

T&SR Times

Special Recovery Edition 2018

Inside this Issue

- 2** Recovery Stories
- 3** Recovery Stories
- 4** Recovery
Stories/Miscellaneous
Prose
- 5** About T&SR Times

*Because we have a
story....*

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T&SR TIMES—SPECIAL RECOVERY EDITION

Recovery Stories

Each participant at T&SR have a unique recovery story. They were asked to write a portion of their story, as each participant has a valuable success story to tell.

I was first diagnosed with major depression and schizophrenia back in 2001. Two years before that I was in the United States Air Force. While in the Air Force, I ended up having a mental and/or nervous breakdown. I left the Air Force after being there for only four months.

So I went back to Pittsburgh, depressed because I wasn't able to complete my full term of duty. I was put on medication to stabilize my mood, my schizophrenia and my major depression symptoms.

I continued taking my medication as prescribed and my symptoms remained under control enough to do two years of college. I developed a drug and alcohol addiction through the years, but I ended up getting involved with AA and NA. In November of 2018, I will have five years clean.

I attend rehabilitation groups to give me something positive to do with my time. I started exercising on a regular basis. I started drawing and going to the library again. People tell me I have come a long way and to keep up the good work. My attitude towards life is improving and now I look forward to each day to see what positive impact I can have on my life and other's. ~Kai

When I was a teenager, I really wanted the things that the cool kids had, such as being home by myself. But I knew that I was different because I had autism. I had to go to day care after school, but something was going on on the inside. I can't describe what.

In the 8th grade, I earned a lot of Kevin McCarthy awards. When I was 15 and a half years of age, I wanted my driver's license at 16. But I had to first obtain my learner's permit.

I know that I went through a lot as a teen but God managed to get me through. It was like I was his baby. Me, now at 24 years of age. I can do all the things that the cool kids did like leave group for lunch by going off the campus to McDonald's and get a job with supportive employment. I hope to get to go the beach with my mom and her friend, Cheryl by quitting cigarette smoking. I totally dream my day will not be the highway.

I am a closed book when it comes to talking about my story, so I choose whatever I want to do. I choose to write about the things that I wanted as a teen and how now I can obtain them as an adult. I hope to drive a car, work a job successfully and go to school, continuing with divinity. ~Marlie

FYI

The Kevin McCarthy awards:

“This award is intended to honor the achievements of our communities’ best and brightest, recognizing their positive achievements and inspiring all of our students to work toward their goals,” said Congressman McCarthy. “By coming together and recognizing these students, I believe we help to create a positive community environment that supports the hard work of the next generation’s leaders.”

I used to be very depressed at one time in my life. I would just sit on the edge of my bed in high school and stare at the floor. Different meds and therapy helped me tremendously.

I've been through some rough times and made some mistakes that I am still paying for. But I feel I came a long way and learned from those mistakes. It's the little accomplishments that I focus on. Sometimes getting out of bed is a victory. Completing a task is another one. I take it one moment at a time. My depression is under control and I even look forward to each day! ~Phil

I have been unemployed for 7 years now. The MAWD program requires the client to work at least one hour per month. I am working with OVR to find a job and go back to school. It's been a year now that I have been trying to accomplish some things, so I am persisting, because the government requires each citizen to prove their circumstance. ~Anonymous

There were times and times I cried so much I could not stop. My anxiety was at its peak. I could not deal with noise, going outside or traffic outside. I held myself on the couch and laid there it was hellish. I couldn't find the right doctor of right medication to ease my discomfort.

Finally, I found a place in the phone book and had an intake appointment. I hung on until I could see the doctor and when I did I was diagnosed with anxiety, PTSD and depression. In a short time I felt relaxed and I felt like I felt years ago: good, calm, happy, normal. This was on and off for years and got worse during menopause. And being menopausal, I also sought out a gynecologist for HRT and the level of my hormones. I felt so good and happy and hadn't felt that way in at least 20 or 30 years. ~Anonymous

In 2017, I was in St. Clair Hospital for a month in February. I took my medication and we had group therapy after lunch.

Then I went to the RTP. There was group every morning until lunch and after for six hours a day. Thanks to Dr. Radfar and her medicine, I can come to T&SR and get the trolley to go to my appointments. I also graduated from mobile meds. ~Elaine

I am a fellow who's been through a lot. I've been hospitalized, institutionalized and misunderstood. But I make sure I take my medication every single day. That's how I function properly and appropriately. When I live on my own, I still take my meds. Even when I'm by myself, I know I need to take my medication. When I take as many pills as I take, there are always side effects. But I say to myself I'd rather take the medicine and have the side effects or I will be sick and end up in the hospital again. And that is why I prefer to take my meds—because the hospital is not a good thing. But it's alternative medicine. So this is the way I stay fit physically and mentally. The moral of the story is always to take your medication. The end ... or the beginning.

~Anonymous

I recovered from depression years ago. I was afraid. The stress and tension eventually reduced as did the forms of depression. ~Frank

Hello my friend! I would like to share my experience in recovery with you today. I began my journey 20 years ago and have been recovering from depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder, to be specific. With the proper medication and treatment I have been able to live a "normal" life. My life is not free from pain or suffering but I am able to get through the day with minimal intervention from staff where I reside. By communicating with my peers in recovery, I am able to live a productive life. One of

my joys in life is watching my children grow. My family and friends understand that I suffer regularly and go out of their way to help me overcome my sadness.

I was not always willing to accept help from others. I was in denial of my mental state, but now I realize that I must follow through with treatment in order to be happy. My therapist, nurses and doctors all help me with my recovery. I have found positive people that share my interest and I now have hope that I can remain out of the psyche ward and maintain my status.

By attending T&SR and taking personal inventory, I have found my purpose in life: to help others. I have a strong passion for providing companionship to those who seek help in mental health as well as chemical dependency. If you ever have any doubts about living a meaningful life, please don't. There is help available and sometimes all you need is a good friend to talk to. I try to be that friend as much as possible. Recovering responsibly, ~Gloria

This is my progress about my potential recovery. First, my history. I had untreated paranoid schizophrenia at age 21. I went into remission, but later was admitted to a psychiatric ward for hearing voices. Depression and suicidal thoughts are the most common problems. I had three hospitalizations, once for five months (Butler and Torrance). The last one was in early spring of this year. Bipolar disorder was diagnosed but I was not admitted. I have been drilling into my mind for when it starts. I will go on thinking positive thoughts including those who care about me (my sisters and the people at Chartiers). A set back occurred last month, as my mind was filled with racing thoughts. Other setbacks may occur, but I hope they are uncommon ~Carl.

Miscellaneous Prose

It's Only Been You

I wake up in the morning to yet another day. I knelt down on my knees to pray
Asking what are Your plans for me. I ask You to speak to me and show me the way.
I look in the mirror to see Your face in my reflection. I go outside and look up to the sky and see You.
And I hear Your voice and now I know.

It's only been You, Lord, all this time.
Only You know the plans You have for me.
All this time, it's only been You. Only You Lord.

Before I lay down and go to sleep, I kneel down to my knees
And pray to You, to worship You. I thank You for yet another day.

It's only been You Lord, all this time.
Only You, Lord. Only been You. Only You.
It's only been You, Lord. All this time. Only You Lord.
~John K.

The general population watched one too many Alfred Hitchcock flicks. The afflicted with mental disorders enriched every one's lives. I have Asperger Syndrome. For example: Charles Darwin had Asperger Syndrome. Charles Darwin made not one of the greatest, but *the* greatest scientific discovery—evolution—and to hear these derogatory slurs against us, I find literally offensive. The #1 most discriminated percentage of the population is the afflicted with mental disorders. It is considered politically correct and it is considered acceptable. It is not acceptable.
~Jeff

Training and Social Rehabilitation

T&SR provides social rehabilitation to adults with a mental health diagnoses. Consumers participate in a shared community that builds self-esteem, confidence, appropriate social skills and supports each other. We foster independence through group activities and community activities and events.

Some Current Activities (Subject to change depending on participant needs)

- Groups on topics such as stress management, self esteem, anger management and other important topics.
- Arts and crafts, current events, music and pop culture.
- Writing classes
- Computer learning
- Fun games and activities
- Outings
- Cooking groups

Criteria for Admission

- Must be eighteen years of age or legally emancipated.
- Have a mental health diagnoses on the most current DSM classification and a complete psychiatric evaluation dated within one year.
- A registered client of Chartiers Center or an active participant in other psychiatric services.
- Demonstrate a willingness to voluntarily participate in the program and adhere to all Agency policies/procedures.
- Must be free from the need for medical treatment requiring specialized care.
- In need of improved knowledge of symptoms and/or social skills.
- Free from behavior that would pose a danger to self or others.

For more information, contact: Amy Randal, Social Rehabilitation Coordinator.

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Recovery, Respect, Renewal