



THE FIVE RECOVERY PATHWAYS

- HOPE
- CHOICE
- EMPOWERMENT
- RECOVERY CULTURE
- SPIRITUALITY

DEFINITION OF RECOVERY

Recovery is remembering who you are and using your strengths to be all you were meant to be.

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Recovery Innovations Quarterly Premieres

Welcome to our first issue of Recovery Innovations Quarterly. In this and subsequent issues, we will bring you information on mental health recovery in Ventura County.

As a Ventura County Behavioral Health partner, Recovery Innovations of California provides free mental health recovery education classes like WRAP, WELL and Medication for Success to participants with mental health and addiction challenges.

Recovery Innovations believes deeply in an individual's ability to recover and reach beyond stabilization to living a full life where dreams are fulfilled. To this end, Recovery Innovations employs a peer workforce of Peer Support Specialist who work as Facilitators and Recovery Coaches throughout the VCBH network of clinics located in Oxnard, Ventura, Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley and Santa Paula. In this issue

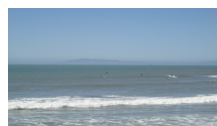


Recovery is alive and well in Ventura County!

you'll meet Mark, who works as a Facilitator and Doug who works as a Recovery Coach serving on the EPICS & MARRT Teams. These two people symbolize the many Recovery Innovations' employ-

ees who have lived experience with mental illness and have a recovery story to share with those needing hope that they too can recover and accomplish great things.

In the coming year, meet more of the Team and be inspired to foster recovery in your life and the lives of those around you.



with the entire mental health community in mind. We trust you will learn something new about mental health recovery in each issue.

Enjoy reading other topics about VCBH partners, tips to foster wellness and coming events. Recovery Innovations Quarterly is written

Client Network Hosts Free Community Forum

Friday, April 8 from 10am to 2pm, The Client Network of Ventura County invites you to join in on the conversation as they host a free community forum entitled "Wellness Wisdom".

This year's forum will be held in the training room at the Ventura

County Behavioral Health Clinic located at 1911 Williams Drive in Oxnard.

Six panelists will discuss their natural healing philosophies and answer questions from the hosts and audience members. Lunch is included. Please, call Karyn Bates at (805) 671-5038 for more

information. See you there!



The greatest wealth is health. -Virgil



Recovery Services
Administrator, Mary
McQuown

TEAM
IN
FOCUS



Doug

Spring Greetings from Mary

Welcome to our first newsletter! I hope you will find it to be fun and informative. This newsletter is for you, so please feel free to make suggestions or send in contributions. We would like to highlight different people and their stories. If you are interested, let us know. If you write poetry or would like to write an article, send us your material.

Spring is a great time to get outdoors and enjoy the sunshine. Outdoor activities such

as hiking, walking along the beach, going on a picnic or watching a soccer game are great wellness tools.

Volunteering is another wellness tool and a great way to get connected to the community. Go to www.volunteerventuracounty.org for opportunities.

At Recovery Innovations, we want to help people move forward in their recovery. We do this through recovery education classes and peer sup-

port. People have the strength and tools within themselves to recover. Sometimes they just need a little help discovering those tools and pulling them forth. Our classes help develop wellness tools for everyday life.



Meet A Facilitator: Mark

I remember my case manager telling me about WRAP. I reluctantly took the class. Today, I'm glad that I did because WRAP changed my life. I realized that I was already doing the things that WRAP recommends but WRAP brought everything together. Before WRAP, my recovery was all over the place. With WRAP, I've got my recovery in order by using the tools and action plans that I developed with my fellow peers. I believed in WRAP so much that I wanted everyone to be able to take this life-changing course.

Thanks to Recovery Innovations, I am blessed to be able to facilitate the classes as a Peer Employment Training graduate. With PET, I learned about **"...let's grow together."** recovery language, mutuality and helping people help themselves. I use my lived life experience to help fellow peers with their challenges while they, at the same time, are helping me to learn and grow in my own recovery. I've now been a Certified Peer Support Specialist for over two years and I still get ex-

cited about what I'm going to learn from peers in the classes that I help facilitate. I once read a quote on a coffee cup that said, "the only true treasure in life is helping fellow man through it" and that's exactly what I feel like I'm doing. It feels great. So come one and come all to RICA and let's grow together!



Meet A Recovery Coach: Doug

I walked into WRAP class in November of 2008 and after the very first class, I knew I had found something profound and instrumental to my recovery. WRAP gave me direction in my desire to be well and I was able to literally write my own book on how I could recover. In my two-plus years

with Recovery Innovations of California I have acquired immeasurable insight into who I am and who I want to become. Through my work as a Recovery Coach, I have the privilege of sharing that insight, along with my personal story, with others in the hopes it can shed some light on their own unique

road to wellness. I believe, as do all of us at RICA, that there is always hope and that EVERYONE, regardless of circumstance, can live a life of meaning.

Facilitators and Recovery Coaches are Certified Peer Support Specialists.

Partners in Focus: VCBH STAR Team



STAR: Screening, Triage, Assessment & Referral
1-866-998-2243

Ventura County Behavioral Health's centralized processing arm is called the STAR Team. Screening, Triage,

Assessment & Referral are functions of this vital unit which serves on the front lines with individuals seeking help from VCBH. With the creation of this program, triage and assessment duties moved from the clinic staff to one centralized area. Clinics are now free to spend more time providing treatment.

The Crisis Team is an invaluable resource operating out of the STAR program. Operators are standing by 24/7, 365 days a year. Early growing pains have decreased as STAR continues to staff up to

handle the ever-increasing demand of those in need of behavioral health services.

Recovery Innovations' Recovery Coach, Mark Schumacher, serves on the STAR Team. He will be profiled in a future issue of Recovery Innovations Quarterly.



Contact STAR for Behavioral Health Intake Assessments or Crisis Team Services

“Often people are afraid to talk about mental health because there are many misconceptions about mental illnesses. It's important to learn the facts to stop discrimination and to begin treating people with mental illnesses with respect and dignity.”

~Myths & Facts About Mental Illness, SAMHSA ADS Center, Bethesda, MD

SAMHSA's Resource Center to Promote Acceptance, Dignity and Social Inclusion Associated with Mental Health (ADS Center) Visit the website at stopstigma.samhsa.gov

Tips for Recovery: Myths vs Reality

Myth: *There's no hope for people with mental illnesses.* **Fact:** There are more treatments, strategies, and community supports than ever before, and even more are on the horizon.

Myth: *People with mental illnesses are violent and unpredictable.* **Fact:** In reality, the vast majority of people who have mental health needs are no more violent than anyone else. You probably know someone with a mental illness and don't even realize it.

Myth: *Mental illnesses cannot affect me.* **Fact:** Mental illnesses are surprisingly

common; they affect almost every family in America. Mental illnesses do not discriminate—they can affect anyone.

Myth: *Mental illnesses are brought on by a weakness of character.*

Fact: Mental illnesses are a product of the interaction of biological, psychological, and social factors.

Myth: *People with mental illnesses cannot tolerate the stress of holding down a job.*

Fact: In essence, all jobs are stressful to some extent. Productivity is maximized when there is a good match between the employee's needs and

working conditions, whether or not the individual has mental health needs.

Myth: *Once people develop mental illnesses, they will never recover.*

Fact: Studies show that most people with mental illnesses get better, and many recover completely. Recovery refers to the process in which people are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities. For some individuals, recovery is the ability to live a fulfilling and productive life.

Spotlight on WRAP

Where did WRAP come from? The Wellness Recovery Action Plan is the brainchild of author, educator and mental health recovery advocate, Mary Ellen Copeland. Copeland has herself experienced years of mental health challenges. She wanted to have hope and more control over her own health. She achieved wellness by using a system of strategies which grew into the Wellness Recovery Action Plan.

WRAP has been produced in book, and other media to aid all who are willing to

become an active partner in their own recovery. The personal wellness tools Copeland introduced have altered the lives of many living with mental health and addiction challenges for the better.

WRAP strategies include making a list of how an individual is when they're well and how they are when they are unwell and creating a working document (the plan) that guides the person towards recovery. Sparking a world-wide movement, Copeland's WRAP laid the groundwork for the creation of the

peer support specialist workforce.

Arizona-based, recovery education provider, Recovery Innovations, Inc., adopted WRAP as its foundation course and then created WELL and Medication for Success, and other recovery education classes. In places as far away as New Zealand the lesson of recovery is being passed on from person to person. Taught by peers, the message "If I can do it, so can you." is loudly heard.



Learn more about Mary Ellen Copeland, the creator of WRAP, at mentalhealthrecovery.com



OUR MISSION

To create opportunities and environments that empower

people to recover, to succeed in accomplishing their goals and to reconnect to themselves, others, and to meaning and purpose in life.

Recovery Innovations of California

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Recovery Innovations is a recovery-centered program committed to helping individuals who experience mental health and addiction challenges. With an unwavering belief in the power of the human spirit to heal itself, we offer encouragement on the journey to wellness through support and education from peers who are living in recovery.

Founded in 1990, META Services became Recovery Innovations, Inc. in 2006 to develop recovery-based programs and training opportunities throughout the United States and the world. Recovery Innovations of California began services in 2007 in San Diego, and in Ventura County in 2008.



Erase the Stigma: Join NAMI WALKS! April 30th

Last year Team RICA ROCKS was among the many community partners participating in NAMI Ventura County's annual fundraising and event NAMI WALKS!

This year's theme is 2011 Changing Minds...One Step at a Time. The annual NAMI Walks! 5K, put on by The National Alliance on Mental Illness Ventura County, is one of the most well-attended events benefitting those with mental health challenges and their families in the county. This year's honorary chair is Sheriff Geoff Dean.

NAMI WALKS! is a nationwide fundraising and mental health awareness program that is being held in more than 80 communities around the country in 2011, including right here in Ventura County. It is expected that these walks will raise over 8 million dollars in 2011 for NAMI and the mental health services it provides to thousands of families across the country.

All the funds collected by local walkers will be used to fund NAMI's programs here in Ventura County. These programs

Walk with NAMI in Ventura near the Crowne Plaza Hotel

include support, education, research and advocacy involving schizophrenia, bipolar disorder (manic depression), major depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder and severe anxiety disorders.

NAMI Ventura's local fundraising goal is \$100,000 this year. Over \$5,000 is already pledged. To track NAMI Ventura's progress to goal, and for more information visit the organization's website at:

www.nami.org/namiwalks/CA/Ventura

See you on walk day!



NAMI WALKS! April 30, 2011

9:00am Check-in/10:30 am Start

San Buenaventura Beach Promenade

For more information, contact Ratan Bhavnani or Chris Novak at (805) 641-2426