



STANISLAUS COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES

CULTURAL COMPETENCY UPDATE

...a newsletter to address cultural issues that enable us to effectively work in cross cultural situations.

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The Empowerment Center Members Speak

By Christina Kenney, Program Director
 Turning Point Community Programs—The Empowerment Center/The Garden of Eat'n

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The Empowerment Center is a Mental Health Drop in Center located on 1001 Needham Ave. Business hours are from 7:30am-3pm, Monday through Friday.

Typically, folks find their way to the center by way of referral from agencies and programs in the community. The focus of the Center is to complement the Mental Health related services they are currently receiving as well as to provide peer support in developing healthy relationships to increase independence and well-being.

Often, it is learned that folks have stopped services or are unaware how to navigate back to getting much needed support. The Center has worked as a connector for these folks to share where they are and how to connect them to the “tools” in the community to increase their ability to receive services and be active participants in their recovery.

The Empowerment Center is comprised of many different folks having very different experiences. Some individuals have provided glimpses into their personal stories and have chosen to forward this recollection to the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission and the Prop 63 Story. The Center’s members have learned, and continue to learn, the importance of cultivating their voice to promote advocacy, support, and movement within Mental Health. Collectively, members have shared this is what keeps hope alive and to be well in their individual paths to recovery.

The following stories are clips of some of the Center Members.

Anita Say, an active center support and spokesperson:

The Empowerment Center has helped me to take responsibility for my actions. If I lash out I need to take responsibility for it and learn to not lash out and control my anger better. The groups have also helped me a lot and participating in them. I enjoy being able to talk about my problems and emotions, it helps to keep me calm. I also enjoy facilitating groups and being able to talk about my recovery and dealing with my mental illness. It has given me hope that I can get better as long as I do the work.

Gary Nicholas, an active center support and spokesperson:

In the years 2009-2010, I was invited to the Empowerment Center by three gentlemen. I arrived. I was invited by a Lady, a member. I went to one group. I started going to other groups. I went to a group on Wednesday, Meditation. I asked about trainings in the Stanislaus County in our community. I went to NAMI Stanislaus Peer-to-Peer. I went to Mental Health First Aid. I met someone at the training, the person works at Modesto Gospel Mission. I am a Facilitator’s Training graduate from Mr. Tim White. I went to A.S.I.S.T. on July 17, 2014. I started Co-Facilitating Meditation and Journaling, scheduled on Tuesdays at 1:00pm-2:00pm. I have been asked to co-facilitate with another group

BHRS Cultural Competence Oversight Committee meets on the 2nd Monday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the Martin Conference Room, 830 Scenic Drive

Announcement:
MHSA Document
 The MHSA Annual Update FY 15-16 is available for 30-day public review and comment March 24 through April 22, 2015.
 To access the document, please go to:
www.stanislausmhsa.com

that requested a meeting room at the Center. I have met more peers in their Recovery and Rehabilitation, through actions to stay healthy.

Gregory Barnes, previous Center Support and graduate into community employment:

My name is Gregory Barnes and I want to express to you the importance of the Empowerment Center. I want to start by telling you that I am a homeless man and I thought resources for me were few and far between. I was told about the Empowerment Center from some peers at the Modesto Gospel Mission. The moment I stepped into the center I was treated like a human again. Through the center I was able to apply for general assistance, apply for unemployment and jobs. The staff was more helpful than other agencies combined. The staff worked twice as hard as I did, provided I did the leg work. They gave me hope and a sense of purpose again, when it seemed like all the lights of life had been turned out. I am happy to say now, that through their help understanding, I now have a job and my homelessness will soon be over. My situation would have been very bleak and dismal had it not been for the center and its excellent staff. I would like to close by saying the center for me is the best resource in the city of Modesto. Thanks to the powers that be for making this place a light at the end of the tunnel!

Juan Dicochea, previous Center Support and graduate into community employment:

My name is Juan. I have been volunteering at Turning Point Community Programs for a few months now. In my experience here, I have developed new skills and gained knowledge in several different areas in Mental Health and Drug Dependency. Topics and groups geared toward Stigma, Recovery and Conflict Resolution have opened the door to a variety of possibilities in furthering my career in Human Services. As a Support and Member, I get to receive assistance in resources for transportation, web access and one on one support with experienced Staff. Every day is different, but the smiles stay the same and that's why I would recommend this center to anyone looking to change their circumstances or learn something new.

If you are interested in learning more about the Empowerment Center, please contact Christina Kenney, Program Director, at (209) 544-1913. The Empowerment Center's new location is 1001 Needham Ave. Business hours are from 7:30am-3pm, Monday through Friday.

Highlights of March Cultural Competency, Equity and Social Justice Committee (CCESJC) Meeting



- * The CCP workgroup will convene Thursday, March 12, 2015 at the PEI offices located on 1904 Richland Avenue, Ceres, CA from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
- * Jeff Anderson presented Sierra Vista's MHS Innovation project proposal titled Quiet Time to the CCESJC, a curriculum which originates from the Center for Wellness & Achievement in Education (CWAE).
- * Lori Schumacher presented Center for Human Services MHS Innovation project proposal titled "Father's Initiative" to the CCESJC. Their project will help develop a network to keep fathers engaged with the community resources available for the benefit of self and families; provide technical assistance to partners; increase the capacity of fathers to engage with their partners and their children.
- * Each mind matters kick off - 4/25/15 from 12-6 in front of 1010 10th Street
- * Women's Film Festival – 5/2/15 at the State Theater. Women's art show and reception at Peer Recovery Art Project
- * Day of Hope – 5/27/15 at 1220 J Street featuring Youth in Mind, Wellness Recovery Center

If you have questions or suggestions regarding Cultural Competency, please forward them by e-mail to:

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