

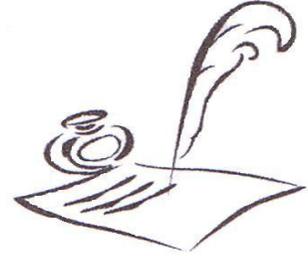
THE SENSITIVE SCOOP

Consumer Newsletter

For *any* Woman living with Mental Illness

Editor: Jo-Ann Paley

Issue 57, May June 2009



The Sensitive Scoop is now available on the MSS website at www.mss.mb.ca



Thank You

To the supporters of the Footsteps IV Fundraiser who made donations and helped to make the fundraiser a success. We appreciate all the help from the women of the MSS Women's Group, for all their hard work and to the donors for their continued support.

Sheila Levine
Marlene Vieno
Jo-Ann Paley
Janice Brown
Ann Paley
Alice Kaplan
Ann Robert

Shelly Szmadya
Kaplen's Earth and Cartage Ltd.
Mom's Perogy Factory
The Second Cup on Edmonton St., Winnipeg
Canadian Mental Health Association, MB Div.
Hein Tran

The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba, Micah House and Morningside Productions cordially invite you to attend the launch of:

The Way We See It
a centrepiece for Mental Health Week
at 7:00 pm, **Wednesday, May 6, 2009**
St. Mary's Academy, 550 Wellington Crescent,
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Free admission. Wheelchair accessible. Onsite parking. Entrance on Stafford Street. Located on bus routes. We look forward to celebrating the release of this Winnipeg **documentary**, in support of individuals who live with mental illness, and their families. For more information, you can contact (204) 233-3480.

It Doesn't Take Much

The actual working together, to bring about the Potluck Fundraiser, just didn't miraculously happen. The women were prepared with pre-event coaching by Karen (the Women's Coordinator) and myself (Jo-Ann Paley). Everybody who participated developed in some way toward their own personal recovery. As an exercise in the Writers' Group, the following Thursday, the women were asked to express these recovery experiences, and for those who missed the Fundraiser experience, an expression of their feelings in general with regard to the Women's Group and the "Footsteps" Book was forthcoming.

Our Group every Thursday, is a special sharing place to grow, for our friends who attend. Here are some of their comments on how much we helped each other in improving each other's recovery, because of and through the process of organizing the Potluck Fundraiser. As a bonus also, the general comments about the Women's Group and the "Footsteps" Book were appreciated here too. Have a look-see and enjoy!!!!

- Jo-Ann

As you know, this fundraiser was held to raise money for the 4th Edition - the 2009 "Footsteps" Book of poems and stories etc. A lot of thanks go out to Karen for her pre-fundraiser and post-fundraiser work as well! Much appreciated by all, Karen.

This, written by an anonymous donor, was the epitome of everyone's feelings, I'm sure.

"It was amazing. You would not believe it! So many parts came together as a whole, to support the works of this group of artists and writers. You would not believe it! The work of so many with love in their hearts, went to support the talents of friends and members. You wouldn't believe how it all came together – busy organizing and busy running it. All in support to publish words of the heart and imagination and artistic outlooks!"

"Footsteps" – by Audrey Ruth Wiebe

I wrote in Footsteps about my journey to recovery.
It's a personal discovery.
I learned a lot.
I had something to talk about.

Through the Ladies' Group I've grown,
Sharing my troubles and joys I have known.

Writer's Group is always fun,
Especially when we see the sun.

Walks by the river were nice.
Now there is so much ice.
Spring will soon come.
Sun will shine some.

"Footsteps" Thoughts - by Ruth McLean

2009 is the 4th time we've done the "Footsteps" Books. It was started in 2006 as an offshoot of the "Expressions" books of Brandon.

We started going to Brandon in 2001, and have been submitting poems to "Expressions" since 2002, and to "Footsteps" since 2006.

In order to publish the books, we usually have a "Footsteps" Fundraising Dinner in February or March. Brandon has been having a similar fundraising function as well, and is attended by people from all over southern Manitoba who have contributed to "Expressions."

Here are a few thoughts about the Women's Program...- all anonymous

I enjoy the Women's Program, especially in summer, when all the usual programs stop for the holidays.
I enjoy writing for "Footsteps" as that is the only place where I can get my "verse" published.
I enjoy the positive feedback I get for my writings from the Women's Program "Writer's Group."

IT TAKES JUST A MOMENT

by Jane Burpee

Public Education Coordinator with the Manitoba Schizophrenia Society

When this thing called First Episode hits a family full force from left field, why can't Mum find out more about her son's illness and what is happening to him? How can Dad become more informed if the people in control don't talk to him? How can the 6yr old child understand why Mum cries so often if there's no one to talk to?

What's with this secrecy that shrouds mental illness, making it more hidden; more unknown and more frightening?

What a contrast when we see the person experiencing the equally devastating illness of breast cancer, for instance. Here, at the first point of diagnosis, the family, best friends and children are welcomed at every appointment if they wish. Telephone calls ARE answered. Literature is freely given and questions freely answered. It is encouraged that there is always a supportive person at all therapy appointments. Why doesn't this happen with the mental health system?

Two systems - probably under the same roof - but so many worlds apart.

Just think of how fearful, scared, tired and confused a person might be, who is experiencing mental illness, and how brave of them to walk in alone into the psychiatrist's office.

Just think how fearful, scared, tired and frustrated a family must be when they are shut out of their son's or spouse's life, even though they have important information to share that would assist the whole medical team.

Yes, of course there is confidentiality, PHIA (Personal Health Information act) and, most importantly, the choice of the ill family member to share information, but families need and deserve support too. There should be no blame in the mental illness world, because no-one is immune.

Parents' stories include a "feeling of being overwhelmed and drowning at sea, while their child is left on an island".

It doesn't take much to ask a little question such as "How are YOU doing? Is there anything I can do to help you through this difficult time?"

To know someone cares gives a sense of hope and helps the loneliness.

To have assistance steering through the mental health system can make things clearer.

To be heard can help the family feel an important part of the recovery journey.

It is so simple, costs nothing and takes only a moment of time to help families know there is a light shining beyond the dark cloud of the unknown.

Women's Program Schedule

May June 2009

Meetings are held on Thursday afternoon from 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM at 4 Fort Street (FACES) although sometimes we go on an outing. Any women living with a mental illness are welcome to attend. Occasionally we are out of the office for an activity so please call to confirm your attendance at 786-1616.

May

- May 7th** **Writer's Group** - Participants are invited to bring poetry or short stories they have written to receive positive feedback from other group members.
- May 14th** **Movie Day** here at FACES
- May 21st** **Sharing and planning** for the summer. Let us know what you'd like to do for the summer.
- May 28th** **Physical Activity to be confirmed**



June

- June 4th** **Walking** outside in the Bonnie Castle Park or inside in the Mall of Fort Garry Place building.

*****NOTE***** **Writer's Group** switched to second week in June for this month only.

- June 11th** **Writer's Group**
- June 18th** **Self-esteem**
- June 25th** **Pot Luck Lunch** – 12:30 PM in lunchroom at FACES. Please call 786-1616 to register.



Funded by:

A REASON TO HOPE. THE MEANS TO COPE.
MANITOBA SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY
SOCIÉTÉ MANITOBAINE DE LA SCHIZOPHÉNIE
UNE SOURCE D'ESPOIR, DE SOUTIEN ET D'ENTRAIDE

Opportunity Fair

Are you an adult with former street involvement, looking for a job or training opportunity where your street-smarts and personal life experiences can help others? We are looking for adults with personal experience in the sex/drug trade, gangs, child welfare, and justice system. Meet community agencies who offer training programs and employment to people with your experience and skills, update your resume on-site and meet people like you who are working or in training. **Tuesday, May 5th, 2 pm to 6 pm at Red River College, 160 Princess St., Winnipeg, MB**
For more information call Susan at 582-1978.

Manitoba Schizophrenia Society Volunteer, Consumer and Family BBQ

The Manitoba Schizophrenia Society Volunteer, Consumer and Family BBQ will be held on Wednesday, June 17th at 5:00 p.m. at Bonny Castle Park, across the street from FACES. Rain date: Tuesday, June 23rd. To register please call 786-1616 by Thursday, June 11th. Please bring your own lawn chairs.

Moving Forward Together: Facilitating Empowerment in Mental Health

June 5, 2009, Winnipeg, Manitoba

at

Victoria Inn and Convention Centre

1808 Wellington Avenue, Winnipeg, MB

Please contact Rachel by email at conference@cmhamanitoba.ca

Or pick up a registration form at FACES, 4 Fort Street, Winnipeg, MB

Registration will close May 31st

Mental Health Consumer subsidies available. For information call 982-6100.

REMINDER

We welcome submissions for *Footsteps IV*. Deadline for submissions is August 31, 2009. Please call Karen at 786-1616 for a form or check on line for our March April Issue at www.mss.mb.ca Follow the link to newsletters and *The Sensitive Scoop*. The form is also available there.