



Wisconsin Peer Specialists

Igniting Recovery



Solstice House-A Peer Run Respite...

Special Points of Interest for WI-CPS

- ◆ Updates & News
- ◆ Peer Run Respite
- ◆ Kindness
- ◆ Resources

Solstice House is a Peer Run Respite located in Madison. We are a resource for individuals who are in need of extra support related to mental health and/or substance use challenges. Guests are people who are looking to strengthen their recovery and proactively address any challenges they may currently be experiencing. A short-term stay in a home-like environment offers connections to experience difficult times as an opportunity for growth and change.

A stay at Solstice House begins with a potential guest speaking directly with staff about what they are experiencing, their hopes and needs, and how they feel peer run respite would be beneficial to their recovery. Guests can access Solstice House through self-referral only, meaning that only the individual experiencing a challenge can determine if Solstice House sounds like a good option for them. Stays are completely voluntary. Guests can stay up to 5 nights at Solstice House

Solstice House is open and free to all adult residents of Wisconsin who want peer support to aid in their recovery related to mental health and/or substance use. All guests will be asked to participate in a guest conversation to determine if Solstice House is an appropriate resource for where they are currently at in their recovery journey.

All of our staff (including those in leadership roles) identify as peers, or people who have lived experience of mental health and/or substance use systems, and have been successful in their own recovery. Peers who work at Solstice House want to share their personal experience to support others and provide hope for wellness. Our staff does not offer any clinical support or services, such as medication management or therapy, but we will be supportive of individuals who may want to connect with these supports in the community.

We also have a Warmline which is a 24/7 non crisis hotline. However, staff may not be able to answer the phone if we are with a house guest so if you would like a call back please leave a voice mail and staff will return your call within 24 hours.

If you or someone you know is in need of a respite stay or need to talk to our Warmline, please call 608-244-5077.

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Working as a Peer Specialist...Bob Schrader

I have been working as a Peer Support Specialist for 6 years now, 4 of those years were as a volunteer. Working at a Mental Health Recovery Center in Eau Claire affords me many opportunities to be of service to people. It is, as they say, "Where the rubber meets the road." The personal rewards I receive when I am able to help someone cannot be matched by any amount of money or compensation.

I facilitate 3 different peer-run support groups. I don't use my personal story as much as I use my personal experience to generate discussion questions for the group participants. We all share common experiences of external and internal struggles of stigma; grieve the loss of our "perfect" self, acceptance of who we are; and, reassessments of what strengths we have and how we can utilize our strengths in living our lives each day. For me, this is what recovery is all about.

As with many, my life with mental illness has been a struggle. However, I focus on something much bigger than the struggles. I shift my perspective to find the sense of adventure in what I do. That is what motivates me forward. I doesn't work all the time, but when I am struggling, I have strong friends who support me.

I now supervise 3 peer support specialists, and educate others on how to provide informal peer support to others. I speak with parents to help them understand what its like to live with chronic depression and anxiety. I give them hope that, like me a person can learn to manage their condition and become free of the mental illness victim role I see so many people living.

The most important rule I follow, and what has contributed to my success is the old saying: "People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care."

Dane County Certified Peer Specialist Network...

It's happening! We have a Dane County Peer Specialist Network. You're invited whether you are working as a Peer Specialist, or only starting to ask what a Peer Specialist is and thinking it might interest you. This might be a place to learn more. We welcome all.

We meet monthly, the third Thursday of the month, from 4:30-6:30. We currently meet at Access to Independence at 3810 Milwaukee St. There's plenty of parking, and we're near the Madison Metro east transfer point.

Often we find ourselves sharing fascinating conversation, and it's a great back-and-forth that includes everyone. Topics range from the career ladder for peer specialists to best practices in peer support. We have also offered presentations on topics such as Person-Centered Planning, Parent Peer Specialists, and Ethics and Boundaries, some of which offer

Dane County Certified Peer Specialist Network...continued

Continuing Education hours required for Peer Specialists to maintain certification. Our groups usually include 5 to 14 individuals, so you can feel comfortable speaking up or dropping in as a new member to listen and learn. There is no cost, just your interest and enthusiasm! If you're interested in learning more or have questions, please email Karen at karen.milstein@gmail.com. We would be happy to be in touch with you! We look forward to having you join our group, or if you are in other parts of Wisconsin, we can talk with you about starting a group in your area.

Solstice House continued from page 1...

The main goals of Solstice House are:

- Giving individuals choice and empowerment over their recovery journey
- Providing a safe, stable and supportive environment
- Providing resources and linkages to the community
- Improving quality of life for peers utilizing Solstice House

Recommended Readings...



The Power of Kindness is a stirring examination of a simple but profound concept. Piero Ferrucci, one of the world's most respected transpersonal psychologists, explores the many surprising facets of kindness and argues that it is this trait that will not only lead to our own individual happiness and the happiness of those around us, but will guide us in a world that has become cold, anxious, difficult, and frightening. Piero Ferrucci warns against the dangers of "global cooling." As the pace of living grows faster and the impact of new technologies more insistent, communications become hurried and impersonal. The drive for profit overrides the heart. Warmth and genuine presence fade.

In eighteen interlocking chapters, Dr. Ferrucci reveals that the kindest people are the most likely to thrive, to enable others to thrive, and to slowly but steadily turn our world away from violence, self-centeredness, and narcissism- and toward love. Writing with a rare combination of sensitivity and intellectual depth, Dr. Ferrucci shows that, ultimately, kindness is not a luxury in our world but rather a necessity for us all.

ISBN-13: 978-1585425884 Publisher: Tarcher Perigee

Review provided by Amazon.com



Autumn Quotes...

Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower.

Albert Camus

There is a harmony in autumn, and a luster in its sky, which through the summer is not heard or seen, as if it could not be, as if it had not been!

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Autumn is here. Time for the dance of the rakes.



Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Employment Initiative

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www.wicps.org

The newsletter is also available in other formats. If you would like to submit an article for consideration or recommended reading we would be happy to review it for possible publication in the newsletter.

Announcements...

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has released a workbook based on the Eight Dimensions of Wellness. It is titled Creating a Healthier Life, A Step-by-Step Guide to Wellness.

SAMHSA envisions a future in which people with mental or substance use problems pursue health, happiness, recovery, and a full and satisfying life in the community.

Every aspect of wellness can affect a person's life. Working toward all of them in one way or another is a great goal, because wellness relates directly to the quality of a person's life.

Please feel free to share this guide. It has important information about creating balance in your life .

You can download the digital version of the guide at the link below:

<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Creating-a-Healthier-Life-/SMA16-4958>

2016 Peer Specialist Certification Exams

Exams for 2016 have been completed.

The new training curriculum and new exams will begin again in 2017. Please check the www.wicps.org website for updates on training and exam dates. Or you can be placed on the training updates e-list by contacting

alicep@accesstoind.org

Thank you to the ILC's and UW-Milwaukee for their partnership in making the exam process a success!

Resources ...**Wisconsin Bureau of Prevention, Treatment and Recovery**

Phone: 608-266-2717

Web: http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/mh_bcmh/index.htm

Grassroots Empowerment Project

Phone: (800)770-0588

Web: www.grassrootspower.org

NAMI Wisconsin

Phone: 608 268-6000 or (800) 236-2988

Web: www.namiwisconsin.org

Wisconsin United for Mental Health

Web: www.wimentalhealth.org

Phone: 866-948-6483

Mental Health America-Wisconsin

Web: www.mhawisconsin.org Phone: (414) 276-3122 or (866) 948-6483