

DID YOU KNOW?

Spring 2010

Vol. 1 No. 1

A NEWSLETTER FOR AND BY CLIENTS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY FBHPARTNERS' CLIENT AND FAMILY ADVISORY BOARD

WHAT RECOVERY IS ALL ABOUT

In the field of mental health, recovery means getting to a point where we are living life to its fullest: having fun, having relationships, and enjoying a variety of roles like spouse, parent, friend, employee, and community member.

And all of this is happening at the same time that we still have a mental illness. Recovery is not a cure. But it is a process that helps us learn to manage and cope with our symptoms so that they don't get in the way of living a satisfying life.

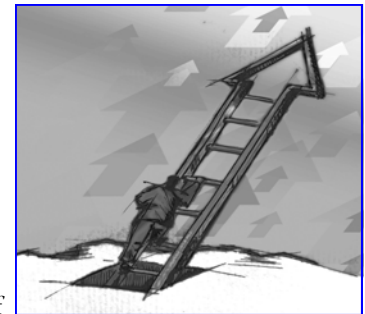
Recovery is neither quick nor easy. Often it requires taking risks that may be uncomfortable – like joining a club to socialize

with other people. But we don't have to do it alone. There are helpers along the way.

Recovery is so important that the federal government has endorsed it as *the* objective of mental health care. In the *National Consensus Statement on Mental Health Recovery*, it specifies ten components of recovery. They are Hope, Responsibility, Respect, Peer Support, Strength-Based, Non-Linear, Holistic, Empowerment, Self-Direction, and Individualized and Person Centered. This statement can be found at <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/sma05-4129/>.

Mark Ragins, M.D., a psychiatrist and early proponent of recovery, says that when we first learn we have a mental illness, many of us go through the stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Dr. Ragins believes that recovery then occurs in four stages. In order, they are hope, empowerment, self-responsibility, and having a meaningful life. For more information, go to [http://www.village-isa.org/Ragin's%20Papers/an overview of recovery.htm](http://www.village-isa.org/Ragin's%20Papers/an%20overview%20of%20recovery.htm).

Ed Knight, Ph.D, is the Vice President of Recovery, Rehabilitation and Mutual Support for ValueOptions.



He is also in recovery from schizophrenia and alcoholism.

In a speech he presented entitled "Recovery," he said "...experience shows that recovery from mental illness is possible. Experience teaches that with expectations of recovery and proper support, people can regain their lives and independence." A bit further on he said "The recovery model has some well-defined elements. The system that encourages recovery is based first and foremost on the expectation of recovery."

continued on page 2

*And the day
came when the
risk to remain
tight in a bud
was more
painful than
the risk it took
to bloom.*

Anais Nin

YOUR CLIENT NEWSLETTER IS HERE

This newsletter is for and by mental health clients. It will provide information that is useful to clients who are managing mental health issues. The newsletter is brought to you by the Client and Family Advisory Board (CFAB) of Foothills Behavioral Health Partners (FBHPartners). It will be

published quarterly, and clients can pick up printed copies at Jefferson Center and Mental Health Center Serving Boulder and Broomfield Counties (MHCBBC) sites.

We want to present information that is useful to you as you deal with mental health issues. Some of you

may prefer to receive emailed copies. If so, please send your email address to Lucy Hausner at Lhausner@fbhpartners.com. She will confirm receiving it, and will then email new issues to you when they are ready. If you do not receive a confirmation, please email her at the above address.

Did You Know**Published by the Client and Family Advisory Board:**

Robert Anand
 Sharon Bowyer
 Lois DuPuis
 Ken Fowler
 Terry Karlin
 Michael MacDonald
 Jim O'Connell
 Carla Rankin
 Amanda Stettenbenz
 Susan Wagner

WHAT RECOVERY IS ALL ABOUT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

expectation of recovery. (http://csipmh.rfmh.org/Knight_recovery.htm)

Just as Dr. Knight speaks as someone who lives with mental illness, so do the peer specialists who work at The Mental Health Center Serving Boulder and Broomfield Counties and at Jefferson Center. Here are some statements that they have made about their recovery:

- It wasn't until I opened up and spoke honestly with others, especially those that could help, that I could

begin my recovery. I began having faith that recovery was possible. I became convinced that I was worthy and able to look out for my own welfare.

- My recovery started when I hit rock bottom of my life. Coming out of denial was a big first step.
- I have accepted the fact that I need medication and that it helps me.
- I basically found relationships with trusted others to be the biggest factor in my recovery. I

have had many recurrences of psychotic breakdowns, but also have had many achievements.

- I've found the right mix of bipolar medication, I go to therapy, and I take good care of myself by exercising, not eating much sugar, meditating, and keeping in touch with people. It has not been an easy path, but I have learned so much from my problems.
- It took most of [10 years] to find the right treatment (meds, DBT, therapy). Once this happened, I felt that I was on the path of recovery. I became a good parent, maintained a job that I am passionate about and gave back to the community.

Future newsletter issues will have more about recovery. To learn more now, check on this website <http://www.bu.edu/cpr/repository/index.html>, or talk with your therapist.

MENTAL HEALTH NEWS

Recovery Champion winners are announced by Foothills Behavioral Health Partners. Clients and staff have nominated Recovery Champions, people whose work they believe best incorporates the principles and practices of mental health recovery. Some of these practices, listed on the Recovery Champion brochure, include "Lives a belief that recovery from severe mental illness is possible," "Relates to clients as people, not illnesses" and "Supports clients in identifying and building upon their strengths." Jefferson Center's winner is Lisa Aberle, a clinician with older adults. The winner at MHCBBC is Patrick Rose, a peer specialist. Each will receive a handsome plaque and a cash award.

Judi Chamberlin, a hero of the mental health consumer movement has died. At the age of 20, she was hospitalized and diagnosed with schizophrenia. She discovered that, as a psychiatric patient, she had no rights. Since the early 1970s, Ms. Chamberlin has been in the forefront of establishing rights for mental health patients in hospitals and for treatment methods that lead to recovery, especially client self-determination.

We Want Your Feedback

This is YOUR newsletter, so we want it to provide information you find useful. If you have ideas to improve it or topics or news to suggest, please send an email to Lhausner@fbhpartners.com and put "Newsletter" in the subject line.

If you don't have access to a computer, put your thoughts on paper and place it in an envelop. At MHCBBC, write Linda Runyon on the envelop; at Jefferson Center write Lucy Hausner. Then give it to a person at the front desk and ask them to send it through inter-office mail.

WHERE TO FIND HELP

- **The Foothills Behavioral Health Partners website** has so broad a range of information that most mental health clients will find something there of use and of interest. Go to the website, (www.fbhpartners.com) then click on "For Members" and then, on the left side, scroll down to "**Achieve Solutions.**" Along the top, try going to "All Topics," "Resources," and "What's New." "Topics" are collected into categories shown on the left or are available in an alphabetical listing. "Resources" includes sources of information, quizzes to assess your personal situation, and audio or video clips about relevant topics. You can also click on "Find Services" at both national and state levels, "Manage Life Event" like divorce, loss of job, etc, or "Assess Concerns" where there are questionnaires to self-assess how well you are handling stress, moods, relationships, etc. This website is a great place to start an information search.