

Report from the Chair

This had been a very busy year for both PACE and myself. This year we saw PACE staff more than double with the hiring of Sylvia Helfrich, Kathleen Halstead and Don Upton. And, of course we lost our office worker, Liz and Cindy Cade was hired to take her place. Sylvia and Kathleen are full time employees while Don was hired on a contract to complete our initial Economic Development Project. We hope to continue in the area of economic development and turn the Community Development worker into a full time position in the coming year. The MISN staff also had staff hours increased to full time to accommodate for a 31% increase in membership. Both the PACE and MISN staff have been very active conducting workshops and presentations (self-help, public speaking, crisis services, native cultural traditions), developing position papers (Disabilities Act, Privacy legislation), increasing social recreation activities, and serving on committees (NWO Implementation Task Force, the International Association of Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services, Northern Conference Committee, the Employment and Mental Illness Workshop Planning Committee. Good luck to the new staff and thank you to all the staff for your dedication and service to PACE.

This year the Research Coordinator, Karen Charles, and the members of the Action Research Team completed and presented our research project "Surviving in Thunder Bay: An examination of Mental Health Issues—Phase III". We distributed this research to various stakeholders and presented it at the IAPSRS (Ontario Chapter) 6th Biannual Conference in September 2001. This presentation, along with a presentation on the history of PACE as a grassroots movement were well received and conference attendees expressed a great deal of interest in PACE.

Attached to our research proposal was the development of a PACE website and it is with great pride that I tell you about: "www.pace-tbay.net". We now have a website and with our own domain name and through this we can send PACE worldwide or at least make ourselves accessible to other interested consumer/survivors.

Also developed this year was the PACE logo. Originally conceived as a dove rising out of the turmoil of a storm it was simplified for reproduction purposes to a dove with the word PACE underneath. This logo is owned by PACE and will come to be identified as a symbol of PACE. You can see our logo on the website, the newsletter, and all printed items associated with PACE.

The Board, often with the staff has also worked very hard. In November 2001, at the recommendation of the Coordinator, the Board hired Superior Business Consulting to do an administrative review of PACE with the goal of the review being to improve the administrative functioning of PACE.

In ending I would like to say thank you to the members and supporters of PACE.

Celebrate PACE and take care of each other.

Colin Stewart Chair

The following article was written by our P.A.C.E. member, April A. who moved down East some time ago. It is taken from "The Clean Times", the Toronto Area Newsletter of Narcotics Anonymous. March 2002

Website: www.torontona.ca Email: mail@torontona.ca

My Experience With Mental Illness and Staying Clean

"Our readings state that we sought help through medicine, religion and psychiatry and none of these methods were sufficient for us. You would not believe the amount of backlash I get from working a recovery program along with seeking outside professional help and the ensuing medications I take. Without my outside professional help I wouldn't be clean. That has meant many a sleepless night for me.

I've been lying in a hospital bed and told by a former sponsor that I was using because I was taking prescribed drugs for a psychotic state brought on by a relapse. She couldn't have been more wrong. Meetings don't cure a psychosis. Without professionals to guide me hospital wards would be closed down according to that cruel sponsor who abandoned me in my time of need.

As for taking an anti depressant, it's not using, it's being responsible for our recovery, and making sure that the brain chemistry is right so that the addict doesn't crave or need drugs.

A meeting is not the panacea for all that ail us. If you are suffering from a major depression and sleeping until noon everyday you are not being responsible for your recovery. We are taught to become responsible, productive members of society. Doing whatever it takes to cure that depression is being responsible and productive in all areas of our lives.

I've never made a secret of my mental illness in or outside of the rooms. For that I have been treated as a pariah. Have a heart. Include the mental health consumer in the fellowship, as we matter too. My kinetheologist/personal trainer describes what I have as diabetes of the brain.

Attending 90 meetings in 90 days for me includes my mental health support groups because it is tailor-made to me being responsible for all areas of my mind, body and spiritual growth.

I don't molly coddle myself. I work hard at my recovery in all aspects of it whether it is addiction or mental illness. I attend college, and am now taking a brief leave to nurture myself and be well. I'm proud of what I've accomplished which is 18

months clean and the responsibility for the entire holistic approach I've taken to ensuring I stay clean."

Advocate's Advice

Do you feel there are times that your rights are being ignored or abused? If this occurs at an agency or organization by someone such as a nurse, receptionist, store clerk, police officer, worker, etc., there is one thing you can do.

POLITELY ask what the person's full name or badge number is and take the time to write it down as soon as possible. This will effect an amazing change in attitude 75% of the time. This is also a good way to remind people who are supposed to be helping, that they are there for YOUR benefit.

Prescriptions

Are you having difficulty paying for some or all of your prescriptions? The Trillium Drug Fund can help. Ask your pharmacist for the application. If you need assistance and have a worker at an agency such as ODSP, Alpha Court, Ontario Works etc., they will help you fill it out. You can also ask a friend or family member to help you fill out one. The Trillium Drug Fund can greatly reduce the cost of prescriptions that are not covered by another plan.

Emergencies

There is an Emergency Assistance Fund available to members. It can be used for many things and the application process takes about 5 minutes. If you need to apply for this fund, P.A.C.E. now has the forms. Just see Sylvia, your Systemic Advocate Worker and I can help you out.

Sylvia Helfrich

P.A.C.E.'s AGM 2002

The P.A.C.E. Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday, July 20th at the Italian Cultural Centre. The main item on our agenda, of course was choosing our Board members for the year 2002-2003. The following members were the successful candidates:

Stella Montour ~ Chairperson
 Colin Stewart ~ Co Chairperson
 Pat Morris ~ Secretary
 Dawn Washington ~ Treasurer

Don Camus ~ Member-at-Large

Other Board members are Tina Manfredo, Diane Perth and Calvin Jewett.

Congratulations to each and every one!

Another important item on the agenda each year is the presentation of the two P.A.C.E. Awards. The members choose, prior to the AGM who they would like to see receive each of the awards. One award, "Membership Appreciation Award" is for someone who it is felt volunteers and helps out within P.A.C.E. Stella Montour was our winner for this year. The second award given out is the "Consumer/Survivor Outstanding Achievement Award". This award is given to a member who, not only volunteers at P.A.C.E. but also does volunteering within the mental health field outside of the P.A.C.E organization. Our winner this year was Pat Morris. As it turned out, on our agenda was a "Special Award". This award was also given to Pat Morris in recognition of her receiving the prestigious provincial "Courage to Come Back Award" in May of this year.

Congratulations!
To the new Board of Directors
And to our Award Winners

Staff Reports

Coordinator: (Laurie Albertini)

MISN ~ Vanessa from Manitouwadge will be going on pregnancy leave in September. We will hire a term contract to replace her while she is away. We all wish Vanessa the best with her pregnancy.

P.A.C.E. ~ The past month or so we have been busy preparing for the AGM...annual reports, auditor work, quarterly operating plan reports for the Board, slate of the Board of Directors, ticket sales for the dinner and so on.

The Task Force has taken the next few months off as other committee groups have done. In the next little while there will be some important developments in the mental health services in Thunder Bay and the surrounding regions. Once the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care reviews major Task Force recommendations, the work will begin to implement the strategies that have been developed. All Task Forces will have submitted their interim reports by July of this year and awaiting Ministry approval.

I also wish everyone who takes some time to go outside and play, a good summer.

Laurie Albertini

Membership Development Worker (Inez May)

In the latter part of May, I went to Marathon and did a cultural presentation to 100 grade 9 students. The young students (14 - 15 yr-olds were very interested and quite well behaved. Evaluations were very positive. Sylvia and myself have been doing some work on the Safe House Proposal. We had a meeting with potential

partners in June. [Maurice Fortin, CMHA, Ian Ritchie Alpha Court, Gilda Douchi Anishnawbe Muskiki, Blain Landry Patient's Council, Sandy Homeniuk TB Regional Hospital.] Supports for this endeavour came from TB police Chief, Robert Irwin and Fire Chief J. Kaplanis. They have also waived the fee for Criminal Record Checks for employees and volunteers of the Safe House. Of course, a lot of work will have to take place before the Safe House becomes a reality.

Inez May

Public Education Worker (Kathleen Halstead) I have attended the first meeting of the NWO Mental Health Committee in May. I will be working on the subcommittee that will be developing the Terms of Reference for this committee. I also attended a workshop that was held by Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic on ODSP, and the fact that there are many individuals that are being turned down for ODSP, legal clinics across Ontario are spending more and more time and money on this issue. The homeless are most affected. There is a need for advocates. A full report on the workshop will be sent to those that were in attendance and I will forward this information to the Systemic Advocate when I receive it.

Kathleen Halstead

Systemic Advocate Worker (Sylvia Helfrich) In preparation for Mental Health Week in May I coordinated the development of printing of a P.A.C.E. poster and ensured that they were distributed to all schools in Thunder Bay as well as various clinics, the police station and all hospitals. They are also used every time we set up the P.A.C.E. booth, which is every opportunity we get! I've also had the opportunity to attend a seminar on Information Sharing Among Agencies, as well as workshops on the Tenant Protection Act and Counseling the Bereaved. After learning that no one in Thunder Bay deals with "Complicated Grief", P.A.C.E. took steps to obtain information on this topic.

Sylvia Helfrich

10 Ways to De-Stress Your Life

1. Live simply. Don't clutter up your life with too many things.
2. Take care of yourself. Get enough sleep; eat healthy foods.
3. Think positively. Fill your mind with uplifting images.
4. Be cooperative. Resist the common tendency to want things your own way all the time. Try to see another point of view.
5. Get involved in a good cause. Feel like you are making a difference in the world, even if it's in a small way.
6. Live one day at a time. Make the most of the moment. Yesterday is gone, and today will be soon enough.
7. Exercise. Do something you really enjoy. Restore yourself.

8. Maintain balance. Devote time to all aspects of your life; spiritual, emotional, family, career, community, physical, mental, material.
9. Give yourself credit where credit is due.
10. Realize you can't do everything.

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www.power2u.org/selfhelp/10ways.html

Bill 68 forcing people back into high-risk drugs, electroshock
 Written by Don Weitz, Toronto

Submitted by: Wayne Lax

(Edited by Pat Morris)

Dear Editor:

Many thanks to the good piece on Kenora human rights activist Wayne Lax by Shauna DeGagne. Readers not only survived the horror and torture of forced drugging and electroshock but are still fighting to expose and stop these crimes against humanity masquerading as "safe and effective treatment."

(Daily Miner and News, Nov. 28)"

"It's time so-called "mental health experts" across Ontario started listening to Wayne Lax and many other of us activists who have been advocating and developing non-medical, humane and empowering self-help alternatives to psychiatry's health-threatening medical model for many years. You don't have to be a doctor or rocket scientist to know that numbing or frying people's brains by drugging and electro shocking them will only cause more problems, more suffering and more harm including permanent memory loss and brain damage. There have to be better and more humane ways to help people in crisis. Of course, there are, but who's listening, who cares? Certainly not the psychiatrists and mental health experts.

Wayne and many of us survivor-activists in Ontario have lots to teach mental health professionals and corporate drug pushers about real self-help and community alternatives, which can save millions of dollars in health care costs and thousands of lives each year. The question is this: Do they really give a damn? Do you?

An Understanding of Mental Illness

Taken in part from The Chronicle Journal Thunder Bay ON Friday, July 19, 2002

It's an important victory for many of our society's marginalized members. A public outcry has brought about an alteration in a television ad for cheese—the ad, created by the Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC), featured an off-the-cuff remark about schizophrenia.

The DFC at first balked at pulling the ad in response to public complaints. However, the dairy crew has changed its tune and removed a segment of the commercial in which a taxicab passenger called the driver a “schizo”.

To all too many people, such a slur would go by unnoticed. Jokes, and insults based on mental illness are so prevalent in our society that, for the most part, we’ve become somewhat accustomed to them.

For example, magazines like Mad and its competitors poke fun at mental illness in their very names. The fact that such publications have become institutions in our society does little to build the morale of people with problems like schizophrenia.

It’s time our attitudes changed.

People with mental illness need society’s support and respect. Perhaps it’s the respect that is most important—it would go a long way in building up the self-esteem of people with such illnesses as schizophrenia or bipolar.

Perhaps the best way to approach the matter is through educating the public about mental problems. Giving people more of an idea of what mental illness is and what it entails would help in making them aware of the cruel remarks coming out of their mouths.

Information is there for the asking. Common sense and conscience ought be enough to get most people thinking how about developing a sense of understanding of how difficult it is to live with mental illness. It’s worse when the illness is mocked, and the dairy farmer’s organization and its ad agency should have known that.

Updates/Activities at P.A.C.E.

Volunteer of the Month

P.A.C.E. Board has approved the creation of a “Volunteer of the Month” where the volunteer would get a certificate, notice in the Newsletter and a \$5.00 award. The Social Recreation Committee will choose the volunteer and sponsor the award.

Social Recreation – A certificate was given to the bingo volunteers from the Handicapped Action Group for their excellent contributions for helping with their bingos. They would very much like to see

P.A.C.E. come back to work at the bingos. Inez has the schedule. Anyone interested, please speak with Inez.

Women’s drum group is held every Sunday at 2 p.m. at 824 Finlayson. Contact person: Frieda McDonald.

WORKSHOPS TRAINING SESSIONS AT P.A.C.E./MISN

“Cultural Awareness Workshop” ~ Tuesday July 30,/02 ~ Presented by Inez May in Geraldton for MISN members in that community. Please contact Faye Brugger for more information.

“Self-Advocacy” ~ Tuesday, August 20, 2002 ~ 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ~ P.A.C.E. House

This workshop is all about standing up for yourself and learning how to deal with obstacles in a calm, effective way that will get positive results. Lunch and dessert will be provided (for workshop attendees only).

Pre-registration with Sylvia is required.

“Changes in ODSP” ~ Saturday, Sept. 21/02: Sally Calhoun, lawyer for Kineway will be presenting at P.A.C.E. at the September General Membership Meeting.

“Public Speaking Training Sessions” ~ Wednesday, September 11/02 @ 2:00 p.m. Kathleen, Public Education Worker, will be teaching the members techniques in public speaking. Adrian and Pat have offered to help.

Seminar: “Making Your Will” (FOR P.A.C.E. MEMBERS ONLY)
Friday, September 20, 2002 @ 2:00 p.m. ~ P.A.C.E. House

Special Announcements

Economic Development Proposal

The P.A.C.E. Board of Directors has approved an application for two-year funding for the Community Development Worker position. This will be sent for government approval.

In May, 2002, Sylvia Helfrich, Systemic Advocate Worker received her degree in Political Sciences from Lakehead University.

At the Alpha Court AGM on June 27th, 2002, both Sylvia Helfrich and Calvin Jewett were appointed to the Board of Directors for Alpha Court.

Cultural Awareness Workshop, a presentation by Inez May in Marathon on May 21st was greatly appreciated by the 100 grade 9 students in attendance.

Total Visits to P.A.C.E. in June: Out of 22 days open, 441 people have come to visit for meetings, support, advocacy, and education info. Use of computers, coffee/smoke, recreation, laundry and other reasons.

The Ontario Council of Alternative Businesses

OCAB Principles and Philosophies

Editor’s Note: P.A.C.E. is working on developing an Alternative Business. [Please refer to Pg. 4 of April Issue of Thunder Struck.] I would like to quote from the OCAB Principles and Philosophies as I feel this will give us a better

understanding of what this really means for us. As quoted from one member of OCAB:

"The reason consumer/ survivors are doing this is not just to create successful businesses, it is to rebuild human lives. Survivors are using the economy toward that end, not using the people to build the economy..."

"The majority of people who have used the formal services of the Ontario Mental Health system have a huge task to gain back much needed self-esteem, self confidence and hope for their future. Being in the "system" means that you have people working with you who tend to believe you are "sick" and that you lack the capability to do things others take for granted. It also means that for many of our folks, we believe what we have been told. Sometimes our biggest roadblock is our own lack of belief in ourselves. For those who have been in the hospital off and on for years, we have been told when to get up, when to eat, when to sleep, where to live, what pills to take, what our sexuality should be, who to be friends with, etc. etc.

After awhile this can have tremendous impact on individuals' lives. Also, we learn not to trust ourselves and our judgments, because we're crazy (they say).

Through our business developments we can assist people to gain some control over their lives, and to improve their economic circumstances. What OCAB says repeatedly is that "we use the economy to build our community". Most people in community economic development activities use the community to build the economy."

Thunder Bay Literacy Group

Our Public Education Worker has P.A.C.E. members interested in getting involved with the Thunder Bay Literacy Group. This article is to help those who are unfamiliar with this organization and for those who, perhaps may want to get involved.

The Thunder Bay Literacy Group is a community-based organization created to assist adults in Thunder Bay improve basic reading, writing and math skills. In addition, the Thunder Bay Literacy Group works to raise awareness about adult literacy issues.

Our Program

Adults who want to improve their reading, writing or math skills:

- may attend small group classes,
- or may be matched one-to-one with a volunteer tutor,
- and can borrow learning materials from our library.

All of our tutoring services are free, confidential and designed to meet the needs of each adult learner.

Clear Language Services

Clear Language Consulting is a unique service offered by the Thunder Bay

Literacy Group so your customers understand your message the first time. Clear Language and Design:

- increases efficiency
- saves money
- is more user friendly
- offers marketing advantages
- improves readability

Please see Kathleen Halstead for more information.

How to Cope with Crisis Intervention

This article was taken from a newsletter put out by the Timmins Consumer Network Centre called “Reflections” Summer 2002—It was thought to be of help for us as well. Thank you Christine!

What is a crisis? Everyone has a crisis in our lives at one time or another whether or not we have mental illness, so what is it?

Crisis is a temporary state of upset and disorganization. An inability to cope using customary methods of problem solving. A crisis involves the potential for radically positive or negative outcomes.

The goal of crisis intervention is to help the person in his/her efforts in restoration of equilibrium or the ability to cope with the situation. Also to aid in regaining the level of functioning that existed immediately before the crisis.

Crisis intervention is the act of assessing the difficulty of the crisis, pinpointing and mobilizing helping resources.

So what causes a crisis situation and how do we deal with it?

A crisis situation is caused by different things to different people. Mostly it is caused by pressure from the outside, (external from you). That may make you feel tense externally. Which is stress !! ~ an unavoidable part of life that affects everyone. Stress affects us emotionally and physically. Stress can be negative and positive. [Emphasis by editor]

The impact of a stressor depends upon it's timing, intensity duration, sequencing and the degree of other events that interfere in the individuals lives.

Ways to deal with Stress, to avoid a crisis situation

Here are a few methods of coping with stress: Relaxation Techniques, Abdominal Breathing, Visualization, Meditation, Outside Support (extremely important). [Emphasis by editor]

Most of all, increase your self-esteem. Everyday our lives change and if we are positive about ourselves, and believe you can get through anything, YOU CAN!!!!

Submitted by: Christine

