



Our Journey

Meaningful, relevant information for our community, published quarterly.

Volume 7 • Issue 2

Northern Lakes
Community
Mental Health
Authority

northernlakescmh.org

Fall 2019



Welcome to *Our Journey*. We hope you will find the articles informative and helpful. Your ideas and submissions are welcome! Please also take time to check out the Northern Lakes CMHA website, the lobby flat screen monitor, and the information tower for more information on topics in this newsletter and more. Join us in the ongoing creation of this newsletter to best serve you!

Recovery Celebration 2019

The 13th Annual Recovery Celebration was held at a new venue this year – at Twin Lakes Camp in Traverse City. The theme was *Celebrate Good Times*, and it truly was a good time, with awards, performance, friendship, games, and sunny weather!

Awards were given to people receiving services from NLCMHA in each office as well as staff members **Shelly Schmidt, Carrie Smith**, and the whole **Cadillac ACT Team**.

The Club Cadillac choir performed and Kandu Island loaned many of its yard games. A highlight was winning tickets to enter drawings for a wonderful assortment of baskets of a wide variety of items, all donated by staff at Northern Lakes. It was truly a special day.



The Cadillac ACT Team was recognized by Sheryl Day with a “You Made A Difference” Award.

Time for the Art of Recovery Show!

We are now collecting art submissions for the 13th Annual Art of Recovery: The Human Journey show. Guidelines and forms are available in the Recovery Tower in each NLCMHA lobby.

The show will be held at the Traverse Area District Library main branch on Woodmere and will be available to see during library hours for six weeks this fall. Artwork that is for sale may be purchased during the Open House reception on November 7, or interested buyers may contact Cindy Petersen to make arrangements, at (231) 935-3099.

Submissions Due
October 4, 2019

Show Dates
**October 14 to
November 25**

**Open House
Reception
Thursday,
November 7
3:30-6:30 PM**



Please contact
Karla Eisner at
231-876-3262 or

karla.eisner@nlcmh.org
to receive

Our Journey electronically.
Submissions may also be
accepted, space permitting.

PhotoVoice Class Coming to Cadillac

Deb Freed and Cindy Petersen are leading a special six-session class in the Cadillac office on Tuesday mornings starting October 8.

The class is open to anyone receiving services for a mental health issue at NLCMHA. PhotoVoice is a creative class where you talk about issues faced by people with mental health challenges, such as stigma, labeling, discrimination, etc. Participants will take photos and create posters to help educate the general public about mental health issues. Everyone will get a copy to keep. There is no charge but space is limited.

**To sign up, call Cindy at
(231) 935-3099.**

7 Things You Didn't Know About Depression by Jayme Haines

One, depression is a shape shifter – one day it's as small as a butterfly in the palm of an elephant, next it's the elephant. Those days are the bad days, the dark days. The days you can't ignore the screams inside your head, so you stay all day in the comfort of your bed, until the screams sound like echoes instead. When the elephant is sitting on your chest and you're gasping for breath, and you can't breathe because you're just so damn sad.

Two, people keep asking why you sleep so much but you don't sleep because you're tired, you sleep because it's an escape from the troubling thoughts circling your non-coherent brain. You try so hard, but you can't break the non-existent chains that hold your thoughts hostage with a ransom note that you cannot read. You keep clawing at the chains until your fingers bleed but no matter how hard you try you continue to lie in bed until your thoughts subside.

Three, depression isn't always crying. It can be slapping a mask on and repeating till your blue in the lips, and the cheeks, and the nose, that you're just fine, because you're terrified to be looked at like you're from the island of isolation if you disclose that inside you're empty. You could go to school for faking it until you make it. You would graduate from the island of isolation with a failing grade in making it but pass with flying colors in faking it. Being on academic probation for not trying hard enough because of lack of motivation.

Four, you ignore the gaping hole of hunger in the pit of your stomach because your legs won't work long enough to walk the 20 steps to the kitchen. You'd rather pull your tooth out without Novocaine than to admit you need to eat, because admitting you're hungry would mean you'd have to get out of bed to make a piece of raw meat look appetizing when, truth is, nothing you'd make is appetizing because your appetite is non-existent. You keep food out of sight, so your gaping hole is in your control and it doesn't grow bigger.

Five, the things that once brought you joy now make you feel annoyed because your motivation disappeared into a wall of crumbling aggravation. You once loved the feeling of getting a new pen and starting a new journal once again, but now you can't even force yourself to write a single word about the blurred lines that are drawn around your world. People tell you that this feeling will pass, like a kidney stone without pain medication or a broken bone that will completely heal years later; but then you'll feel like a traitor of your own country, because things will be rescued with the Jaws of Life and you'll buy that new pen and enjoy things in your life once again.

Six, people call, and you once again cancel plans because unlocking your house doors is a horror movie starring you that you don't want to be in. You fight an internal bloody war with yourself until people stop asking you because they miss who you were before the unknown, stigmatized illness asked for more than you could endure. You tell yourself this time will be different but inside you know that you'll make up some excuse to snooze the guilt you hear in your ears when you ignore the phone call from your best friend, because the horror movie is playing a matinee of you being possessed by the lie that you're busy instead of crying in bed by yourself at three A.M.

Seven, you learn to appreciate the good days because you know the bad days will come crashing down on you with waves of feelings that you rather not face. While you try to save yourself from ever feeling that bad again. You realize how strong you really are because a weak person would never make it through this. The weak people are the ones who call the person with depression a freak because they don't understand how it feels to not fit in your skin. While it feels like a thousand ants breaking in the door, they are not welcomed in.

You wake up at the crack of dawn because your internal alarm clock is playing your favorite song. You brush your hair and teeth for the first time in 5 days and stare at the reflection of a strange person you do not know. No matter how hard it is, you break into a smile and tell yourself you will not allow this disease to ruin the lifestyle you envisioned for yourself. You will get up every day and continue to fight the hardest fight you will ever encounter, because you know someday things will eventually get better. You will start to pray and talk to a god you once had no faith in, because you'd rather break every one of your own fingers than to give up and let this disease win! One day you'll look in the mirror and say, "I finally made it!"