Recovery: Rights, Responsibilities & Roadblocks
Jim Gottstein
Law Project for Psychiatric Rights
http://PsychRights.Org

“Consumer” Is A Culture!
2009 New Mexico Consumer Wellness Conference
Albuquerque, New Mexico - September 23, 2009
Mental Health Recovery Stories
Jim Gottstein

In 1992, when I was 19, I got into a situation where I can't sleep for days. I tried to fight it, but it was pointless. When I fell asleep, someone came and took me to the ER. I thought I was dying, but it was just a nightmare. I woke up to find my clothes still on me, and I was back in the hospital.

Law Project for Psychiatric Rights (PsychRights®)

- Mission: Mount a Strategic Litigation Campaign Against Forced Psychiatric Drugging & Electroshock
- Adopted Massive Over-Drugging of Children & Youth as Priority in 2006.

Themes
- Recovery
- Responsibilities
- Roadblocks
  - The Medical Model
  - Force
  - Rights

Recovery: What Does Recovery Mean?

- Courtenay Harding Definition:
  - No current signs and symptoms of any mental illness, no current medications, working, relating well to family and friends, integrated into the community and behaving in such a way as to not being able to detect having ever been hospitalized for any kind of psychiatric problems.[1]

Recovery: Responses to 2003 “National Organization” Query

- An individual's opportunity for social activities and places to go is no different than any other citizen.
- An individual has paid or volunteer work if they wish to.
- An individual has a secure roof over his/her head.
- An individual is no longer bothered by symptoms that monopolize his/her consciousness and days and nights.
- An individual may or may not take medications, do exercises physical or spiritual.

Recovery: National Organization Responses Continued

- What is recovered is a sense of self that is not defined by illness, but by abilities and interests and hope for the future.
- I appreciate the literal meaning of recovery; to recover is to “take back.” Thus “recovery” is the process of taking back. As I recover - I take back my life.
- For me "recovery" has been a very painful and unfinished, day to day struggle. It takes medicine, ongoing therapy, friends, meaningful work, withdrawing for periods of time, keeping-on-keeping-on.
**Recovery: JG Definition**

Getting past a diagnosis of mental illness to a point where a person enjoys meaningful activity, has relationships, and where psychiatric symptoms, if any, do not dominate or even play a major role in their life.


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**Responsibilities: Two Aspects**

- Responsibilities for Problems
  - Responsibility does not equal blame
  - Responsibilities for Recovery

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**Responsibilities: Psychiatric Symptoms As Responses to Events/Experiences**

- **Examples:**
  - Multiple Personalities
  - Other Responses to Trauma
  - Mental Map Reorganization
  - Hearing Voices
  - Common Phenomenon
  - Mania
  - Icarus Project

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**Responsibilities: Essentials for Recovery**

- You have to take responsibility for your own mental health and behavior
- You have to learn to recognize your symptoms.
- You have to learn what works for you.

(Same ideas as WRAP – Wellness Recovery Action Plan)

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**Roadblocks: Force & Coercion**

- Precludes Therapeutic Alliance
- Path of Least Resistance
- Precludes “Consumer” Taking Responsibility for Recovery.
- Prevents Use of Approaches desired by “consumer.”

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**Roadblocks: The Medical Model**

- No Real Evidence for Medical Model
- No Evidence of Defective Brains, Chemical Imbalances.
  - Query: Does a headache demonstrate an aspirin deficiency?
- 2003 Hunger Strike Challenged American Psychiatric Ass’n to provide reliable scientific evidence of Medical Model; APA essentially admitted it could not.
Roadblocks: While Some People find Neuroleptics Helpful...

- Quality of Life Tremendously Diminished
- Otherwise Cause Massive Amount of Harm
- Life Spans Now 25 Years Shorter
- Greatly Reduce Recovery Rates
- 6-fold Increase in Mental Illness Disability Rate
- Hugely and Unnecessarily Expensive
- Huge Unnecessary Human Toll

Roadblocks – The Medical Model: Key Studies

- Mortality and Mortality in People with Serious Mental Illness, National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, (2006)

Why Has Society Accepted Dubious Medical Model?

- Fear Myth:
  - People Diagnosed with Mental Illness Are Violent
- Absolution
  - By Accepting "Medical Model," No one is Responsible

Roadblocks: Don’t Ascribe Bad Motives to Psychiatrists, but at this Point...

- With Recent Revelations No Longer Plausible Deniability
- Why Do They Still Insist on the Drugs Even Though they Are Largely Ineffective and Always Harmful?
- Psychiatrists No Longer Know Anything But the Drugs

What to Do?

Successful Peers Are The Real Experts

- Many examples of recovery from “incurable” mental illness.
  - Value of Insights Need to Be Recognized
  - Unique ability to relate to people because of shared experience.
  - Also some Mental Health Professionals Get It – They Listen to and Learn from (ex)Users.

Many Others
Other Principles

- If it isn't voluntary it isn't treatment
- Force is counterproductive
- Different things work for different people
- Unsuccessful attempts part of recovery process
- Diagnoses of limited benefit/mostly harmful

WARNING

- Quitting Psychiatric Drugs Can Be Very Dangerous/Should be Done Slowly Under the Supervision of a Physician
- Withdrawal Often Causes Psychiatric Symptoms
- Often accompanied by Adverse Physical Effects

Rights: When Involuntary Commitment Constitutionally Permissible

1. Confinement takes place pursuant to proper procedures and evidentiary standards.
2. Finding of "dangerousness either to one's self or to others," and
3. Proof of dangerousness is "coupled ... with the proof of some additional factor, such as a 'mental illness' or 'mental abnormality.' Kansas v. Crane, 534 U.S. 407, 409-10, 122 S.Ct. 867, 869 (2002).

New Mexico Statute §43-1-11E.

- [30 day commitment] if the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that:
  1. (1) as a result of a mental disorder, the client presents a likelihood of serious harm to the client's own self or others;
  2. (2) the client needs and is likely to benefit from the proposed treatment; and
  3. (3) the proposed commitment is consistent with the treatment needs of the client and with the least drastic means principle.

Extended Commitment under §43-1-12

- Right to a trial by a six-person jury, if requested
- [Extended commitment if] fact-finder determines by clear and convincing evidence that the client presents a likelihood of harm to the client's self or to others, that extended treatment is likely to improve the client's condition and that the proposed extended commitment is consistent with the least drastic means principle.


Court Must Conclude:

1. Important governmental interests are at stake,
2. Will significantly further those state interests - substantially unlikely to have side effects that will interfere significantly with achieving state interest,
3. Necessary to further those interests. The court must find that any alternative, less intrusive treatments are unlikely to achieve substantially the same results, and
4. Medically appropriate, i.e., in the patient's best medical interest in light of his medical condition. The specific kinds of drugs at issue may matter here as elsewhere. Different kinds of neuroleptic drugs may produce different side effects and enjoy different levels of success.

Forced “Treatment” NMS §43-1-15

- Treatment Guardian appointed if court finds by clear convincing evidence that the client is not capable of making the client's own treatment decisions. §43-1-15E.
- “capable of understanding the proposed nature of treatment and its consequences and capable of expressing a decision regarding its acceptance or refusal.” Matter of Sanders, 108 NM 434 (NM App. 1989).
- Best interest and least drastic means for accomplishing the treatment objective §43-1-15F.

Forced Drugging Self Defense Package at PsychRights.Org

Suggested Reading

- Alternatives Beyond Psychiatry, Peter Lehman & Peter Stastny, MD, Editors (2007)
- Agnes’s Jacket: A Psychologists’ Search for the Meaning of Madness, Gail Hornstein, PhD (2009)
- A Fight to Be: A Psychologist’s Experience from Both Sides of the Locked Door; Ronald Baseman, Ph.D. (2007)
- The Hidden Prejudice: Mental Disability on Trial, (2000) by Michael L. Perlin
- Brain Disabling Treatments in Psychiatry: Drugs, Electroshock, and the Role of the FDA, Ed. 3 (2003) by Peter Breggin, MD
- Community Mental Health: A Practical Guide (1994) by Loren Mosher and Lorenzo Burti
- Psychotherapy of Schizophrenia: The Treatment of Choice (Jason Aronson, 1996), by Bertram P. Karon and Gary R. Vandenbos

Suggested Reading (cont.)

- Creating Mental Illness, by Allan V. Horwitz (2002).
- Toxic Psychiatry: Why Therapy, Empathy, and Love Must Replace the Drugs, Electroshock, and Biochemical Theories of the New Psychiatry, by Peter Breggin, MD (1994)
- Commonsense Rebellion, by Bruce E. Levine (2001)
- Escape From Psychiatry, by Clover (1999)
- Other books at http://psychrights.org/Market/storefront.htm
A consumerist culture is one defined by the ongoing pursuit of satisfaction, identity, and community through the consumption of goods and services. It is a hurried culture that expects immediacy and has no use for delays, and one that values individualism and temporary communities over deep, meaningful, and lasting connection to others. Bauman's Consumerism. In Consuming Life, Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman explains that a consumerist culture, departing from the previous productivist culture, values transience over the duration, newness and reinvention, and the ability to acquire things immediately. Consumer culture theory (CCT) is the study of consumption choices and behaviors from a social and cultural point of view, as opposed to an economic or psychological one. CCT does not offer a grand unifying theory but "refers to a family of theoretical perspectives that address the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings". Reflective of a post-modernist society, CCT views cultural meanings as being numerous and fragmented and hence views culture as an... Consumer culture is a theory in marketing strategic planning that considers the relationship consumers have with certain products or services. One of the most iconic examples of consumer culture is Apple's rise to the top technology, because it created a product that fit the needs of consumers in a way that buyers became part of a technology movement. As a business owner, identifying your target market is essential and involves more than just basic demographics; consumer culture helps target groups of people who share the same desire and the same need for a product or service. Apple's Product Design. Apple strives to make using technology easier. Consumer culture is a system in which consumption, a set of behaviors found in all times and places, is dominated by the consumption of commercial products. It is also a system in which the transmission of existing cultural values, norms and customary ways of doing things from generation to generation is largely understood to be carried out through the exercise of free personal choice in the private sphere of everyday life. Large local consumer markets is a big part of the story of global consumer culture in the 21st century. Another important part of the story is the persistence of large, numbers of consumers at the base of the economic pyramid, that is, subsistence consumers, who live on at best a few dollars a day and whose needs and aspirations have finally begun to. Consumer culture is closely tied to capitalism, because it is driven by money. What distinguishes it, though, is that it is not focused so much on the power of money as it is on the happiness that can be attained through buying and owning personal property. 1 History. The United States is the most obvious example of a consumer culture, but ancient Egypt and ancient Rome could also be considered consumerist societies. Consumerism is usually identified with wealthy countries. When the Industrial Revolution made mass consumption possible, consumerism came to be seen as an effective political option to sustain a healthy, balanced economy. 2 Viewpoints. A consumer culture can be viewed both positively and negatively.