



Peer Support Recovery Dialogues Workshops

Open to ALL HMC Members

HALIFAX LOCATION

Recovery often begins with becoming aware, and realizing, that you can start to take more control of your life and build on that awareness and grow in self-confidence. Recovery Dialogues are designed to help you achieve that awareness and increase self-confidence. They are designed to cut across that belief that “there is nothing I can do that is going to make my life better”.

Please join us at Healthy Minds Cooperative on the following dates as we talk about our journey of Recovery and register by calling 404-3504.

- Session 1 Learning about one’s Diagnosis**
Thursday April 5 10 am to 12 noon

- Session 2 Impact of Illness**
Thursday April 12 10 am to 12 noon

- Session 3 Life is Limited**
Thursday April 19 10 am to 12 noon

- Session 4 Change is Possible**
Thursday April 26 10 am to 12 noon

April 2012

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Message from the Executive Director

Karen Gilmore



Every year in Canada there is a week in April set aside to honor the tremendous contributions volunteers make in communities all across our great country. There are 34 million people in Canada, of those over 12.5 million of them are volunteers, contributing 2.1 billion volunteer hours annually. While at the Coop we firmly believe and advocate for people living with mental illness to be paid for work they do, we also recognize the value of volunteering. It is a rewarding experience for the individual who volunteers as well as an invaluable service to the organization that you give your time to. Volunteering can open up opportunities that might have never been available if you hadn't volunteered. Reflecting on her volunteer experience, Healthy Minds member and dedicated supporter, Susan Roper speaks of how it was volunteering that developed the skills and community connections that lead to employment after her diagnosis. The Coop's Membership Guidelines actually include volunteering as one of the member's responsibilities to participate in Healthy Minds Cooperative. Not everyone is ready and able to do everything by everyone is able to do something! For our Board members, for those who help with events, for members helping with programs, for each and every one of you who have given your time and talents to Healthy Minds, we express our heartfelt gratitude. You make the Coop a better place for all who come through our doors.

National Volunteer Week April 15 - 21

Thank You Volunteers!

A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

- Margaret Mead



Navigation

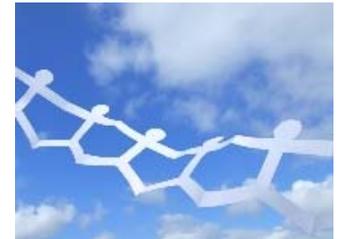
Going through the mental health system can be like trying to find your way through a maze. Navigation is a service that Healthy Minds Co-op provides that helps guide people living with a mental illness, and their

families, to connect with support services in the community. The Navigator can answer your questions and concerns about:

- ⇒ Services in the community
- ⇒ Support groups
- ⇒ Programs and workshops
- ⇒ Referral Services
- ⇒ Advocacy
- ⇒ Web-based resources

For more information about Navigation and to speak with HMC Navigator, Laurel Walker, please call 404-3504 or email hmnavigator@eastlink.ca

From Recovery to Discovery



Recovery to Discovery is a Peer Support Group Meeting that is organized through a partnership between the Schizophrenia Society of NS and Healthy Minds Co-op and is open to anyone affected by any type of mental illness (including family members and friends). This group believes that we all have the opportunity to manifest our strengths, to recover a sense of empowerment and to live with meaning and purpose. The format of the weekly meetings involves an interactive presentation on topics of interest to the group in the first hour and a group discussion during the second hour.

From Recovery to Discovery meets every Thursday from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at The Hub, located at 1673 Barrington Street, Second Floor. For more information on this group or to check out what the week's topic is, call 465-2601 or email ssns@ns.sympatico.ca

Check out the back page of the Blue Horse Chronicles Newsletter for a more detailed schedule!





Stand Up for Mental Health Comedy Promotes Healthy Minds

By Kathleen Higney

I have been a member of the Healthy Minds Cooperative and taking comedy classes with Stand Up for Mental Health since fall 2011. On the fourth of December I performed my first comedy act ever at the Atlantica Hotel, Halifax. The experience of standing before an audience and telling jokes related to mental health was truly exhilarating. Our next show is April 29th and I am looking forward to trying out some brand new material. It will be interesting to see how the jokes I am thinking about and working so hard on now look when they are finally ready to be told.

People ask me why I would voluntarily subject myself to the stress of such an extreme form of public speaking. And to be honest, it is not easy to answer that question. I think I am doing it mainly because I like to try new things. I find life quickly becomes stale and boring if I'm not learning something new. A few years ago I took riding lessons with my daughters and enjoyed the challenge for two reasons. It was fun spending time with my girls, and it was so outside of my comfort level. And I think it is basically the same with the comedy challenge.

When learning any new skill, it is important to have a good teacher. My class is extremely fortunate to have David Granirer, Founder of Stand Up for Mental Health and author of the book: *The Happy Neurotic: How Fear and Angst Can Lead to Happiness and Success*, teaching us. During periods of uncertainty about my ability or the quality of my material, David's patience and expertise are very reassuring. Also important is the fact that I am part of a class which meets regularly to write material, practice and receive feedback. So, in addition to learning stand up comedy, the classes are an opportunity to strengthen social skills and build relationships.

I am grateful for the chance to learn stand up comedy. People who are living with mental health issues often feel it is better to keep quiet about their struggles. Creating and performing a comedy act about those struggles is like opening a door and letting fresh air and sunshine flood in. And when you hear an audience laugh at your jokes, you know that you are not alone in working towards recovery. The audience becomes part of your support network.



Welcome!

There's a new face at Healthy Minds Cooperative! We'd like to welcome Alyssa Hobb, who is a NSCC student from Yarmouth, NS. Alyssa will soon be graduating from the brand new program, Mental health Recovery and Promotion. During her nine week placement at Healthy Minds, she will be participating in workshops, developing a navigation tool for mental health services and will be visiting different sites to get a better understanding of what is available for someone dealing with a mental health issue in HRM.

Alyssa has always had an interest in mental health and her time at NSCC has prepared her for her time at HMC and says, "I really appreciate being able to come to Healthy Minds Cooperative and have already met many great people and I am really excited about my time with this organization. Thank you for this opportunity."

Make sure to stop and say hello to Alyssa when you drop in and welcome her to HMC!

Nova Scotia Helpline

If you are experiencing something difficult in your life and don't know what to do about it, there are people that can help you. The Helpline is open between 8 am to 8 pm, seven days a week and you can reach them by calling 421-1188. If you live outside of HRM, you can call their toll-free number from anywhere in Nova Scotia by calling 1-877-521-1188.

Member Café

Remember - as a Healthy Minds Cooperative member, you have access to the computers located in our Member Café! It is open for your use from 10 am to 3 pm, Monday to Friday. Come in to check your email or practice your skills. Need some help with the computers? Give us a shout at 404-3504 and book a time to come in.



Community Activities

...stuff you might want to check out!

Bayers Road Open Groups

Auricular Acupuncture
Mon & Thurs - 11 to 12

Depression Support Group
Tues 7 - 9 pm
Contact: Roy Muisse (404-7800)

Mindfulness Group
Wed - 12:15 to 1:15

(You can reach the clinic by calling 454-1400)

Outpatient Art Group

9th Floor Abbie Lane Art Room
Tues - 6 pm
Contact: Tara Harnish (473-4068)

Connections Halifax

1221 Barrington Street
Daily activities & meals
Contact: 473-8692





Way to Wellness

Addressing body, mind and spirit...promoting wellness, wholeness and a sense of well-being.

Don't confuse your path with your destination. Just because it's stormy now doesn't mean you aren't headed for sunshine.

- Submitted by Irene Skehen, Wellness & Recovery Educator



HMC Creative Writing Group

by Anna Quon

Back in Action!

It was a small group who braved the cold weather to attend the first Healthy Minds Creative Writing Group since the bus strike ended. We did the usual - writing exercises, sharing and laughing, eating snacks and this time, a few Homer Simpson impersonations.

Writers and would be writers...please feel free to join us! And if you want to try the home exercise...we're taking on a character (the Queen of England, a CEO of a large corporation, a monkey...or any character of your choice) and writing short journal entries for a week in the voice of this character. During the course of the seven days, the character should have an emotional experience which is then resolved by the end of the week. If that sounds like a challenge, remember it can also be fun...unless you'd prefer to be serious. Anything goes!

The writing group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month. This month the group will be meeting on April 10th and 24th from 2 to 4 pm at Healthy Minds Cooperative.

What is Healthy Minds?

By Gerard Blum

Helpful

Encouraging

Active

Loyal

Thoughtful

Honest

Yours

Mindful

Interesting

Non-judgemental

Dedicated

Sensitive

Caring

Open

Original

Personal



Healthy Minds Cooperative Keep the Dates - December 2011

- ◆ March 1 - Recovery to Discovery, The Hub on Barrington St., 6:30 to 8:30 pm
- ◆ March 5 - Peer Support Recovery Dialogues Workshop - *Good Days - Bad Days* - DARTMOUTH, 10 - 12 noon
- ◆ March 7 - Vision Board Workshop, 10 to 12 noon
- ◆ March 8 - Recovery to Discovery, The Hub on Barrington St., 6:30 to 8:30 pm
- ◆ March 12 - Peer Support Recovery Dialogues Workshop - *Hope as the Beginning of Recovery* - DARTMOUTH, 10 - 12
- ◆ March 13 - HMC Creative Writing Group, 2:00 to 4:00 pm
- ◆ March 15 - Peer Support Recovery Dialogues Workshop - *Entitlements* - HALIFAX, 10 - 12 noon
- ◆ March 15 - Recovery to Discovery, The Hub on Barrington St., 6:30 to 8:30 pm
- ◆ March 19 - Vision Board Workshop, 10 to 12 noon
- ◆ March 22 - Recovery to Discovery, The Hub on Barrington St., 6:30 to 8:30 pm
- ◆ March 27 - HMC Creative Writing Group, 2:00 to 4:00 pm
- ◆ March 28 - Vision Board Workshop, 10 to 12 noon
- ◆ March 29 - Peer Support Recovery Dialogues Workshop - *More Than My Diagnosis* - HALIFAX, 10 - 12 noon
- ◆ March 29 - Recovery to Discovery, The Hub on Barrington St., 6:30 to 8:30 pm

Do you have something you would like to share in an upcoming issue of The Blue Horse Chronicles? Get in touch with us by email at hmnavigator@eastlink.ca



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