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RISE (Recovery thru Integration, Support & Empowerment)
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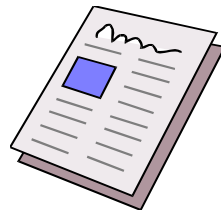
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This newsletter is for anyone interested in the ongoing and growing RSS Pro-

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Recovery Support Specialist Newsletter Issue # 4 January 2006



"Camaraderie"


Alternatives Conference 2005
By Jill Harman, AA, RSS

The National Empowerment Center and the Alternatives Conference Advisory Committee sponsored "Leading the Transformation to Recovery: And Still We Rise" in Phoenix, Arizona the week of October 26-30, 2005.

Eight hundred attendees from the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia attended the conference. We had one or more of the following circumstances in common with one another: mental illness, substance use disorders, dual diagnoses or physically handicapped. People came together from diverse backgrounds and experiences, finding common ground and learning from one another. We had more similarities than we thought. I experienced camaraderie with people I'd just met, it felt like we all knew each other because of the journey we shared through our experiences.

Some people had a common theme about how they were treated poorly and experienced the stigma that goes with having a mental illness. The attendees willingly shared their stories. We know that we are strong individuals and can handle things that come to us. Attendees networked by exchanging business cards and some signed up for the RSS Newsletter.

People gathered to discuss "peer support" at a caucus convened by Beverly McGuffin from the University of Arizona RISE and Dann Huff from Pinal Gila Behavioral Health Agency (PGBHA). Arizona was well represented at the caucus, and peers attended from other states. Several people reported they had no mechanism to be reimbursed for peer support services. Arizona has a Medicaid waiver for rehabilitation services called "Covered Services" which allows peer services to be billed to Medicaid.

The Alternatives Conference was a wonderful way of bringing a large, diverse group of people together to share, learn and experience how to work productively towards their recovery. Many workshops focused on how to effectively support others in their recovery as well. 

**Advisory
Committee**

Bits by Beth

- Dan Steffy,
Senior Advisor
- Diane "Crickett"
Austin
- Wanda Black
- Angela Dingleline
- Hope Gonzales
- Linda Hicks
- Valley Owen
- Connie Proctor
- Ken Rogers
- Tyrone Scercy
- 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.

Here we are in a new year and things are already in full swing. I am excited about Issue #4 because it shows how Recovery Support Specialists are integrating into all areas of the community. The Alternatives Conference is a good example of peers supporting each other across the U.S. and in other countries. It was great for many attendees to have this be their first conference. Community organizations showed confidence in their RSS staff by funding and sending them. The Art Show was another stunning example of how much talent is in this community. The staff at U of A RISE wish all of you a Happy New Year and the best in 2006.

Letters to the Editor

What are the components of the Recovery Support Specialist Institute in order to be certified?

The Recovery Support Specialist Institute consists of seven days of training. After graduating from the Recovery Support Specialist Institute the people who are working attend practicums of two hours a week, for at least eight and up to twelve weeks. A practicum is a supervised discussion of practical applications of previously learned knowledge. The RSS must then receive a positive evaluation from their supervisor and complete a total of 3 months or 120 hours of work. After completion of all of these activities CPSA gives out a certificate of certification to the RSS. The certification celebration occurs annually.

 * Beth C. Stoneking, PhD, CPRP Publisher *
 * Beverly McGuffin, RN, MS, CPRP Editor *
 * Jill Harman, AA, RSS Reporter *
 * Linnette Klinedinst Page Designer *

SMART RECOVERY Search and Find
By Ken Rogers

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| <i>ALBERTELLIS</i> | <i>COST</i> | <i>MOTIVATION</i> |
| <i>ANALYSIS</i> | <i>DISPUTE</i> | <i>PLAN</i> |
| <i>APPROACH</i> | <i>EMOTIVE</i> | <i>RATIONAL</i> |
| <i>AWARENESS</i> | <i>EMPOWER</i> | <i>SCIENTIFIC</i> |
| <i>BALANCED</i> | <i>ENHANCE</i> | <i>SUPPORT</i> |
| <i>BEHAVIORS</i> | <i>FEELINGS</i> | <i>THOUGHTS</i> |
| <i>BELIEFS</i> | <i>FOURPOINTPROGRAM</i> | <i>WORKSHEET</i> |

Mental Health Arts Show

By Ken Rogers, CRSS, CPRP & Jill Harman, AA, RSS

In celebration of recovery during National Mental Illness Awareness Week, the Long Range Public Education Coalition (The Long Rangers) and Community Partnership of Southern Arizona (CPSA) sponsored the 6th Annual Community Mental Health Arts Show. The Arts Show was held October 4-6, 2005 at CPSA's Training Center located at 2502 N. Dodge Blvd in Tucson. The art exhibit was open to the public and free of charge.

The Arts Show showcased the diverse talents of artists receiving and providing services in the public behavioral health system. Artists of all ages were able to submit a total of three pieces of artwork in one or more of the following categories: Paintings, Ceramics, Collages, Poetry/Creative Writing, Textiles, Sculptures, Photography, Drawings, Crafts and Mixed Media. A new category was added this year, Recovery and/or Stigma poster contest, that required the submission of an original painting or poster that represented Recovery and/or Stigma.

The artwork was judged by an independent panel of judges from the community. First, second and third place ribbons were awarded to each age group in each of the categories. Every artist who submitted artwork received an Honorable Mention ribbon for participating. An outstanding piece of artwork was chosen as Best of Show. The winners of Best of Show and the Recovery and/or Stigma poster received cash prizes in addition to their ribbons.

Christina Jasberg, RSS, was the first place winner of the Recovery and/or Stigma poster contest. Her poster will be reproduced and distributed to programs throughout Southern Arizona. Connie Proctor, CPRP, RSS, won first place in the Poetry/Creative Writing category. Congratulations to both of them for their achievements.

The Community Mental Health Arts Show was spectacular because of the diversity represented in all areas of existing artwork. This event shows the community and presenters what a wide variety of talent and creativity we have. 🎨



Christina

Did You Know that...

Sir Isaac Newton, one of the greatest scientific intellects of all time, had symptoms of mania? At times, he was so energized that he forgot to eat, sleep or bathe. He often experienced memory loss, confusion and paranoia, in addition to being plagued by thoughts of sin and death. Some found Newton quite unpleasant, judging him to have been evil-tempered and vindictive.



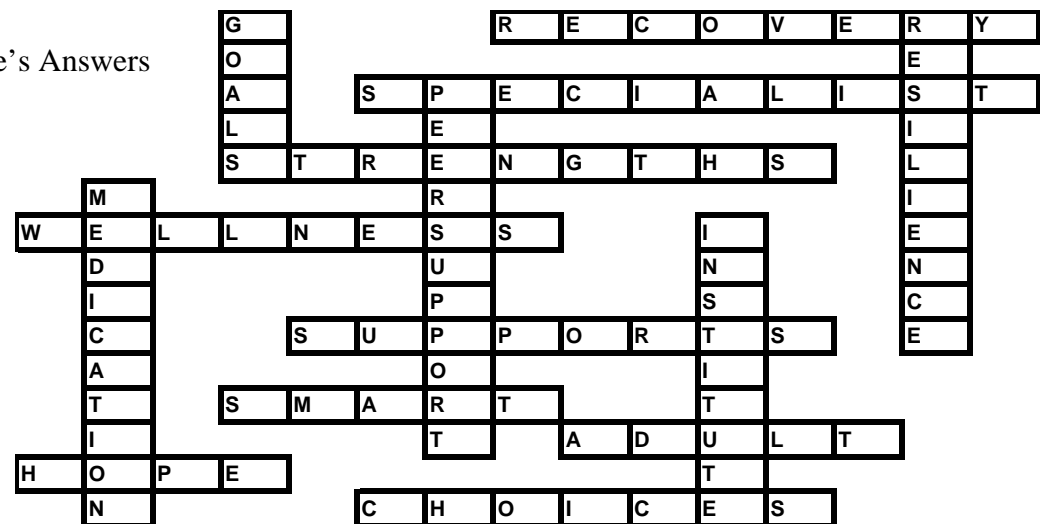
*Sir Isaac Newton, 1643-1727
Medallion issued by the Royal Mint
in 1727.*

Despite his illness, before the age of 25 Newton began revolutionary advances in mathematics, optics, physics and astronomy. Among many other lifetime achievements, he laid the foundations for differential and integral calculus, was elected Lucasian professor at Cambridge College in England, and was a highly paid government official in London.

Sir Isaac Newton did not allow his illness to define him, but instead determined to lead a full life in spite of it!

Article by Linda Hicks and Tyrone Scercy, RSS employees of COPE Behavioral Services, Inc.

Last Issue's Answers



Cartoon by:
James E. Babcock

Content by:
Angela Dingleline, Connie Proctor & Jill Harman



SMART – Self-Management and Recovery Training

SMART Recovery Training is taught as part of the curriculum in the Recovery Support Specialist Institutes. It is a scientific approach to changing all types of addictive behaviors, for example: alcohol and other drugs, gambling, over-eating, sex, the internet, lying, and co-dependent relationships.

SMART empowers people to take responsibility for changing the behaviors that are not serving them well. It is a self-management program that is built on a cognitive psychotherapy called Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), which was developed by Dr. Albert Ellis in 1955. REBT is the science of learning to recognize that our thoughts and beliefs, both rational and irrational, are directly related to how we feel and how we behave.

SMART is a four-point program that focuses on: 1) enhancing and maintaining the motivation to abstain, 2) coping with urges, 3) managing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and 4) leading a balanced lifestyle. SMART teaches coping and problem solving skills through the use of self-help tools called the ABC Tool, the Change Plan Worksheet, and the Cost/Benefit Analysis.

SMART is implemented via support meetings. It is in the meetings where people learn to utilize the tools and begin the process of changing addictive behaviors. In the RSS Institutes, people participate in a mock meeting to become familiar with the meeting structure and flow. Following the mock meeting, participants then break into groups and role play the facilitation of a SMART meeting, which gives them the opportunity to experience both sides of the program.

For more information about SMART Recovery, to download the self-help tools, or to search for meetings in your local area, go to www.smartrecovery.org.

Ken Rogers, CRSS, CPRP

See page 11 for SMART Search and Find

Quotes from Alternatives 2005

“The Alternatives Conference was so inspiring. I was in awe of how many people there were in recovery that shared the same passions I have.”

Christina Jasberg, RSS, La Frontera Center

“The Conference was exciting, educational and empowering. I feel it was an honor to get to be a part of it. The people at the conference showed me that it is possible that we can and will rise above anything blocking our path of life.”

Wanda Black, RSS, Mothers Caring About Self, (MCAS) COMPASS

“The Alternatives Conference was a huge blessing. To see the heart of recovery through the eyes of individuals all around the world was wonderful.”

Sonia Robles, RSS, La Frontera Center

“I really enjoyed being able to attend the Conference and it not only provided information from people in Arizona but from nationwide as well as a few international perspectives. The large number of people who participated also made it possible to network and get insight and tips to help us all, not only in our own wellness and recovery, but to help others. In addition it was a great experience being on a panel to present some of the education styles going on in Arizona.”

Sheldon Cowles, RSS, Comfort Zone

“The Conference was outstanding, I could not believe the number of consumers who attended and were excited about wellness and recovery. We were witness to the reality that recovery is very possible and is happening all around us. What a great experience!”

Edward Grijalva, RSS, Coordinator of Special Population Services, COMPASS

“I found the Conference informative. I was amazed at the diversity of the mental health system around the country. I had never really thought about the mental health system outside of Tucson. My eyes were opened to how much of a problem we have around the world. The effort to make things better for the mental health system is astounding. I am proud to be a part of the change.”

Angela Dingledine, RSS, New Directions, COMPASS

“The Conference was great because I was surrounded by so many people that were in some form more like me than different. There was a lot of shared information that I valued.”

Brenda Morris, RSS, La Frontera Center

“What an awesome opportunity to meet down to earth people from everywhere in the country. The networking opportunities were endless as well as the food. I found the workshops I attended to be stimulating and encouraging in my future endeavors.”

Albert Regain, RSS, Director of Mobile Outreach Recovery Empowerment (MORE), Sierra Vista

“I felt that I was part of an enormous family of eight hundred strong. Like it was one big happy family, and the fun part was meeting new, exciting people through each day.”

Connie Proctor, CPRP, RSS, Psychosocial Rehabilitation Specialist, CODAC Behavioral Health Services, Member Resource Center.

“I had never attended the Alternatives Conference before. The workshops and institutes were very educational and interesting. I enjoyed learning about Voc. Rehab., what works and what hinders in support groups, and steps on changing negative attitudes to positive attitudes. Everything was very well coordinated. The hotel service and the staff involved were very hospitable. I really enjoyed myself. I was only able to attend this event because I received a scholarship. The Conference was a wonderful experience and I am grateful to everyone who made this possible. I look forward to attending future events and conferences.”

Sylvia Diaz, RSS, Nogales, Southeastern Arizona Behavioral Health Services (SEABHS).

“The Alternatives Conference was a unique experience for me. I came out of the conference with new skills, outlooks and new friends. I learned about ways for peers to run crisis centers by themselves and also a new approach to use recovery groups.”

Hope Gonzales, RSS, COPE

“The Alternatives Conference 2005 was my first. It was amazing to be a part of such a motivated event. It was inspirational and encouraging to be in the presence of so much recovery.”

Ken Rogers, CRSS, CPRP, CPSA, Community Educational Specialist

Tyrone Scericy

In February of 2005 I had an interest in the Recovery Support Specialist program, so I applied and was accepted into Institute III held in Sierra Vista. I learned a great deal of valuable information from the three facilitators and guest speakers and got to know the people in the group very well. We went through an extensive training together that pushed us beyond our comfort zone.



COPE Behavioral Services, Inc. hired me in April of 2005, right after graduating from the Institute. I attended the practicums with other RSSs to express how I was doing on my job and listen to others talk about how they dealt with their jobs and challenges. We created a bond with each other and we knew that if we ever had any concerns that we could always contact one another for peer support.

As a Recovery Support Specialist I visit COPE members at hospitals, go on home visits and help run several groups at various COPE

sites. The other RSSs and I promote recovery to members while sharing our own experiences and model that there is hope. I also believe that there is a healthy chance for a productive and successful life even with mental health disorders. We are more than our diagnoses and there are many other facets of our talents, abilities and personalities that make up who we are.

I was diagnosed as having bipolar disorder at the age of sixteen, in 1984, so I am no stranger to mental health issues. Now that I am working at COPE and living a life in recovery I finally feel happy and content. 🌈

Best Kept Secret MCAS

By Emily Plasterer, RSS & Wanda Black, RSS

Mothers Caring About Self (MCAS) is located at a CODAC site, but MCAS is not supported solely by CODAC staff. The other agencies involved are: La Frontera Center, COPE and a Compass Recovery Support Specialist (RSS). Women who are pregnant or postpartum with a substance use disorder seek support from these networks through this program.



Emily

Wanda

The women are supported for over a year, while they get back on their feet and integrated with the community. The therapist on site provides individual support as well as groups. MCAS staff facilitates two groups a day Monday thru Friday. Hope and support serve as a foundation for these groups. While the mothers are in the group, MCAS staff offer free child care. Points are awarded for group attendance, and can be used at the MCAS store for personal, household and baby items. In between groups a furnished kitchen is available for eating and socializing with others.

Wanda Black, RSS, Compass, provides support by going with the women to Child Protective Services (CPS), Family Drug Court, criminal court and physician's appointments. She also offers information about community resources including jobs, housing, furniture and other necessities.

Home visits are available to assist the person back to a positive sense of self. Sometimes women go through inpatient treatment and return to MCAS for continued support. If a woman has a relapse from their recovery, MCAS has an outreach plan for those who have a hard time admitting and accepting that they need help and support. Some return to MCAS after they have left/graduated the program to show staff how well they have progressed. MCAS wants the women to know the door will always remain open.

Besides Wanda, Emily Plasterer, previous RSS at MCAS, has moved into the position of CODAC Case Manager Aide. Both feel that it is a great honor to work with the women, and know that they are making a difference in people's lives. They are happy to share information on MCAS, and don't want it to be the best kept secret any longer. You can contact MCAS at 520-202-1710 or at their location on: 700 North 7th Avenue Tucson, AZ 85705 🌈