



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER

WINTER/SPRING 2017 ISSUE

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WELCOME TO THE SECOND ISSUE OF RECOVERY RISING!

Welcome to the second issue of Recovery Rising! We are proud to bring you the second edition of Recovery Rising and share with you many of the wonderful things that are going on around our amazing division. Expanding upon our previous issue, this one features many of our program participants engaging in a variety of activities. Be sure to check out the inspiring story about the Rising Warriors group and some of the great things they are doing in the Bethpage building and around the local community. We also learned about an amazing entrepreneur who's been working hard to

start her own business. These are just a few of the great articles, pictures, at work and poems that have been featured in this edition of Recovery Rising! We continue to encourage all of you to share your accomplishments with us so you can be featured in Recovery Rising. If you have a talent, accomplishment, short story, poem or even a suggestion you want to share please speak with your program supervisor or a peer specialist assigned to your program. We love hearing about all of the wonderful things that are going on in each program and want to be sure that we feature you. But if you

don't tell us we won't know about it! So please, if you want to be mentioned alert your program management or a peer specialist in your program! Lastly, thank you to those of you who submitted your beautiful artwork, poems, short stories and accomplishments. As we look to expand, we hope to have an even greater amount of submissions to share in the future. We hope to have our very next issue out by July/August 2017. Email your submissions to:

RecoveryRising1@gmail.com



Happy Spring, the season of renewal!
Happy Spring, the season of renewal!



Northern Lights illuminate the night sky and enchant all who gaze upon them.



Always keep dreaming and hoping... never ever give up right before the miracle may happen.



Butterfly flowers bring joy to a springtime garden.

SOCCER MAKES ME FEEL GOOD by Michael Jay Abrams

I like soccer because I feel good when I'm kicking the soccer ball. It helps my stress about getting an office assistant/receptionist part-time job. I played indoor soccer when I was much younger than 50. I use to play with an indoor team at Shepmessing indoor soccer field in Syosset. I came in first place when I played there on the team called the Panthers. I taught soccer at Ken - Mont in Kent Connecti-

cut. I taught the 7-14 year olds to play soccer defense position, mid-fielder position, and forward position. They also learned how to kick the soccer ball, pass the soccer ball and kick the soccer ball in the net on outside field. I was a good soccer team player and got along with my soccer team manager. I play soccer with my friend John Goldfarb at the gym at Terry's Place PROS. I enjoy playing

soccer at the Terry's Place PROS gym and for many years I've been doing it. I play soccer with Adam LeWinter on Tuesday and Wednesday during Action Planning in the gym. Soccer helps me keep my type 1 insulin Diabetes depended blood sugar stabled and from having complications of heart disease and Kidney failure as well. Soccer helps me feel in a good mood.

PROS NEW YEAR'S TOAST

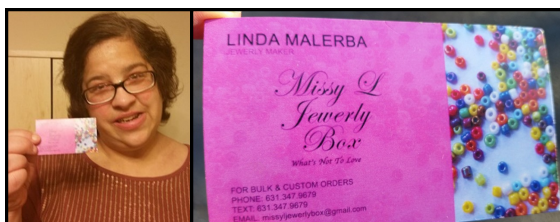
Participants at PROS and staff rang in the New Year with the traditional 12pm Ginger Ale toast. PROS participants and staff gathered in the multipurpose room and shared their New Year's resolution. Many members shared resolutions of getting healthier by quitting smoking or changing eating habits while others set their sights on going back to school or saving more money. 2017 is looking like it is going to be a great year!



STARTING MY OWN BUSINESS by Linda Malerba, Independent Living Services

I've always wanted to start my own jewelry business and now I am. I make necklaces, bracelets, earrings and key chains. I'm starting to build up an inventory. In the future I want to learn more advanced jewelry making and take my designs to the next level. I'm learning the different aspects of being a business person.

Just recently, with the help of my staff Ryan W. I designed my own business cards on a computer and purchased a whole box of them. This is me holding my very first business card. I'm so excited to start this new adventure.

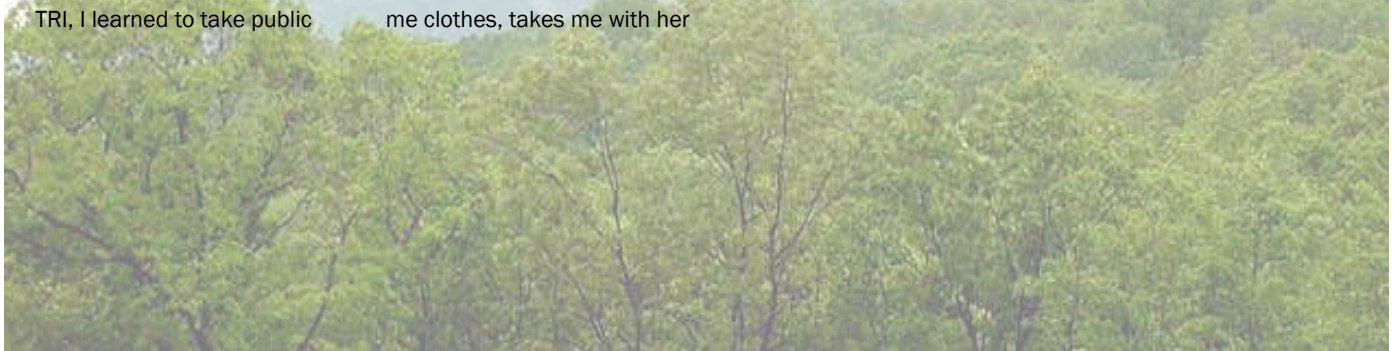


OVERCOMING MY DEPRESSION, by Gail Lisi

I used to be in the hospital a lot for depression. I was heavily medicated for a long time when I lived at my father's house. I wanted to get well so I could function better. After my last hospitalization the hospital staff and my family decided my father was getting too old to take care of me. I started living in Family care when I got out of the hospital. When I back to TRI, I learned to take public

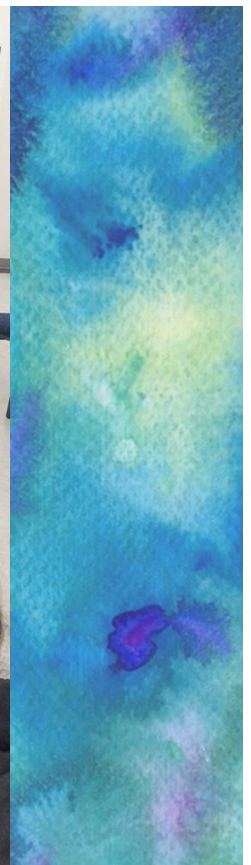
transportation to and from program which helped me make become more independent. It felt good to be able to do more on my own. When that provider moved to Florida, I moved into another Family Care home in Roosevelt and, I have been there 21years. Now and am on less medication and I am more independent. I am happy there, my provider gets me clothes, takes me with her

to church and I have a nice roommate. She also takes us on vacation with her. I also am happy because I have my own library card, PNA money and Family Dollar near me and I get to go on my own into the community to shop and go to the library. I like being independent and am proud of my accomplishments!



GOOD BYE DAN

On January 24th, PROS members said good-bye to staff member Dan H. Fan. Dan joined the PROS team in 2010 and has been a helpful member of the team ever since. Participants had the opportunity to say good-bye to Dan during an end of the day closing circle. Several members made Dan cards wishing him well. Everyone at PROS wishes Dan the very best in all of his future endeavors!

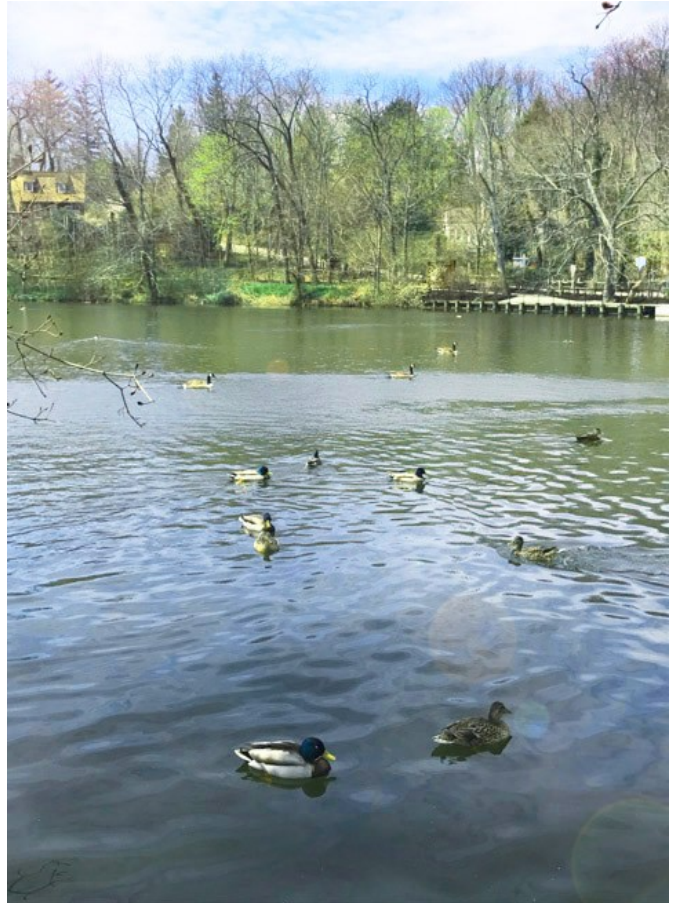


WHAT LIFE MEANS TO ME, by Angel H. from Hospital Diversion

Life is a gift. It's pretty awesome if you ask me. I love life because it's my own story. There's two paths and I choose which one I want to go down. The people that I meet along my way in my journey of life makes it even more interesting. The world it's self is even beautiful. To the beautiful sunrise in the morning to the beautiful sunset in the afternoon. To the beautiful blue skies and the white plush clouds, and the crisp evergreen grass and trees. Life isn't all rainbows and unicorns though, there might be bumpy roads and hardships, but life is what you make it. Remember, life is a gift, cherish those moments no matter how big or small, even the little things. Live every day like it's your last. Leave the past behind, the future might be near but let the present be. past behind, the future might be near but let the present be.



Spring is in the air so breathe deep and relax in this colorful feast for the eyes!

**CHANGE**, by Angel H. from Hospital Diversion

Most people are terrified of change because they don't know what's coming or what the future is going to hold. Change is ugly because, when people think of change they fear the worst, but here's the twist. Change can be good or bad depending on how we take it, but just taking that leap of faith, you can find something incredibly beautiful. You never know, the sun could be shining so bright on the other side.



EMPLOYMENT AWARDS PHOTOS



EMPLOYMENT AWARDS STORY

The Behavioral Health Division celebrated several employment milestones on March 3rd at the first ever Employment awards. After enjoying a lunch, honorees, parents, staff and other family members learned about the importance of gainful employment in recovery. After the presentation, several individuals shared their success stories sharing some of their personal struggles but also identifying what and how they have continued to strive towards success and maintain their job. Members shared incidents of symptoms and past hospitalizations and even

shared that they thought they never would be able to work but have been able to prove so many people wrong. After the presentation, PROS Vocational Counselors, Nancy Levy and Samantha Wolf, presented dozens of awards honoring individuals working under a year and up to 30 years. Those honored received a certificate of achievement noting the years which they have been employed with their respective company. We look forward to next year's Employment Awards with even more awards and success stories!



POEMS, ART & WRITINGS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

One day I was outside a mall. It had been raining, it was dark and gloomy, almost mysterious with hints of sunshine begging to come out. After darting to my car to escape a soaking the sun got its way and beamed with joy, the rain subsided. It was magical!

I stopped to look up at the sky in search of rainbows, for this is when they truly expose their beauty. To my surprise as I looked at the Saks Fifth Avenue sign a double rainbow arched completely over the store name! It was beautiful, like a gift for my eyes and soul, something that could not be bought at any store in this mall!

Overwhelmed with joy I looked around the parking lot to see if anyone else was looking up... everyone seemed more consumed with their shopping adventures. It then struck me, a surge of hope, excitement and joy. I felt special, like I was unique, and could keep this rainbow of hope sacred within my mind.

After some thought I felt badly that so many people didn't get to feast their eyes on this precious gift. As I started my car I thought... maybe most people on Long Island are more consumed with shopping.... for me I'd rather chase rainbows than a pair of designer jeans.

Michele Schouder

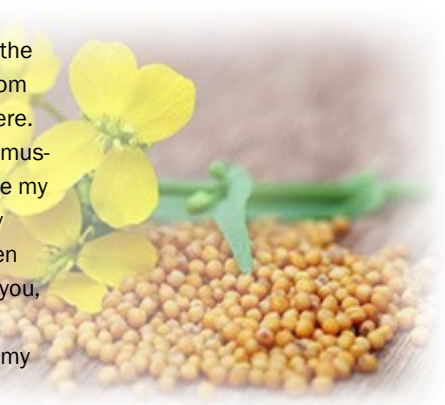


RANDOM THOUGHTS, Anonymous

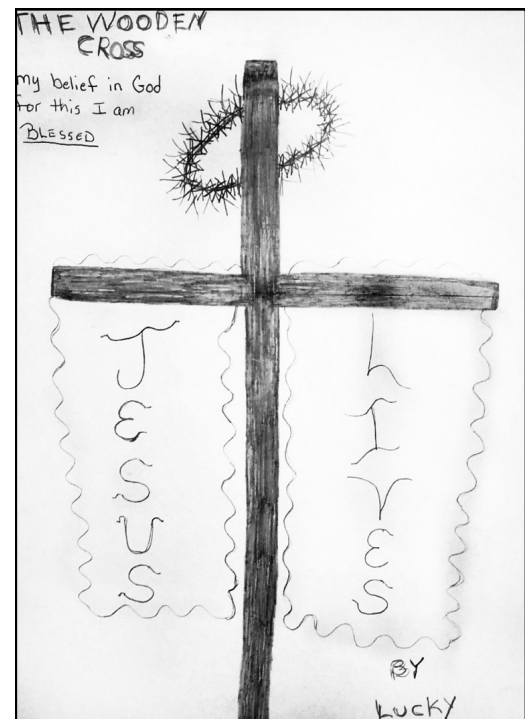
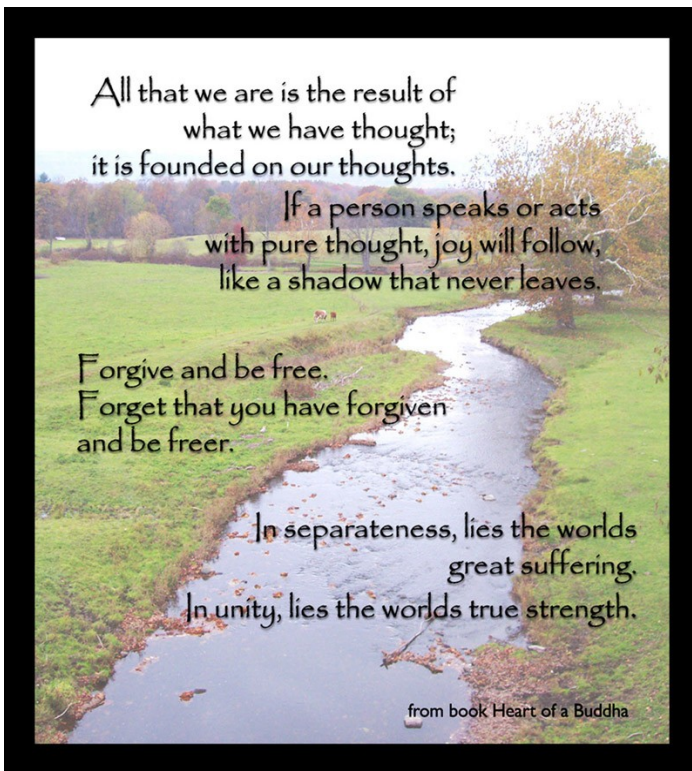
Oh little mustard seed, I don't really know you but do know you taste very good. I hear you are quite delicious on many foods, things like hot dogs and sandwiches although I don't eat meat. I crave you're sour and spicy flavor, it brings life to my taste buds and makes me feel alive, you're my favorite spice, my spice of life I'll call you. I'm only seven years old, or so I think and I'm very hungry. I can't recall all the details but do know I'm just starving and I'm going to walk around my neighborhood and knock on peo-

ples doors and ask for a mustard sandwich. All I want is bread and some yummy mustard. Gosh I just love that stuff! I know once I get some of you inside of me I'll feel fine, like I'm whole again and that pain in my belly will be gone. I don't like feeling sick and light headed, like I have nowhere to turn, no one who cares. But then there's you, that warm mustard seed spread, so tasty and colorful. You bring warmth to my mouth when I ingest you, and when I do nothing else

matters, I'm just consumed with gratification that I have you in a sandwich, you're just so good! How simple it is, to know the feeling of fullness just from food, how sad it is to know the emptiness from love lost from parents that never really were. Then there's you, that little mustard seed that's followed me my whole life, through all of my struggles you've always been there... I'm just grateful for you, however small you are, I'm grateful for you. Thank you my little seed



POEMS & ART FROM VARIOUS SOURCES IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUED



POEMS, ART & WRITINGS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUED:

COMIC CREATED IN PIXTON.COM by Amahd Brown, Supported Housing



**YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL & SPECIAL
IN ALL WAYS THAT MAKE
YOU UNIQUE!**

POEMS, ART & WRITINGS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUED:

PATIENT TO PEER, Volume 1

"Fake It Until You Make It": The A.K. story (as told to M.S.)

This is the first Patient to Peer interview to hit our newsletter. It's also the perfect example of what this ongoing article is supposed to portray. With each new edition, a story will be told about someone's path of recovery and how they got to where they are today. It not only shows their struggle, but expresses a vision of hope. It's a success story of someone who's currently working as a Peer Support Specialist and has been a patient in a hospital in the past. Please see our interview "Fake It Until You Make It" below:

A.K. was never physically abused, but was verbally abused. He always had what he needed and wanted. Growing up, he attended BOCES in Baldwin Harbor Middle and High School for people with anger problems. His parents were divorced and he lived with his mother, his father was not around. A.K. graduated high school and then went to school for cooking and was in the ROTC. When he was 18 years old, his father died. From 16-18 years old he drank, smoked, and experimented with many drugs. At 20, A.K. got married and had a daughter. By 23, he was divorced due to his drinking, and his ex-wife wouldn't let him see his daughter. In 1986, A.K. worked for Glen Cove special police, the sheriff academy and worked at an auto parts store yet always drank and went out with friends. He still never saw his daughter. He lost many jobs and relationships due to his drinking. In 1990 it was time for him to stop drinking and he started going to AA. He then worked for the fire department in Glen Cove and continued to work for the city. In 1993, A.K. was married again and had his 2nd child, another daughter. At this time he was also in and out of the hospital for alcohol poisoning, due to depression and self medicating.

In 1995, A.K. started having panic attacks and the following year, his wife left him because of his mental problems. At this time, he was then hospitalized for the first time for a panic disorder and depression. A.K. got divorced again, lost his house and everything but was still in recovery as he worked on his sobriety. He continued working for the city and fire department, and in 2001 he worked on fast ferries. On 9/11, A.K. was on the fast ferries on Liberty Island when the plane hit the first tower. The Coast Guard commandeered his vessel and headed towards Manhattan, Pier #11. That's when one building went down. He was looking through binoculars

and saw people jumping out of the buildings. Then the 2nd building went down on the way to Pier 11. When he was at Pier 11, his job was to get people in the vessel and make sure they didn't have any explosives and that they weren't terrorists. He worked alongside a police officer. They filled the vessel up and headed back to Glen Cove. They transported over 2,000 people that day. A.K. stated it was very stressful and overwhelming but there's no words to explain the horror of what went on. He also said that they noticed that as time went on the vessel had fewer and fewer people on it so they knew they lost many lives. After 9/11, A.K. volunteered to work at Ground Zero, but started to get very depressed. He also lost his mother from a heart attack shortly before 9/11 and never had the chance to grieve her loss. Everything hit him at once and he started getting severely depressed and his panic disorder started flaring up. Due to this, he was hospitalized again now for 2 weeks. After he got out of the hospital he noticed he didn't want to live anymore. At this time, there weren't any programs for people from 9/11 with PTSD, only regular hospitals. Three years later, A.K. ended up in the hospital for 6 months for depression and his panic disorder. After coming out of the hospital, he took a leave of absence from work in 2003 and went to a program at Mt. Sinai specifically for people affected by 9/11, which helped him to begin to recover from his PTSD. A.K. then became involved in many volunteer activities. He worked with the Coast Guard and Homeland Security for Hurricane Katrina & Rita and assisted with tornadoes. However in 2009, things got tough for A.K., he began to feel very sick and stated that he didn't want to live. He felt like driving his car into a train. He lost his job, his house and was homeless yet was still working on his recovery and staying sober. At this time, A.K. decided to focus even more on his recovery and started attending Terry's Place PROS at FREE. With the help of Amy G., Joyce L. and the rest of the staff at PROS he got better. In this program, A.K. said he learned how to be patient and to love himself again. A.K. was then able to get housing in FREE's Supported Housing program and was able to maintain stable housing again. A.K. states that it wasn't perfect, but he was just grateful to have a place to call home. A.K. states that he owes a lot to the staff

PATIENT TO PEER Continued:

at PROS and Supported Housing, as they never gave up on him. After 7 years at PROS, things did get better. His cousins helped him get a vehicle and he began volunteering at Pilgrim State as a Peer Specialist. He also started a relationship with his daughters. In 2015, A.K. was hired by FREE to work as a peer specialist for the Mobile Crisis team in Suffolk County. He says he had a great boss and team there. He then got his dog Major, and got permission to have her as a therapy pet. Because of his progress, A.K. was able to stop attending PROS and began working full time as a Peer Support Specialist. He now works closely with other individuals who are going through their own recovery.

A.K. says he's just so grateful to have a home, to be able to work full time as a Peer, and that no one discriminated against him because of his disability. He's always had a belief in God and is appreciative to all the staff at FREE. A.K. says to anyone out there that's struggling to have faith, to show up to your program and take your meds. He also wants to say thank you to all the staff at PROS for where he is today... thank you!



A.K. in Texas, Homeland Security.

RIISING WARRIORS PERFORMANCE AT TERRY'S PLACE

The Rising Warriors singing group performed at Terry's Place during the annual holiday party. Their performance was a great success and the group continues to work to perfect their craft both at program and out in the community. Led by Nicole Merino, PROS Group Leader the Rising Warriors

work to build confidence in themselves through music while instilling hope in themselves and others which lead them to become the "Rising Warriors". In 2016, the Rising Warriors completed 6 performances and they are once again off to a strong start in 2017 with an upcoming performance

on February 21st at the Turn the Cork Screw bookstore in Rockville Centre. In gearing up for their performance at the bookstore, the Rising Warriors are selling candy grams in Bethpage! Pictured below are some of the Rising Warriors following their December 21st performance.



WORDS OF INSPIRATION PAGE...

*"Great things are done
by a series of small
things that are brought
together."
Vincent Van Gogh*

*"Put yourself at the top
of your to do list every
single day and the rest
will fall into place."*

*"Fall seven times, stand
up eight."*

*"The most powerful words you can
say to someone with an invisible
illness is... I BELIEVE YOU."*

"YOU ARE A WARRIOR"

*"Let us fill our hearts with our own
compassion—towards ourselves and
towards all living beings."
Thich Nhat Hanh*

*"Every breath we take, every step
we make, can be filled with peace,
joy and serenity."
Thich Nhat Hanh*

"Healing is not linear"

*"True healing will al-
ways begin with your
thoughts. Master your
thoughts and you will
master your life."
April Peerless*

*"You're allowed to
scream, you're al-
lowed to cry, but do
not give up."*

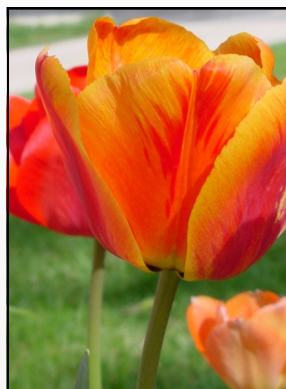
*"You come to love not by finding the
perfect person, but by seeing an im-
perfect person perfectly."
Sam Keen*



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WINTER/SPRING 2017 ISSUE

Family Residences and
Essential Enterprises
191 Sweet Hollow Road
Old Bethpage, NY 11804
CONTACT US AT:
Phone: 516.870.1600
RecoveryRising1@gmail.com



We'd like to wish you a happy Spring!
Enjoy this season of growth, color and
embrace each new fresh day with hope.



EMERGENCY NUMBERS:

National Suicide Prevention
Line - 1-800-273-8255

SAMHSA (Substance Abuse &
Mental Health Service Admini-
stration) National Help Line -
1-800-662-4357

Disaster Distress Helpline
1-800-985-5990

NAMI (National Alliance
Mental Illness)
1-800-950-6264

Police - 911

GET INVOLVED!

PLEASE CONTACT US WITH YOUR IDEAS!

We look forward to hearing from you and seeing your submissions, your advice, poems and anything you want to share with us. Here's how you can submit to the next newsletter..



- Contact a Peer Specialist or any staff in your program, share what you want to submit.
- Please remember we hope to print everyone's article but be mindful that if it doesn't make it in the current edition we may have a place for it in the following newsletter.
- If you want to submit to the newsletter but you're not sure where to start maybe tell us a recent success, take a picture of an interesting place, go out in your community and tell us about it, share about a recent movie you saw, tell us what you did for the weekend, etc.
- You can also reach us at the email address on the top left corner of this page.



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