McGuffin,
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UA Workforce Development Program 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.



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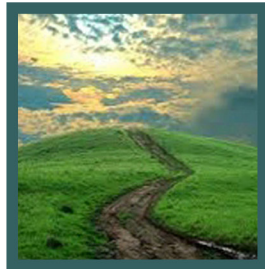
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