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Perspectives for a New Year: Living in the Moment

Do you sometimes find yourself unable to let go of the past or stop worrying about the future? When I feel that way, I recall to mind a great Zen story:

One day, while walking through the wilderness, a man encountered a vicious tiger. He ran for his life, and the tiger gave chase. The man came to the edge of a cliff, and the tiger was almost upon him. Having no choice, he held on to a vine with both hands and climbed down. Halfway down the cliff, the man looked up and saw the tiger at the top, baring its fangs. He looked down and saw another tiger at the bottom, waiting for his arrival and roaring at him. He was caught between the two. Two rats, one white and one black, showed up on the vine above him. As if he didn’t have enough to worry about, they started gnawing on the vine. He knew that as the rats kept gnawing, they would reach a point when the vine would no longer be able to support his weight. It would break and he would fall. He tried to shoo the rats away, but they kept coming back. At that moment, he noticed a strawberry growing on the face of the cliff, not far away from him. It looked plump and ripe. Holding onto the vine with one hand and reaching out with the other, he plucked it. With a tiger above, another below, and two rats continuing to gnaw on his vine, the man tasted the strawberry and found it absolutely delicious.

This story is all about living in the moment. Despite his perilous situation, the man chose not to let unrealized dangers paralyze him. He was able to seize the moment and savor it. The story is full of metaphors. (continued p 7)

Growing with Leadership Council

Keystone is in a time of change, a time of transition and with this a time to grow and develop new opportunities. In this process we are redefining who we serve and who we are and how we want to grow into the future.

During the next year starting in January, there are changes to our organizational structure. There will be peer point people at each site and by selecting the advocacy topic in advance the opportunity to discuss it in various sites.

We are planning to build relationships across our geographic distance through the usage of teleconference calls, e-mails newsletters on the website, and in-person site visits.

We will be expanding Leadership Council to new areas of Keystone services while staying committed to education and empowerment. This will be a year of opportunities!
My Most Recent Hospital Experience

Around Thanksgiving of 2011 I had to go to the hospital for a high calcium level to find out what was causing it. I was having headaches and was sick in my stomach a lot. I was also tired a lot and stayed in bed for the most part of two weeks. Then I started falling down some. These I found out later were all signs of a high calcium level that I thought were signs of other things. A calcium level range is 8, 9, or 10. Mine was 20.5, well above average.

During my stay at the hospital I went through some scary experiences such as hearing voices and being paranoid. These are not part of my mental health diagnosis so I was extremely terrified when they happened. I found it frustrating and hard to get others to know what I was hearing or feeling. Then I began to feel as if these same people would never believe anything I said as being true. I felt totally alone.

WOW!!! That was just for a week what if I had to live my life that way. Well some people do have to live their lives that way. Maybe even someone you know or maybe even yourself. I now have a better understanding of the difficulty that someone else faces in daily life. Kim Morrison, Harrisburg

A Time to Remember

Once a year we gather to remember. To remember that significant gifts that others have brought into our lives and honor those no longer here with us. We used a simple yet powerful candlelighting ceremony and shared a little of our lives and thoughts as we remembered.

Yet this is how we heal. It does not usually come in an overwhelming wave but in the simple moments when we are able to live, truly live and appreciate, the moment that we are living in for all its beauty and celebrate it for all its wonder.

This year Pennsylvanıa lost a great friend and advocate from the South east (who also spent much time in Harrisburg, at NAMI and at PMHCA and Central Region CSP) in the life of Glenn Koons.

Glenn was a natural peer supporter (before he became a CPS) a facilitator and group leader and perhaps what I remember most is his uncanny ability to always be there with the right technical expertise during the coffeehouses at PMHCA conference.

Matthew Federici, Director of the Copeland Center, shared with us a power point that was used at the national Alternatives Conference this past year, and viewing the power point led to many provocative and thoughtful discussions.

We shared some holiday cookies and just took the time, to step back, to reflect and to remember.
What Does Funding Mean in my Life

Without funding for mental health my life would be so different because I would not have the life that I have now.
Funding helped provide a place where I could go to get my head back in order instead of going to jail.
Funding helps to provide the medicine that I need so I’m not acting out.
Funding gave me a place to live and to learn to be a better me, even when I didn’t want to. Funding gave me events to go to where I met others going through some of the same things as me that I could learn from and also help them.
Funding gave me a group to get involved with that gives me opportunities to get outside of my comfort zone and do things I’d never dreamed possible before. Funding gave me the chance to make my dreams come true. Funding has helped me and my family to be a family again. Funding helped me get and keep a job. Funding helped me to have a place to live on my own. Funding helps me to be a responsible and productive person in society. Funding gives me a real honest to goodness life that is enjoyable and fulfilling.
Kim Morrison Harrisburg

Without funding, the doctor would not be able to monitor me as much and I would possibly run out of medicine. I would not be able to keep my appointments due to lack of transportation.
Without funding for mental health case management and peer support, I may get back to calling crisis more, possibly resulting in hospital admissions. I have been out of the hospital for almost two years. It could make me have more episodes, calling police, and having temper flare-ups.
The absolute most critical thing to me is that I want to keep my apartment and job no matter what. The services I need are for my autism and my depression, without these I am too lonely in my life.
Kenny Fisher, Harrisburg

If there were to be lack of funding with budget cuts for The Keystone Center Psychiatric Rehabilitation then:
I would not be able to attend the Keystone Center anymore.
I do not want to attend a local drop-in center because of being boring and I want to go somewhere that I can learn.
I might choose to want to work at some department store company like being a sales associate at JC Penney or F.Y.E. at the Chambersburg Mall but I am afraid that I would be stuck there.
I feel strongly that the funding monies for Keystone Center is my best option at the moment, as I gain skills needed to be able to reach for my dreams of success in life.
Lynn Thane Chambersburg

If there was not Mental Health funding I would be………..
I would feel mad at the Government for taking that away from the people with mental illness.
I would be bored out of my mind and I have to stay home or help my foster Dad with his trailer parks.
I would not be learning the right skills that I need to be able to reach my dreams for my life.
My foster Mom would have to teach me the skills that she can but that is all I would have.
I may not see my friends that I made at Keystone Human Services.
I may not get the job skills that I need for the future.
I may not get the cooking and nutrition skills that I need to learn.
I would be upset and sad that if there was no more Keystone Human Services and might end up in the hospital.
I would want the government to be able to show me how I can learn these skills when there is nowhere to teach me.
People with mental health need supports and services so they can move forward in their life towards finding a job, a college or maybe a trade school that they could go to.
Danielle Lefever
Creative Persons in Recovery

In November we began our Creative Persons in Recovery group at 3609 Derry St with the viewing of the Magnificent Minds website where two members of Leadership Council have their work featured. Through the website individuals are able to have their work showcased and sold to members of the community.

In December Kim Maldonado and Kim Kennedy, both master quilters, shared their expertise as members created Recovery Quilt Square and stories. The Recovery quilt is part of a Dauphin County seed grant (which is being done concurrently in Cumberland-Perry County) for display at the Recovery Conference in May. There is also a book of quilt squares and recovery stories being developed to be available when the quilt is being displayed. Additional Quilt-square making sessions were offered at Keystone.

Upcoming Events and Activities

January 17 3:30-4:30 Card Making The Art of Pop up Cards  
Featured artist Bob Martin

February 27 3:30-4:30 Creative Story writing  
Preparing for PMHCA Insight Submissions  
Featured Artist Kathyann Corl

March 20 3:30-4:30 Visual Arts  
Invited Artist Syngred Magnificent Minds (tentative)

Christmas Meeting in Chambersburg

The Leadership Council Christmas Holiday Party was held at the Keystone Center of Chambersburg, Pa. on Thursday December the 15th, 2011 from 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. It was a very fun holiday gathering as we discussed topics related to mental health and recovery.

We discussed plans to restructure Leadership Council to include more input by peers from outside of 3609 Derry and built relationships as we discussed the different ways that peer supports are used in varied Keystone programs. There was also lunch provided of Sandwich Wraps, Macaroni Salad, Potato Salad, Pretzels, chips, cookies, fruits, and varieties of different beverages—mostly iced tea related. Overall, the party turned out to be successful and fun.

Lynn Thane
ALEXANDRIA, Va.  *My Plan, My Life - My Psychiatric Advance Directive* (www.MyPlanMyLife.com)—is a new online resource to inform consumers with mental illness, their families and health care professionals about the importance of psychiatric advance directives as a tool that provides instructions regarding treatment or services one wishes to have or not have during a mental health crisis.

A psychiatric advance directive allows you to specify considerations about your mental health care treatment and appoint an agent who may make decisions about your treatment in the event of a mental health crisis. In some cases, you may also give further background information about how you have reacted to past treatment. A comprehensive and easy-to-understand online resource and information center, *My Plan, My Life* answers some of the most frequent questions people have about psychiatric advance directives and provides a step-by-step guide on how to create one. The site also features the video stories of several individuals who have integrated psychiatric advance directives into their own psychiatric care.

“I am excited to be a part of the *My Plan, My Life - My Psychiatric Advance Directive* program through the inclusion of several video vignettes that I filmed with individuals who have their own psychiatric advance directive in place,” said Delaney Ruston, a physician, advocate and filmmaker and lead film advisor on the video vignette library housed on www.MyPlanMyLife.com. “Their stories help to illustrate why completing a psychiatric advance directive can be important and it is great to hear their experience firsthand. I truly enjoyed meeting each of them and I am sure you will learn from their stories.” For more information about psychiatric advance directives, try www.MyPlanMyLife.com.

In our conversations within Leadership Council we found that our practices on creating Advanced Directives would benefit from more consistency. An Advanced Directive can be created by using the above website or by having your WRAP plan notarized. In 2012 We are planning to have specific days and times throughout the year when a notary will be at 3609 Derry. Contact your team member if you are interested in having your plan notarized.

**Why I Use an Advanced Directive: Personal Story**

I have found the Advanced Directive Medical/Mental Health necessary because if I had not had it done I would have had treatments which would not have been my choice. Because I had the Medical and Mental Health I did receive the treatment I desired at a time when I could not voice my own opinions. When I had my stroke or was unconscious they will follow the Advance Directive. I carry one in my wallet, the Hospital has a copy on file, any doctor has one on file, I have one with case management, and the person who is acting as your medical agent needs a copy. I also gave one to my minister and one to the apt complex where I live. Paramedics will look at the refrigerator for list of medication and I have a copy posted there for them to see it.

Connie Ziegler
Bringing Nutrition and Wellness into the Keystone Center

Keystone Center has participated in Wilson’s Fulton Farm’s Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and was invited to present at the first local Closing the Gap; Connecting Communities & Local Food, sponsored by Community Food Security Coalition (FSC) & Capital Resource Conservation & Development Area Council (RC&D). They were interested in how and why Keystone’s individuals were involved with the CSA.

The RC&D is a seven county (Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, and York) non-profit that networks people, resources, and projects to promote responsible use and conservation of the region's natural, community, and economic resources.

Keystone’s presentation centered on our vision as part of the Wellness 10 x 10 lead by SAMHSA. Keystone Center is now recognized as an organization that takes Food Security seriously. This opening also gives us a voice that may not have been heard before from the population we serve. Many had no idea that those with SMI faced a decreased life expectancy.

Through our trips to the farm, the research that some do in order to prepare foods they have not encountered, and the overall effect of those involved in the cooking and nutrition classes. The presentation included how the lack of good nutrition effects on those with mental illness. The discussion also centered on people refusing to risk their food stamp allotment on products they know nothing about or how to prepare. There was a discussion about how our center offers education and assistance in these food security areas. Our involvement with CSA, cooking & nutrition sessions, and general involvement in the lives of those receiving our services makes us an ideal partner to help eradicate some of the food security issues that our individuals have and are facing.

We have discussed about continuing CSA next year and actually working at the farm a couple of days per week.

Additionally, we have made contact with the local food banks and we are now partnering with them to round out our cooking sessions. Individuals go to the food banks and help select the foods that we can prepare at the center and they can get from the food bank and duplicate what they’ve learned from our modeling of the activity and using kinesthetic (hands on) instruction techniques, each individual learns in their own way.

Lori Brocious, Chambersburg
Perspective on Life: Living in the Moment

All the major elements in the story are representations that possess deeper meaning. There is so much beauty and goodness in each present moment and the infinite instant, that if you were to take in too much at once, you would be hopelessly overwhelmed. In the language of our story, we might say that the strawberry is full of incredibly delicious juice. To pluck the strawberry is to seize the moment. When you do so, you are being mindful of the present, directing your attention to the flow that moves through you, and choosing to immerse fully in the river of the eternal now. To taste the strawberry is fully savor the flavor of reality. When you do so, you begin to appreciate the miracle of existence and notice a beauty that is ever-present no matter where you look. This fills your heart with gladness and gratitude.

Written by Derek Lin Submitted by Lori Brocious Chambersburg Selected Excerpt reading for full story go to: http://www.taoism.net/living/2003/200301.htm

Highlights of Leadership Council 2011

January-March 2011

- Keystone Conference Presentation on 10 years of using Teach back, Hosting poster board session on Impact of Training on individuals lives
- Leadership Council Harrisburg did a video viewing of “Healing Neen” with members which was recommended by Keystone Maryland members on developing recommendations for KCMHS in trauma informed care and Liz from PMHCA did an educational discussion on Forensic peer support in Pennsylvania

April-June 2011

- Allegheny county members presented Our Personal Story at the PAPSRS Conference in State College Recovery Conference
- Members from Chambersburg did workshops at their county Recovery Conference
- Members of Leadership Council have had their art work featured at the PMHCA Art Show in Pittsburgh and by Magnificent Minds, artists are now featured on their website.

July-September 2011

- Voices and Partnership with the Keystone Psych Rehab Workgroup from members in Maryland and Harrisburg utilizing the global assessment tools in practice for the implementation of person centered planning.
- Voices and Partnership: Harrisburg and Chambersburg members had opportunities to discuss medication recording practices at Keystone and make recommendations to increase the usage and staff training in shared decision making tools.
- Chambersburg twelve members used the Drexel Call to Change indicator’s to do an assessment of the program in Chambersburg.
- Voices and Partnership: Members had the opportunity to attend the National Community Integration Conference in Philadelphia and discuss the impact the training has had on the lives of people in recovery at Keystone.
Leadership Council is an advisory board to the Keystone Mental Health Services Management Team. People in recovery from who have affiliations with Keystone Human Services-Mental Health are invited to join. Other stakeholders are invited but asked to realize that some activities may be specific to Keystone. Leadership Council is directly involved in working with the Management Team in the development, implementation, and evaluation of Keystone Services.

Leadership Council Activities are peer driven and geared towards

- Empowering peers to develop their own voice
- Educating peers about the choices they have in the delivery of service

For the name of your areas local peer leader please contact Kathyann at

**Upcoming Opportunities**

January
- 1/17 Creative Persons in Recovery 3:30-11:30 Allfirst
- 1/19 Leadership Council telecom call 10:00-11:15pm 3609 Derry
- 1/23 Leadership Council Monday meeting 6:00-7:30pm 3609 Derry
- 1/25 Employment Supports that Work 1:00-4:00 3609 Derry
- 1/31 Solutions for Wellness 12 wk course 12:30pm 3609 Derry

New course focusing on body/mind/spirit and making choices for healthy eating and exercise.

February
- 2/7 Shared Decision Making 10-11:30am 3609 Derry
- 2/7 Solutions for Wellness continues on Tuesdays 12:30pm 3609
- 2/16 Leadership Telecom call 10:00-11:15am 3609 Derry
- 2/21 Creative Persons in Recovery 3:30-4:30pm 3609 Derry
- 2/23 Education Professional Development Planning 9am 3609 Derry
- 2/23 Borderline Personality 1:00-3:00pm 3609 Derry
- 2/27 Leadership Council Monday Meeting 6:00-7:30

March
- 3/6 Solutions for Wellness continues on Tuesdays 12:30pm
- 3/8,3/15,3/22 Maximizing Wellness Plans to live with Trauma 10am-3pm Pre-requisite 18 hour WRAP class/It's a WRAP by Copeland Center Training will include large and small group work and home workbook activities. 3609 Derry (Attendance all three days is necessary)
- 3/20 Creative Persons in Recovery 3:30-4:30 3609 Derry
- 3/26 Leadership Council Monday Meeting 6:00-7:30pm
- 3/29 Leadership Council telecom 10:00-11:30am 3609 Derry

There will be an upcoming IMR class but dates are not yet determined. For updates on next IMR class and to register for educational opportunities listed above call Linda Menton 558-8450.

*Corita Kent*