



Montana's Peer Network

Member Count

438

Like us on



Wish List...

Socks

Red Rider BB Gun

New encyclopedias

*Rickenbacker
Guitar*

and

Peace on Earth

A letter from the President...

As I look back on this year I am amazed at all the things our MPN staff have accomplished. The success of programs such as “Healthy Mind, Healthy Bodies”, the “Pilot Program”, and “Peer Advocate Program” would not have been possible without the hard work, passion, and dedication of Jim, Robin, and Michelle.

I for one am grateful for all their efforts to provide our peers with much needed resources. As we are all aware even simple resources for recovery across our state are at times unfortunately limited which makes any support all the more important to those in need. To be sure all the support services available are vital to recovery however; one resource that often goes over looked is each of us. Who knows better the struggles that accompany recovery better than those of us who have gone through it?

Each of us has our own unique experiences, coping skills, and perspective that we can share with others who need support in their recovery. While there is no one person who can connect or relate to everyone, each of us can relate to and help someone with their recovery. Reaching out and helping peers is where you realize nothing you have been through will be wasted. Each thing you have dealt with, learned to manage, cope with, or rid yourself of has made you stronger, wiser, and more resilient do not let that knowledge go to waste.

There are many of our peers suffering alone or in silence because they don't have someone to talk to who truly understands the challenges they face when it comes to all the facets of recovery. We as a collective group of individuals have the power to help and we must step up; in order to help those who are suffering fearful of asking for help and to overcome the stigma that overshadows recovery we must take a stand. If we are not willing to champion the cause of helping everyone in recovery who will?

I ask you as not only members of MPN but as unique individuals to stand together in this ongoing fight and help us support the continued efforts of MPN by supporting each other. You can do this by simply reaching out to someone who is struggling, attend your local support group, or even start a support group in your area. Each of us has a certain amount of influence and the holiday season is a perfect time to use that influence to build on the momentum created this year and help build a brighter future free from fear and stigma for everyone in recovery. All my best wishes for happy holidays, **Todd Tecca**, MPN President



Alternatives Conference 2014 is the 28th national mental health conference organized by and for mental health consumers/survivors. This year's theme was "*Creating the Future; change, Challenge, Opportunity*". Learning from each other at the conference is a clear example of self-help, mutual support and the principles of recovery in action. Robin and I attended 16 different workshops while attending the conference. We both brought home valuable information and some great ideas that you may be interested in Montana's Peer Network pursuing.

Robin attended one workshop entitled "Talking the Talk: How to Share Your Lived Recovery Experience with Anyone, Anytime." This was an overview of a training the presenter makes available to people with lived experience. The purpose of the training is to assist speakers to thoughtfully create, craft, and efficiently deliver their own recovery story to have the most impact on an audience and reduce mental health and substance addiction stigma and promote wellness. Stigma is one of the most common and persistent barriers to good mental health in our communities. Robin would like to know if any of our readers would be interested in taking a training of this kind and preparing your own recovery story to share in your community or around the state. Please contact Robin at 406-590-7822 or at robin@mtpeerwork.org if you would be interested.

I attended "Advancing Peer Workforce via Technology". This workshop discussed different aspects of technology, such as online support groups and video coaching. The workshop was offered by Support Groups Central (www.supportgroupscentral.com), which offers global online support groups 24/7. This is beneficial because help is often needed during the night and global groups offer a broadened perspective. They pass a virtual basket for donations for the group, just like a face to face group would do. Video Coaching offers more of a personal feel than just a phone call for those receiving recovery coaching from a distance. These services may be good ways to reach peers needing additional support in rural Montana.

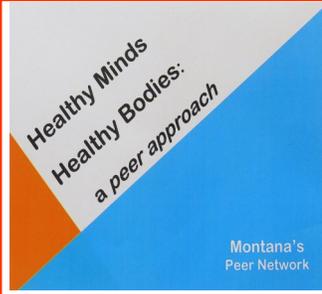
If anyone would be interested in Montana's Peer Network offering these services and/or would like additional information, please email me at michelle@mtpeerwork.org. Michelle Jermunson, Recovery Coach



**MPN Member t-shirt call
551-1058 to order**

Makes a great gift!





Giving Gifts from the Heart

Holiday time can be a difficult season for many, for many different reasons. The thought of gift giving may be a source of anxiety. However, gift giving does not have to involve getting caught up in the buying frenzy we see around us each year. Before making a purchase, if that is what you want to do, ask yourself if the gift reflects the love you feel for the receiver. Many gifts go by the wayside in a short amount of time so try giving a gift of lasting value. The value it carries reflects the love you feel.

As an alternative to purchasing gifts, creating something may be more to your liking. "Pinterest" posts tons of craft ideas. Gift certificates for an outing can be a great gift for those children, grandchildren, friends or spouses you don't feel you get enough one-on-one quality time with. It might be a certificate for a movie, dinner, or a trip to a local museum. If money is tight during the holiday season an outing at a later date may be doable.

Beyond gift giving is the notion of keeping the spirit of Thanksgiving alive throughout the holiday season. Thanksgiving is a time of gratitude. To feel gratitude for the loved ones in your life shifts the focus from spending money you may not have to sharing a part of your very self. If you are alone this season perhaps volunteering at a local charity dinner would interest you. This would truly be a gift from the heart. Making this holiday season about connecting with friends, family or even strangers may relieve some of the stress that the idea of shopping and spending brings.

Happy Holidays! **Robin Johnson**

Want to learn more about trauma?

Contact the [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

[Psychcentral.com](#)

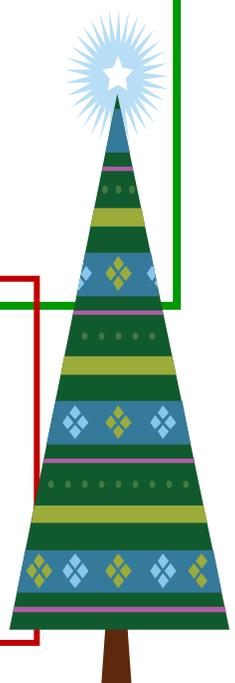
[Supportgroupcentral.com](#)

Wellness Tool of the Month:
Attend a new support group



January 13 at 6pm Peer Advocate Networking call

Contact Robin Johnson 590-7822 for "call in" information



© 2014 MPN



mtpeernetwork.org

MPN welcomes submissions to our newsletter contact. Deadline is the 10th of month.
Jim Hajny, Executive Director
jim@mtpeernetwork.org
406-551-1058

2014 Calendar of Events

MEMBER ALERT—we need your support

January 12 Mental Health Day at the Rotunda in Helena. All members encouraged to attend

National Coalition on
Mental Health Recovery

www.ncmhr.org

[SAMHSA NEWS online](#)

Recovery is Possible

Peer Support Groups across the state

Bozeman

Tuesday 4pm 548-8673

Butte

Thursday at 630pm Library uptown location
406-498-0703 for information

Great Falls

Benefis Hospital Mother Joseph Room
Fridays 3-4pm—590-7822

Helena

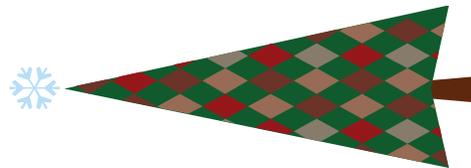
Lewis and Clark Library
Sunday 4-5pm
422-7521 for more information

Kalispell

Thursday 1pm @Wheat Montana

Missoula

Recovery International
Saturday 1- 2:30pm
Missoula Public Library
825-3063 for more information



www.helpguide.org



Montana's Peer Network
109 East Lewis Street
Livingston, MT 59047

Place Stamp
Here

«First Name» «Last Name»

«Address Line 1»

«City» «State «ZIP Code»