



Montana's Peer Network

W e l l n e s s & R e c o v e r y

Just Announced!

Montana Institutions Reboot

NAMI Montana is proud to announce the Montana Institutions Reboot Contest to help guide the future of Montana's public health institutions. There are some great things happening in Montana's public health institutions but we think that it is also worth asking the question of what changes could be made to improve the quality and cost effectiveness of care. What should our state institutions look like in five years? Ten years? We know that we don't have all the answers and are looking for help. There are some brilliant people involved with Montana's public health treatment system (including you) and we're excited to help share those visions with state policy members and advocacy organizations to help make them a reality.

We will be awarding \$500 to the winning entry. The second and third place entries receive \$250.

Please visit www.namimt.org for complete guidelines and information.



MPN Annual Member Meeting

Sunday September 23 after NAMI Walks

Everyone invited, bring a friend

Red Lion Colonial Inn, Helena



Support Groups: Common Threads

When I was approached to write an article on support groups, I felt a bit apprehensive as I am not an expert on the various support groups. I have attended them through the years and will only speak from my own experience, not from research. Although I typically write about WRAP® specifically, today I am writing on the broader spectrum of support groups and how I have benefited from them in my life.

I believe the support groups I have attended that have been most helpful to me have the following things in common:

A set of principles, values, ethics or traditions that guide the group interaction:

We readily use or develop guidelines that help create an environment that encourages hope, expresses unity of purpose, and encourages growth in self-awareness.

Shared stories of experience, strength and hope – mutual support

The key here is knowing that I am not alone. I understand that, although my experience may not be exactly the same as others, I can find strength in others and certainly find hope in sharing common experiences. We can share choices and options that have worked for us, as well as, receive hopeful messages that things can and will get better.

Validation of my experiences:

My experiences with various levels of trauma are not dismissed. I am heard. There are others with similar experiences. My personal goals are not discounted as unachievable and I am supported in reaching my goals.

Voluntary participation:

I am not required to attend every week, nor am I required to share or speak when I attend. I can participate as I am comfortable, sharing only what I am comfortable sharing. Regardless of participation we treat each other with respect and compassion.

A belief in equality:

No one person is better or has more value than any other person in the group regardless of social or economic standing, trauma experiences or other markers set forth in society.

This is not an exhaustive list of the qualities that encourages me use to support groups as a tool in my wellness. There are many others. Making a connection and sharing with others is a key to my recovery.

In closing, I would like to offer the following quote which I believe speaks to the value of support.

“ While your recovery journey is yours alone, you need others to pave the way, monitor the passage, enrich your existence and counter feelings of loneliness.” ~ Mary Ellen Copeland

Michelle Lewis Advanced Certified Recovery Educator



Consider passing this newsletter on after you have finished reading it



**Peer
Support
Tip
101.17**

Peer support programs exist in a number of areas, amongst veterans, trauma survivors, first responders, for those with disabilities, or chronic illness, addiction community, cardiac or burn units and of course mental health.

Having a lived experience and being able to share that with others can be incredibly inspiring and provide a sense of hope, illuminating what is possible.

A Word from the Members

...because we too have walked this path we can now assist others who ask for a helping hand and a compassionate listener.” Liz Silliman

MPN welcomes submissions to our newsletter on topics of recovery, wellness or related mental health issues but we do not edit for clarity or length if chosen for publication. Submissions can be sent to jim@mtpnetwork.org

Humor Alert!

The Bathtub Test

During a visit to the state hospital a visitor asked the Psychiatrist what the criteria defined whether or not a patient should be institutionalized.

"Well," the Psychiatrist said, "we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the patient and ask him or her to empty the bathtub."

The visitor thought for a moment then replied, "A normal person would use the bucket because it's bigger than the spoon or the teacup."

"No." the Psychiatrist said, "A normal person would pull the plug. Do you want a bed near the window?"



Montana's Peer Network is recognized by the IRS as a public charity.

“Mental Health TV”
Episode 1 & 2



Airing all
September for Recovery Month
View on
www.helenacivictv.org

Tell your recovery story or read other recovery stories
www.recoverymonth.gov/Voices-for-Recovery.aspx
 Flickr challenge 2012 -
[visit http://www.recoverymonth.gov/Voices-for-Recovery.aspx](http://www.recoverymonth.gov/Voices-for-Recovery.aspx)





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2012 Calendar of Events

- September 15 NAMI Peer to Peer—Bozeman 994-9134
- September 17 "Living Successfully..." presentation—Helena College—NAMIMT
- September 23 NAMI Walks -memorial park Helena
- September 23 MPN Annual Member Meeting—Helena after NAMI Walks
- September 24-25 Wraparound Training Helena—406-444-5978 for info
- September 28-29 Children's Mental Health Conference in Great Falls 587-7774
- September 28-29 Suicide Survivor Group Training - Miles City
- September 29 Preventing Childhood Obesity Summit Missoula— 258-3895
- October 1-5 WRAP Facilitator Training—Helena 551-1058 for more information
- October 10-14 Alternatives Conference 2012, Portland OR
- November 1-2 Montana State Mental Health Conference -Helena
- January 7 MT 2013 Legislative Session Begins
- January 25-27 WRAP Around the World Oakland, CA www.copelandcenter.com

3 ways to join the peer network!

- Visit our website
 - Mail in a membership form
 - Call the office to register
- It's easy and it's free!



Montana's Peer Network on  acebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Montanas-Peer-Network/>

Annual Member voting

is now



open for

the Board of Directors

ballots were mailed to all members

Wellness & Recovery

Telephonic Support Group

Regardless of where you live you can
now get support!

Every Thursday at 1pm

We would like to invite you to partici-
pate

Simply call 1-866-740-1260

Code # 7276642



Member Reading Recommendations

Send us your favorites for next month

Noonday Demon an Atlas of Depression

By Andrew Solomon

ISBN 978-0684854670