Mental Health Recovery is possible. Its important to know that the journey will be different for everyone, and there’s often no clear beginning and end. Often it is a process of one step forward and several steps back, recovery can take time. Each person’s journey is unique to them, and should be driven by them. Any person who experiences mental health challenges can find ways to overcome their challenging experiences in ways that works best for them. Just because someone may have experienced mental health challenges doesn't necessarily mean they will again. It is a process of change through which individuals, can improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed and meaningful life whilst striving to achieve their full potential.

RRCI Members Forum with Luncheon August 17th 2019

Pictured Left to Right Front Row Monika, Sui, Lizzie, Standing Back row; Paula, Gim, Lyn, Brian, Amanda, Dudley, Anita, Robert, Agneta, Raymond

Special thanks to the Ottey Centre management committee for free use of the centre for this event

A fun day was had by all 20 attendees. People had travelled from as far as York and Bunbury to attend. A yummy lunch was prepared and served for us by Anita and Andrew Flynn, with support from our kitchen helpers Lizzie and Gail. Our Chairperson Lyn, shared what we had been up to behind the scenes in working ‘in and on the business’ of maintaining and sustaining our community. Members were asked to contribute ideas for future activities (stay tuned for more information) and Dudley, Raymond, Sui and Amanda entertained us with music, song and dance. All agreed the day was a success, with a positive and uplifting spirit being shared.

Lizzey’s Quote Corner

“No one ever injured their eyesight by looking on the bright side”

Author
Unknown

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TheMHS Conference Presentation

The Mental Health Services (TheMHS) Conference is Australasia’s leading and most diverse mental health conference. **HOW DID THEMHS CONFERENCE BEGIN?** In 1990, a group of psychiatrists decided that it would be good to organise a conference/forum on mental health issues which would be broadly-based and multi-disciplinary. After a couple of years, it became The Mental Health Services Conference Inc. of Australia and New Zealand (known widely as TheMHS Conference). The TheMHS organising committee members come from a variety of mental health fields. These include consumers, carers/families, nurses, psychiatrists, occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, educators, researchers and administrators. The theme for this year’s Conference is ‘**Building Healthy Communities: Stories of Resilience and Hope**’. TheMHS Conference attracts approximately 1,000 delegates annually. This year it is being held in Brisbane on 27-30 August 2019. Amanda Waegeli will be attending and presenting on behalf of Recovery Rocks Community. The title of the presentation is “Grass roots Recovery Community Development: Lessons Learned and Learning” for more about TheMHS click here [https://www.themhs.org/](https://www.themhs.org/)

Excerpt from Book – Agnes’s Jacket by Gail Hornstein

Hornstein bridges the gulf between medical explanations of psychiatric illness and the lived experiences of those given labels such as schizophrenia, bipolar illness, depression and paranoia. What emerges is a new model of understanding which asks not 'what's wrong with you' but 'what happened to you and how did you manage to survive?'

Excerpt from Chapter 3

When Prof. Marius Romme first began his research, he thought about hallucinations much as other psychiatrists did, as evidence of a disease process, a symptom to be removed. But the more he listened to Patsy Hage and other voice hearers, the more he realised how destructive it was for patients to be told that their voices were alien intrusions whose messages were gibberish. That just made people feel estranged from their own minds. And trying to block out the voices made it impossible for them to notice variations in intensity or intrusiveness in different situations. They weren’t able to identify the triggers that made the voices worse and try to gain control over them. And ignoring the voices prevented people from exploring whether some important symbolic message was being communicated. Romme began to wonder how biological psychiatrists could be so certain that voices were meaningless when they didn’t even ask patients to describe what their voices were saying. …He went back to some of the core things he’d learned from the interviews he and Sandra had been conducting. First, people typically could remember exactly when their voices started. Second, if they’re asked specific circumstances of that first episode, most people identify a traumatic antecedent, often violence or sexual abuse. Medicating people in attempt to rid them of their voices pushed the memory of this abuse away and denied its importance. No wonder patients were so angry with their doctors. Maybe it is time to do what Jacqui Dillon had urged at the Beyond Belief conference – start asking patients what had happened to them instead of focusing on the symptoms that were the consequence of the trauma.
Boundaries

By: Trish Tran

I went to a party last week. I brought the proverbial plate (or two). Everyone had a great time and then came the clean-up at the end. I was so busy being super-helpful with everything that I quickly found all of my leftovers had disappeared without a trace. Now, normally, I wouldn’t say anything about this (feeling too uncomfortable to put others out). This time however, was different. I really wanted to take my goodies back home with me. I asked where everything had gone and one of the party goers pulled my boxed leftovers out of her shopping bag. I was a bit embarrassed asking for it back and began offering some of what was in the box, back to her so she would not be empty handed. She kindly declined and I went home feeling great that I had managed to wrangle my food back without any difficulty. It was only when I got home, that I realised she had only relinquished back to me half of what was left over! I was flabbergasted that someone could do that when it was clearly asked for and was not theirs in the first place.

This got me thinking about respect and boundaries. It appears that they take on very different forms for each of us. There are some people, like me, who feel very uncomfortable asking for what they need and saying no to people. I know that I only do this when there is absolutely no other choice (and even then, I am justifying why I have to do it). I am also the type of person who considers what the other person might want or need and never stepping over this. (Respecting their implied boundaries).

What I have found though, is not everyone feels and thinks this way. Like the lady at the party, who saw that it was my responsibility to set and enforce boundaries and if I was unable to do so... she (and others) would assume that no boundary exist. This is a green light for her to proceed to do whatever she wants.

They see our silence as implied consent.

When a boundary is enforced, some people might roll their eyes because they feel it is piffling or selfish but they do accept it and will move on. Such conversations are forgotten as soon as the interaction is completed. Unlike people like me, who then proceed to put a lot of time and energy into deconstructing and re-playing it over and over again... they just get on with their business. For them it was nothing - just another ‘day on the farm.’ They have not even noticed our discomfort and definitely do not harbour any ill-will towards us for us standing up for ourselves.

The lesson here, is it is not only okay to set boundaries but absolutely necessary for our survival and happiness. If people expect to be told ‘no’ and its absence indicates a clear ‘yes’ or at the very least, that we don’t care either way... It is vital that we lose our unhelpful squeamishness and be honest about what we want and don’t want. I guess the result of our silence (if that is what we choose to do), is ending up only getting half-servings in life!
Upcoming Event
Next Members Social Event

Friday September 13th 5:30pm – 7:30pm

Venue: Dome Café
Midland
21 Cale Street
MIDLAND 6056

RSVP by Thursday September 12th
Email: our.recovery.rocks@gmail.com
Phone/text: 0447 764 1122

Volunteering with
Recovery Rocks Community Inc.

Recovery Rocks Community operates 100% on volunteer power.

Put simply, without volunteers we cant exist.

We are committed to ensuring all our volunteers are valued and appreciated by providing resources, induction, training and support.

To discuss your interest or find out more about volunteering with Recovery Rocks Community, contact us via phone or email.

Thank you to MIFWA for your ongoing support in printing and postal distribution of the newsletter to our community.