



Florida Peer Network, Inc.

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

Summer 2011 Newsletter

Volume 5, Number 2

Note from the FPN Board Chair

On behalf of the Board of the Florida Peer Network (FPN) I would like to express our appreciation to everyone who was involved with 2011 Florida Peer Conference. The Youth Conference on May 7 and 8 and the Adult Conference on May 9-12 both had great attendance (273 adult and 101 youth) and the reviews have been almost universally positive. The spirit of camaraderie among attendees, presenters, guests, and even the hotel staff was truly inspiring! It was a proud moment for FPN and I think it marks the beginning of a new stage in our development. I was especially excited to see consumers and family members of all ages from across the state meeting with administrators, clinicians, and policy makers with the sole purpose of making life better for people dealing with mental illnesses and substance abuse problems. The young people provided dynamic witness and were an incredible inspiration! It reaffirmed my belief that anything is possible if we all work together toward shared goals.

The need for establishing strong partnerships was highlighted by experience with the turbulent 2011 legislative sessions where virtually the entire public mental health and substance abuse system of care was put on the chopping block. We averted disaster this time but we may not be so fortunate in the future. The voice of Florida's consumers needs to be heard and FPN plans to play a lead role.

After the conference, we had a meeting of our board to process the feedback we received from our members and to establish Network priorities. Our prime goal is to develop a strategy to engage our membership at the community level by establishing a network of FPN representatives across the state. We envision a network that is truly responsive to the needs of consumers and family members and actively involved in advocacy and educational activities. We will keep you informed and seek your input about future plans.

In the meantime, we need to expand our membership to ensure that are reaching all of the people in Florida who share our mission. Please make a point of spreading the word about FPN and encourage others to become members. Simply visit the FPN web page at www.floridapeernetwork.org and click on the link for Application for Membership at the left hand side of the home page. If every current member could help recruit just two new members it will help demonstrate that we are a force to be reckoned with. Our voices must be heard!

Jim Winarski, FPN Board Chair

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Message from the Policy Director

Lin Rayner, Policy Director • lin@floridapeernetwork.org

I have worked in the mental health field for 23 years, first as front line staff at an inpatient community mental health center in the panhandle then as the Policy Assistant for the Florida Substance Abuse & Mental Health Corporation until we were taken out of statute and defunded. I served on the board of directors of the Florida Peer network and then accepted the position of Policy Director. I am also a family member of an individual with Bi-Polar disorder. I am a member of the board of directors of Disability Rights Florida and a member of the board of directors of 8th Hill Clubhouse in Tallahassee

I was there in 2006 when the Florida Peer Network was conceived at the first planning meeting in Day Springs. Twenty consumers and interested parties met to develop this statewide organization and we are still around and getting stronger. We had our first statewide Peer Conference in May in Altamonte Springs and it was a great success. All the evaluations came back with positive comments the most telling were that the individuals who attended the conference said that they really enjoyed the workshops but most of all enjoyed the camaraderie with folks from all over the state. We are in the planning stages for next year's conference and know it will be even better. Please contact us with suggestions for workshops while we are in the planning stages.

Our goal in the beginning was to engage individuals and improve the quality of life for people with mental health or substance abuse disorders. We do this by attending meetings with providers and the legislature to let your voice be heard. We know all of you cannot come to Tallahassee and speak in person. Let us be your voice by telling us your concerns so we can stand up for you here in the Capitol. The Peer Network is nothing without you. We have made a difference by alerting our members to legislation, which would damage or end services that are sorely needed. Our membership did their part by sending e-mails and making phone calls to Legislators, and they listened.

We are in the process of electing new board members and have received many applications from our members. We will be posting the ballot with the nominees names on our website and you will be the people choosing the new members for the board of directors. We are counting on you doing your part and voting once the ballot is on-line.

I attended the first meeting of the Governor's Taskforce on Assisted Living Facilities and spoke to them about the importance of consumers and family members being a part of this important taskforce. We cannot stand aside and allow individuals who are elderly or have a mental health diagnosis be mistreated. I am asking you to attend the next meeting in Tampa on September 23 at the University of South Florida to show your strength. This is an open meeting so anyone who is interested can attend and they are taking public testimony. If you have been a resident of an Assisted Living Facility and want to be heard please contact me and I will give you the contact information, meeting details, etc.

It has been a great joy working with so many strong people who have overcome so much to just live a happy life. I feel privileged to work for you.

The Vet Center Program was established by Congress in 1979. Vet Centers are community based and part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The goal of the Vet Center program is to provide a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services to eligible veterans in order to help them make a satisfying post-war readjustment to civilian life. The majority of Vet Center staff are Veterans, with more than fifty percent having served in combat. A little over one third of their staff are combat Veterans who served in Iraq and/or Afghanistan. WWII, Vietnam, Korean, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, and Kosovo/Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan Combat Veterans and their family members are eligible for services.



Vet Centers are also able to offer bereavement counseling services to surviving parents, spouses, children and siblings of service members who die of any cause while on active duty, to include federally activated Reserve and National Guard personnel. The Vet Centers also supports a 24 hour confidential call center where combat Veterans and their families can call to talk about their military experience or any other issue they are facing. The staff is comprised of combat Veterans from several different eras as well as family members of combat Veterans. The number is 1-877-WAR-VETS.

Along with the community -based centers there are also Mobile Vet Centers (MVC)(38ft RV's outfitted with two Counseling offices), that provide readjustment counseling and information resources to Veterans across the country. Like the community-based Vet Centers, MVC's focus on services that help Veterans make the difficult transition between military and civilian life. There are fifty MVC's , that are driven to far-reaching rural areas to provide Veterans with services such as counseling for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Military Sexual Trauma, bereavement counseling, marriage and family counseling, and resources like VA benefits information and suicide prevention referrals.

Every passing minute
is another chance
to turn it all around.

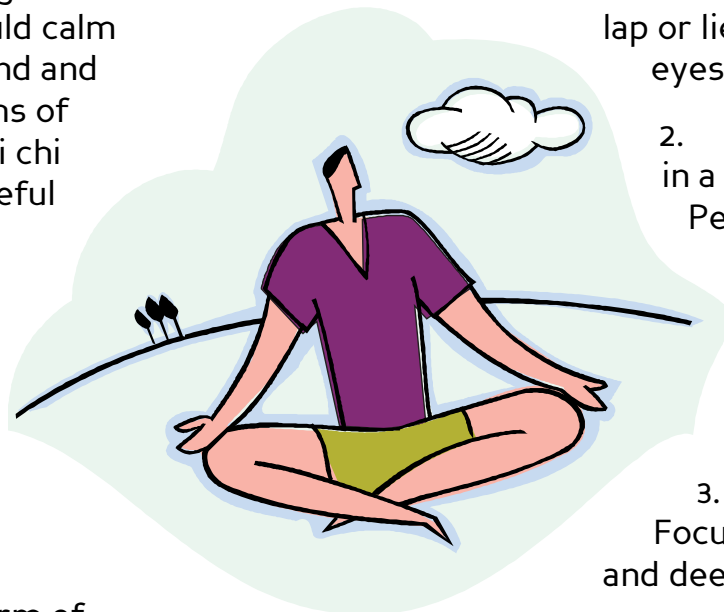
The Florida Peer Network Newsletter is funded in part by Disability Rights Florida, through the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) grant from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Daily Relaxation

Relaxation is more than sitting in your favorite chair watching TV. To relieve stress, relaxation should calm the tension in your mind and body. Some good forms of relaxation are yoga, tai chi (a series of slow, graceful movements) and meditation.

Like most skills, relaxation takes practice. Many people join a class to learn and practice relaxation skills.

Deep breathing is a form of relaxation you can learn and practice at home using the following steps. It's a good skill to practice as you start or end your day. With daily practice, you will soon be able to use this skill whenever you feel stress.



1. Sit in a comfortable position with your feet on the floor and your hands in your lap or lie down. Close your eyes.
2. Picture yourself in a peaceful place. Perhaps you're lying on the beach, walking in the mountains or floating in the clouds. Hold this scene in your mind.
3. Inhale and exhale. Focus on breathing slowly and deeply.
4. Continue to breathe slowly for 10 minutes or more.
5. Try to take at least five to 10 minutes every day for deep breathing or another form of relaxation

Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery.
Today is a gift. That's why it's called the present.

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		

WELLNESS CORNER

Strawberry-Yogurt Smoothie



- total time: 5 min
- prep time: 5 min
- servings: 4 servings, 1 cup each

What You Need

- 1-1/2 cups fat-free milk
- 1-1/2 tsp. CRYSTAL LIGHT SUNRISE Tangerine Strawberry Flavor Drink Mix
- 1 cup vanilla low-fat yogurt
- 1 cup frozen strawberries

Make It

- BLEND all ingredients in blender until smooth.

Refreshing Watermelon Salad



- total time: 5 min
- prep time: 5 min
- servings: 4 servings, 1 cup each

What You Need

- 3 cups chopped watermelon (3/4-inch chunks)
- 1 cup chopped cucumbers (1/4-inch chunks)
- 1/2 cup crumbled ATHENOS Mild Feta Cheese
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh mint
- 2 Tbsp. KRAFT Balsamic Vinaigrette Dressing

Make It

- COMBINE ingredients.
- SERVE immediately.

Chicken & Citrus Salad



- total time: 15 min
- prep time: 15 min
- servings: 4 servings, 3 cups each

What You Need

- 4 cups each baby spinach leaves and mixed salad greens
- 2 cups sliced fresh strawberries
- 1 can (15 oz.) mandarin oranges, drained
- 1/2 lb. sugar snap peas, halved
- 1 pkg. (6 oz.) OSCAR MAYER Deli Fresh Oven Roasted Chicken Breast Cuts
- 1/2 cup PLANTERS Pecan Halves, toasted
- 1/2 cup KRAFT Light Raspberry Vinaigrette Dressing

Make It

- COMBINE all ingredients.
- SERVE immediately

Spinach-Pasta Toss



- total time: 25 min
- prep time: 5 min
- servings: 6 servings, 1 cup each

What You Need

- 1 can (14-1/2 oz.) Italian-style diced tomatoes, undrained
- 2 cups multi-grain penne pasta, uncooked
- 1 cup water
- 1 pkg. (9 oz.) baby spinach leaves
- 1 cup KRAFT 2% Milk Shredded Italian* Three Cheese Blend

Make It

- BRING tomatoes, pasta and water to boil in large saucepan; stir. Cover; simmer on medium-low heat 10 min. or just until pasta is tender.
- ADD half the spinach; simmer, covered, 2 min. or just until wilted. Stir. Repeat with remaining spinach.
- SERVE topped with cheese

Images FROM THE 2011 F



When life gives you a hundred reasons to cry, she

FLORIDA Peer Conference



ow life that you have a thousand reasons to smile.

Florida Peer Network, Inc.

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.

Membership Information

Join Online

floridapeernetwork.org/application.htm

Join by Mail

Florida Peer Network

400 Capital Circle SE, Suite 18316
Tallahassee, Florida 32301-3839

Phone: 850-922-0090

E-mail: info@floridapeernetwork.org

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

The Florida Peer Network, Inc. is a non-profit 501c3 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. For more information, visit our website: www.floridapeernetwork.org, call 850-922-0090, or info@floridapeernetwork.org