



Florida Peer Network, Inc.

An independent organization of and for people who are recovering from psychiatric disabilities and co-occurring disorders

Newsletter

Volume 4, Number 2

Everyone Needs Support

By Adam R. O'Connor - adamroconnor@gmail.com

Living with a mental health issue or addiction is not always an easy road. We all get off to a rough start before embracing Recovery. Recovery is more than just medications, doctors and therapists. It is a journey that will go on as long as we are alive. Sometimes we may get off track a little (or a lot), but at least we are still on that road called Recovery.

An important component for me and everyone else is the need for support, whether it be from a family member, friend, loved one, online community, professional, God, or someone or something else. We do not need to make this journey alone. Being alone without support is not good. Everyone needs support.

No matter whatever our diagnosis, hurt, habit, or hang-up is, support is crucial and essential. No one, and I mean no one, deserves isolation. We all are on the road called Recovery together. Everyone needs support.

We are all at a different point of our journey of Recovery. Some may be further along than others; some may be just beginning. We all need to support each other, not tear each other down. Encourage one another. Be there for someone else, while not neglecting your own Recovery.

Embrace Recovery, live Recovery and do not make that journey alone. Everyone needs support.

My name is Adam and I proud to say I am in Recovery. Will you say that too?

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A Message from the Executive Director

By Rose Delaney - rose@floridapeernetwork.org

This has been quite a summer for the Florida Peer Network. With our partnering with the Department of Children and Families, the Trauma Informed Care Seminars were a huge success. Over 2100 participated in the six trainings that took place in Tampa, Orlando, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, Jacksonville and Tallahassee. We received great evaluations from those attending and many are eager for further trainings. Workgroups were formed for each area to continue the work back in the communities. I would like to thank the DCF volunteers and the CRPS volunteers who helped with the seminars. Without their assistance the seminars would not have been the success they were. A special thank you to David Sofferin who attended all but one seminar, Joe Anson, Clint and Lin Rayner, Amy Peloquin and Joann Finn. Without their support and help the task would not have been achieved.

I attended the Florida Council/FADAA Conference in August and myself, and three other Florida Peer Network members presented a workshop on consumer issues regarding veterans, physical wellness, co-occurring and jail diversion. The workshop was well received with many questions from the participants.

We have been doing very well with our growth in membership in part from our Facebook page and Trauma Seminars. With that said we are trying to make certain that we have the proper contact information from those members we already had. Please send us an email with your correct contact information to info@floridapeernetwork.org and at the end of November we will have a drawing from those emails awarding two prizes of a Wal-Mart gift card and scholarship to Florida Consumer Conference.

A training for Certified Recovery Peer Specialist was held in Tampa this summer graduating 20 participants, with twelve of them Veterans. We are trying to line up trainings around the state monthly and will send future information about this as soon as it becomes available.

Please send us any articles, recipes, health tips and what is happening in your community so that we can add it to the newsletter.

The Florida Peer Network Newsletter is funded in part by the Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities, Inc., through the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) grant from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

May 15 2010 ... The day I was forgiven

*I always thought this
was a solo quest,*

*Striving to become
better than the rest.*

I felt so defeated as the clock past,

Never realizing how time past.

The bags I carried grew and grew,

*Thinking one person was
better than two.*

*I knew I couldn't turn
back, it was too late,*

*Unaware of the strength
it would create.*

With many stops along the way,

*I now fully embrace
that special day.*

At the beach in anger that night,

*I asked God why I'm
here and must fight.*

In such a loving and gentle tone,

I was told I never had to do it alone.

*I cried for help and handed
it all to his son,*

It all seemed to have weighed a ton.

*With thankfulness we now
walk hand in hand,*

I still see his footprints in the sand.

– LeeAnn

The Holistic Approach

By Adam R. O'Connor, CRPS-A - adamroconnor14@yahoo.com

On SAMHSA's National Consensus Statement on Mental Health Recovery, one of the 10 Fundamental Components of Recovery is Holistic. It states, "Recovery encompasses an individual's whole life, including mind, body, spirit, and community. Recovery embraces all aspects of life, including housing, employment, education, mental health and healthcare treatment and services, complementary and naturalistic services, addiction treatment, spirituality, creativity, social networks, community participation, and family supports as determined by the person. Families, providers, organizations, systems, communities, and society play crucial roles in creating and maintaining meaningful opportunities for consumer access to these supports."



regularly to my place of worship to not only connect with God but to associate with like-minded people that believe how I do. It also keeps me from one thing that is to my detriment, which is isolation.

Having a greater sense of purpose and hope keeps me going as well. If I didn't have my faith and spiritual side, I would be lost, feel alone, and have no purpose; all three of would be so bad for me.

There are many programs out there that are faith based that help people out on their road to recovery. Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and Celebrate Recovery are but just a few. Getting in touch with my spiritual side has definitely worked for me and continues to help me make it each day.

In the holistic approach, I want to focus on spirituality, which can be a touchy subject for some and I realize that. Spirituality does not necessarily mean religion, or a belief in God or a Higher Power, but for many it does. For me, spirituality gets me in touch more with my feelings on the inside and trying to make sense of it all. Having a spiritual side or faith for me includes daily time for meditation, prayer, reading inspirational materials, going



Adam R. O'Connor is a Certified Recovery Peer Specialist employed with Tri-County Human Services in Polk County, which is in Circuit 10. He is currently is on the Board of Directors of the Florida Peer Network, Chairperson for the Circuit 10 Recovery and Resiliency Task Force, and Secretary for the Circuit 10 Partners in Crisis group. Adam is married and makes his home in Lakeland.

Application for Membership

The Florida Peer Network is an independent organization for people who are recovering from mental health and co-occurring disorders.

Please cut out form and return to:

Florida Peer Network, Inc.
400 Capital Circle SE Suite 18316
Tallahassee, Florida 32301-3839

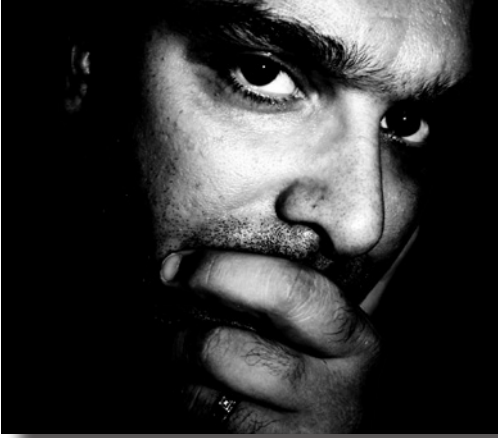
Or email: info@floridapeernetwork.org

Attn: Rose Delaney, Executive Director

Name:		
Mailing Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Home Phone:	Cell Phone:	
Work Phone:		
Email Address:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Consumer <input type="checkbox"/> Non-voting Associate <input type="checkbox"/> Peer-run Program <input type="checkbox"/> Provider		

Never Lose Hope in Dealing with Your Fears and Anxieties

By Stanley Popovich



When your fears and depression have the best of you, it is easy to feel that things will not get any better. This is not true. There

is much help available in today's society and the best way to deal with your fears is to find effective ways to overcome them. As a result, here are some techniques a person can use to help manage their fears and anxieties.

You never know when the answers you are looking for will come to your doorstep. Even if the thing that you feared does happen, there are circumstances and factors that you can't predict which can be used to your advantage. These factors can change everything. Remember: we may be ninety-nine percent correct in predicting the future, but all it takes is for that one percent to make a world of difference.

Challenge your negative thinking with positive statements and realistic thinking. When encountering thoughts that make you feel fearful or depressed, challenge those thoughts by asking yourself questions that will maintain objectivity and common sense. For example, you're afraid that if you do not get that job promotion then you will be stuck at your job forever. This depresses you, however your thinking in this situation is unrealistic. The fact of the matter is that

there all are kinds of jobs available and just because you don't get this job promotion doesn't mean that you will never get one. In addition, people change jobs all the time, and you always have that option of going elsewhere if you are unhappy at your present location.

Some people get depressed and have a difficult time getting out of bed in the mornings. When this happens, a person should take a deep breath and try to find something to do to get their mind off of the problem. A person could take a walk, listen to some music, read the newspaper, or do an activity that will give them a fresh perspective on things. Doing something will get your mind off of the problem and give you confidence to do other things.

Be smart in how you deal with your fears and anxieties. Do not try to tackle everything all at once. When facing a current or upcoming task that overwhelms you with a lot of anxiety, break the task into a series of smaller steps. Completing these smaller tasks one at a time will make the stress more manageable and increases your chances of success.

Take advantage of the help that is available around you. If possible, talk to a professional who can help you manage your fears and anxieties. They will be able to provide you with additional advice and insights on how to deal with your current problem. By talking to a professional, a person will be helping themselves in the long run because they will become better able to deal with their problems in the future. Managing your fears and anxieties takes practice. The more you practice, the better you will become.

Stan Popovich is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non Resistant Methods" - an easy to read book that presents a general overview of techniques that are effective in managing persistent fears and anxieties. For additional information go to: <http://www.managingfear.com/>

WELLNESS CORNER



Roasted Chicken and Vegetables

Ingredients

- 1 chicken cut in eight parts
- 1 bag of whole carrots cut in pieces
- 1 whole onion chopped
- 4 celery stalks cut in pieces
- 2 yellow squash cut in bite size pieces
- 2 zucchini squash cut in bite size pieces
- 2 large sweet potatoes cut in bite size pieces
- 1 tsp each of, garlic powder, poultry seasoning, paprika, black pepper, sage and rosemary.
- ½ cup of oil

Directions

Mix oil and all the seasonings together, set aside. In large baking pan place chicken and vegetables. Pour oil and seasoning mixture over it and mix well to coat chicken and vegetables. Place the pan in a pre-heated 425 degree oven and bake 45-60 minutes, or until chicken is cooked.

Take-a-Break Snack Mix

Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- ¼ cup sliced almonds
- 1 tablespoon light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons water
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 cups whole-grain oat cereal with yogurt-flavored coating
- 2 cups whole-grain wheat and bran flakes with raisins
- 1/2 cup dried unsweetened cranberries
- 1/2 cup dried unsweetened blueberries

Directions

Put a piece of aluminum foil about 12 inches square on a platter or baking sheet. Lightly spray with cooking spray. Set aside.

In a small nonstick skillet, dry-roast the almonds over medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes, or until lightly golden brown, stirring occasionally.

Stir in the brown sugar, water, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, or until the liquid has evaporated and the almonds are coated with the mixture, stirring constantly.

Transfer to the foil. Let cool completely, 15 to 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, stir together the remaining ingredients.

Add the cooled almonds to the cereal mixture, stirring to combine. Store in an airtight container for up to 7 days.

Cook's Tip

Whether your schedule is go-go-go or hurry-up-and-wait, you'll be glad you packed these tasty tidbits for healthy snacking.

For variety, substitute different nutrient-dense dried fruits, such as cherries, apricots, and plums, for the cranberries and blueberries. Cut them into 1/4- to 1/2-inch pieces before adding them to the cereal mixture.



Miracle at the Wal-Mart

“Hope deferred makes the heart sick”–Proverbs 13:12

By Clint Rayner

It's always the same when I go back to my original home in Gulf Breeze, Florida, I pray a simple prayer. “God, please let me see my son, Scott or daughter, Amy and I will be forever thankful.” I've gone through this routine every time I either drive through this beautiful little gulf side town or stop to shop when staying at Pensacola Beach.

I have not seen nor talked to either of them in more than seventeen years. Oh, there was the one brief time with Amy via my outreach with a phone call on her birthday, which turned into two emails before I blew it by asking about her mother and brother. I learned when you are trying to reconnect, you should focus on the person at the other end and don't bring up anything about the past. Talk about today and the future. Let them bring up those out of bounds subjects or else you risk opening old and very painful wounds.

So, this past weekend at the Wal-Mart in Gulf Breeze, I said my usual prayer almost automatically, knowing full well that since this prayer had not worked in more than seventeen years, today should be no different.

I, Lin and my oldest step daughter walked through the doors, greeted the greeter and parted our ways. I always go immediately to the electronics department, where I look for old cheap DVD's in the five dollar bin. As I walked up to the bin, this very tall young man walked up to me smiling, held out his hand to shake mine and asked how I was doing. I did not recognize him and as we talked, I went through all of the possibilities; was he the son of an old friend, one of the hundreds of consumers I have worked with, or just mistaken as to my identity. But he seemed so sure and slowly after about 3-4 minutes of chatting, I got this strange feeling. Was this my long, lost son, Scott? My God, he must be six four, extremely good

looking, very self assured and blue eyes just like mine; thinning hair at about the same time I began to lose mine. So, I threw out a test question to verify. This time my emotions were taking over, my knees started shaking and my damaged heart began to hurt even more. “Does your sister still live in Texas? “No, she and her family moved to the Tampa area about a year ago.”

Now my emotions really took over. For more than a dozen years, I had practiced what I would say to either of them, especially Scott because he was the



youngest when his mother and I divorced. He left the Marines, moved home, graduated from college with a degree with business, worked for the federal government as contracting director for the military. I do not know what else was said, by this time my brain had shut down and I was talking on automatic social skills learned more than fifty years ago. Then I blew it, “how is your mom,” no answer, “when can we meet again to talk man to man.” He told me he had to go and as he walked away, I shouted out “hope to see you later, ah, Scott (boy calling that name out loud to my son as he walked away felt like trying to speak French when Lin and I visited my youngest

stepdaughter in Paris the week before), “Oh, OK, see you son.” He didn’t look back but just kept walking away. What should I do? Go running after him shouting out loud, “I Love you son, please stop and talk with me, I promise we will only talk about today, you, and the future.”

Five minutes later, Lin walked up and found me pale standing looking towards the direction Scott had taken. My forever guardian always aware of my physical and emotional temperature thought I was having another angina attack. I found my voice as weak as it was and told her what had just happened. Immediately, she grabbed my hand and we started walking; she was literally pulling me through the store.

We finally caught up to him, where they hugged each other and talked about things. I could not think straight, I was losing my hearing and I even stuttered as I tried to give him some facts about his grandfather, grandmother and Aunt from my side of the family. He quickly corrected my mistake with the proper names. He did remember, he had not forgotten about the Rayner clan, he smiled down at me as if to say. It’s OK, dad, I understand, I am in

the same mental state of mind where you are at this moment. Again, he promised that maybe, just maybe, we would meet again. Feeling faint, this grown man of 62, had just seen his handsome 32 year old 6’4” son, a great specimen and my mirror image; I told Lin I had to go to the car and sit. And I did, and I cried and cried and my heart hurt and memories came flooding through my mind. My prayer, my miracle had been answered but I could not understand the meaning of this. Thirty minutes later she came to the car, opened the door and smiled the most beautiful smile I had seen on her since we had married over fourteen years ago. “Well, how does it feel to have your prayer answered and your miracle received, even if it was at the Wal-Mart?” We both laughed and hugged each other.

It felt great! Thank you God! Thank you for keeping hope alive! Amy and Scott, if you are reading this, I love you unconditionally and I will always be here for you and if we never see each other again, please let go of the past, accept me as I am now and focus on the future... the gift I leave you with is this: never, never, never give up hope!

I love you now and forever, DAD.

Trauma Informed Care Seminars

Trauma Informed Care Seminars were held in six cities around the state: Tampa, Orlando, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, Tallahassee and Jacksonville. The seminars were a huge success with over 2100 attendees. Workgroups were formed at each seminar so that Trauma Informed Care could be implemented in their communities and broadened in the areas that already practice this.



George Taylor and Bruce Roberts,
Veteran Peer Specialists



Clint Rayner and
Tonier Cain



Paul Rolen, Asst. Secretary David
Sofferin, & Rose Delaney



Dr. Turner, DOH,
& Tonier Cain

Florida Peer Network, Inc.

Membership Information

Individual Consumer: Free

Non-voting Associate: \$25/year

Peer-run Program: \$35/year

Provider Agency: \$75/year

Membership dues and donations are tax deductible for individuals and eligible agencies.

Join Online

floridapeernetwork.org/application.htm

Join by Mail

Send check to:

Florida Peer Network

400 Capital Circle SE, Suite 18316

Tallahassee, Florida 32301-3839

Phone: 850-922-0090

E-mail: info@floridapeernetwork.org

Mission Statement

The Florida Peer Network, Inc. is an independent organization of and for persons with psychiatric disabilities and co-occurring disorders. Our mission is to promote recovery, quality of life, advocacy, education, mutual support, peer directed services, and participation in mental health policy design for consumers throughout the state of Florida.

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Tallahassee, Florida 32301-3839

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