

Summer/Fall 2009
Volume 1, Issue 3

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TRIVIAL MATTERS

A Recovery Intl. Quarterly Newsletter for the Utah/Wyoming Area

Written by:

Kerri LeRoy — Asst. Area Leader

Content edited by:

Karen Allgood — Area Leader

Welcome to the summer/fall edition of our area's quarterly newsletter. We hope this finds you in the midst of a good "average" summer after our exceptionally rainy spring. (Just Mother Nature's way of showing us how to endorse like a "flow of never-ending water.")

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and find it informative. As always, if you would like to include articles, testimonials, or offer a Recovery example of your own, just let us know. We'll be happy to feature your input in upcoming editions. Please mail your examples etc. to Area Leader Karen Allgood at: 3258 West Bradford Park Drive, West Valley City, Utah 84119, or email to: karen4recovery@yahoo.com.◇

Quarterly Quotes

Can you spot the Recovery principles in the following quote?

"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain."

--Maya Angelou



What Recovery International Meetings Offer

Recovery International meetings provide:

- ***Reassurance and fellowship** through meeting friendly people with similar problems who have found a way to live happier, healthier lives.
- ***Understanding** of your situation.
- ***A safe place** to express your feelings without being judged.
- ***Hope** from others who have bettered their lives.
- ***Support and acceptance** that may be lacking at home, work, or school.
- ***Self-help** through learning and practicing a simple set of living skills which encourage and improve personal growth.
- *And finally, **encouragement** to keep trying.

(Taken from the Abraham Low Self-Help Systems website)

2009 Annual Meeting Symposium Videos

Did you miss Recovery's 2009 Annual Conference in Chicago this year? Thanks to technology, you may now catch up on part of what you missed right from your computer at home.

Videos from the panel symposium "Rediscover Recovery" can be found on Recovery's website at: www.lowselfhelpsystems.org.

Conference attendees agree that the symposium talks were phenomenal. Among the "must-see" panel speeches, you'll find a video of Dr. Carl Bell, from the Community Mental Health Council, in a presentation titled: *A Mark of Genius — Recovery International and Its Role in the Community*. Next, Military Veteran Moe Armstrong discussed the need for Recovery's self-help groups among our nation's veterans in a presentation called, *Working Together—Recovery International as a Recognized Partner in Mental Health*. The videos also feature a panel of Q&A's on reaching out to the professional community.

Learn more about the latest news by taking a moment to check out these informative, highly motivating presentations. ♦

Spot of the Quarter

Excessive Responsibility:

We don't need to be in control of (or responsible for) all things. When we resist the impulse to step in and take over, it takes the pressure off ourselves and allows others to come to their own rescue.

Area News and Commentary

- **Evanston Wyoming Panel Demonstration** — Kudos to



Group Leader Kathy Barton! She did an

awesome job putting together a well attended panel demo of the Recovery method at the Evanston, Wyoming library earlier this year. Her panel speakers included Ami Barker from the Evanston Recovery group, Leader Judy Gilmore from Centerville, Utah, as well as Centerville's Laura Smoot and Tammy Goble, joined by

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Weekly Group Meeting Schedule

(Meeting information may change. Please call to verify.)

Northern Utah:

Brigham City
Thursdays 7:00-9:00p.m.
Group Leader: Allen Jensen
Phone: (435) 854-3763
Associated Psycho-Therapists
120 North Main Street

Centerville
Fridays 2:00-4:00p.m.
Group Leader: Judy Gilmore
Phone: (801) 860-3146
Centerville City Library
45 South 400 West

Central Utah:

Kearns
Saturdays 1:00-3:00p.m.
Group Leader: Karen Allgood
Phone: (801) 419-2214
Kearns Library
5350 South 4220 West

Midvale
Mondays 5:00-7:00p.m.
Group Leader: Baerbel Osborne
Phone: (801) 596-2944
Valley Mental Health
7434 South State Street

Orem
Wednesdays 7:00-9:00p.m.
Group Leader: Ron Cottle
Phone: (801) 318-0354
Orem Community Hospital
371 North 400 West

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Southern Utah:

St. George
Tuesdays 11:00-1:00p.m.
Group Leader: Shannon Martindale
Phone: (435) 634-8403
Re/Max First Realty Bldg.
1224 River Rd.

St. George
Thursdays 5:30 – 7:30p.m.
Group Leader: Jay Finlayson
Phone: (801) 455-4993
Re/Max First Realty Bldg.
1224 River Rd.

Wyoming:


Evanston
Mondays 4:00-6:00p.m.
Group Leader: Kathy Barton
Phone: (307) 679-7589
Uintah County Building
350 City View Drive

*Web: www.lowselfhelpsystems.org
 Utah/Wyo. Area Ph: (801) 966-5991*

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Asst. Area Leader Kerri LeRoy. The panel demo was held in conjunction with high school student Lexi Eddington's class project on self-help mental health. Big thanks go to hosts Kathy Barton and Lexi Eddington as well as the panel demonstrators for helping promote Recovery in Wyoming! *Note to Group Leaders:* Public relations work is always welcome and needed. Please remember to contact the Area Leader for approval before engaging in promotional activities (other than putting out fliers.)

- **New Recovery Meeting in St. George, Utah** — With large attendance numbers in Shannon Martindale's St. George group, we're happy to announce the opening of a second Recovery meeting in southern Utah. Jay Finlayson has started a new group in St. George along with Assistant Leader Claudia Crawford. Endorse! Jay holds her meeting each Thursday at 5:30pm, and Shannon Martindale holds her meeting each Tuesday at 11:00am. Currently both groups meet in the Re/Max First Realty building on 1224 River Rd. in St. George. Congratulations, southern Utah!
- **Las Vegas Group Leader Joins Utah's Training Meetings** — Las Vegas Group Leader Annie Sattler will be sitting in on our Leadership Training phone calls starting in July. Welcome, Annie! We look forward to getting to know you and to providing extra support for your area.
- **\$\$ Money Matters \$\$** —The Utah/Wyoming Area Treasurer has prepared a "Request for Funding" letter to be sent to organizations that donate to mental health causes. If you know of any organizations or funding sources to send our solicitation letter to, please notify Area Leader Karen Allgood. Recovery International is self-supporting, and every bit of funding helps toward our efforts in our community.

- **Headquarters Settles into New Digs** — Recovery headquarters in Chicago has moved to a new building.  Correspondence for Headquarters should now go to: Abraham Low Self-Help Systems, 105 W. Adams Suite 2940, Chicago, IL 60603. Be sure to check out the newly designed Recovery website at its new web address: www.lowselfhelpsystems.org. The new site is impressive and full of interesting, useful information. ◇



"Spot"-light on Policy and Procedure

Recovery's systematic self-help method is the result of Dr. Low's many years of careful experimentation with various techniques. The policies and procedures serve as the model for *all* Recovery meetings, because their effectiveness has stood the test of time. Therefore Recovery's policies and procedures are to be closely observed by group attendees as well as the leaders who facilitate our meetings.

This issue's "Spotlight on Policy and Procedure" centers around the spotting portion of each meeting's example period. Specifically the reminder to: ***Direct your spots to the leader, NOT to the example-giver.***

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What exactly does this mean?

It means that a member should *look at* and *speak to* either the leader or toward the group as a whole when spotting on an example, *rather than* making comments directly to the person who has given the example. (Group Leaders will find this policy under "Policies Governing Recovery Meetings" in the *Leaders' Guide* under the heading: "Prohibited Practices.")

When spotting on an example, we want to refrain from making comments directly to the example-giver for four simple reasons:

- 1) The spotting portion of the meeting is strictly for offering Recovery spots, not advice. Spotting directly *at* the example-giver tends to cause spotters to begin offering advice rather than spots in Recovery language.
- 2) Members often feel self-conscious, and having comments directed right at them can heighten discomfort. After a member shares an example, the group's focus should shift *away* from the example-giver and move *toward* the person leading the example. This also helps the leader maintain control of the spotting period.
- 3) Once the example-giver finishes speaking, the example then belongs to the group to discuss as a whole while the example-giver sits quietly for the remainder of the spotting. (Some Group Leaders will describe this by saying, "The example-giver is now going into their quiet, invisible box during

spotting.") While in this "invisible box," it is difficult for the example-giver to keep quiet if spotters make eye-contact and direct comments at him or her. Therefore spots should be directed solely to the leader or to the group collectively.

- 4) And last, sitting quietly while others offer Recovery spots can help a nervous person/patient practice self-discipline by controlling the impulse to interrupt and/or correct the spotters' comments.

In summary, spotting works best when the example-giver remains quiet after sharing the example, while spotters, in turn, stick to Recovery language directed solely to the leader or to the group as a whole. ♦

Getting to Know Our Members: Meet Our New Regional Leader Cliff Brown



Cliff Brown has taken over for our former Regional Leader Bob Dey. We have enjoyed getting to know Cliff via our tele-conference Leader Training meetings and greatly appreciate his support and guidance.

Trivial Matters: Please tell us a little about yourself.

Cliff: I am from Los Angeles, California and lead a meeting on Monday nights in Encino which is in the San Fernando Valley region

of Los Angeles. I also serve, since January of this year, as a Regional Leader for Recovery. My problems started at age 20 with all kinds of physical symptoms for which no cause could be found. It led to major depression and, years later, several mental hospitalizations. Underlying all of it was a high degree of self-dislike along with a lot of fear, many bouts of panic, and ongoing anxiety.

TM: How long have you attended Recovery meetings?

Cliff: I have attended Recovery on a regular basis since 1994.

TM: How did you discover the Recovery meetings?

Cliff: I first heard about Recovery in 1979 from my girlfriend at the time. I tried a meeting but didn't feel it was for me. I tried a few meetings of Recovery again in 1991 after my first mental hospitalization but concluded that it wasn't relevant to someone like me whose case was so severe. In 1994, after 3 more mental hospitalizations and 15 years after my first exposure to Recovery, I agreed to take a friend of mine (who regularly attended Recovery and was on a day pass from the hospital) to a meeting. I asked him, "Is it OK if I wait outside if I don't like it?" which I was sure would be my experience again, and he said fine, but after the first few minutes, I knew that this time I really wanted to find out if this could help me. And it has helped me enormously. I have been able to develop a stable work life over the last 15 years and got married 7 years ago for the first time at the age of 49. These things wouldn't have happened without the Recovery Method. Today, I have

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my share of life challenges and continue to work on my strong links BUT now have the tools to navigate my way through and continue to grow and evolve.

TM: What is your favorite Recovery spot?

Cliff: It is hard to pick one so here are a few: a) the most exquisite form of spotting is to spot what you do not know, b) fear is a belief in danger, and beliefs can be dropped or modified, c) temper may have feeling connected to it, but at its core it is a judgment of right or wrong which means it is a thought or belief which can be changed.

TM: What do you enjoy doing in your spare time, such as hobbies, interests, and/or sports?

Cliff: I enjoy exercise such as weightlifting, calisthenics, bike riding, and jogging. I also like to work with plants and have several pots around our apartment. I have had a lifelong interest in weather. Finally, I like to read anything that strikes me as positive, inspirational, or will help me grow more as a person. ◇

Now Seeking:

VOLUNTEERS FOR THE UTAH/WYOMING RECOVERY AREA

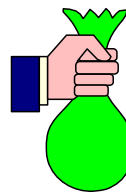
Volunteer Benefits: An "Inner Smile" for group-mindedness, a feeling of self-respect, and a reason to endorse.

Job One: Desperately Seeking— A volunteer to type a two-paragraph script on Craigslist each week to advertise our local Recovery meetings. The script is pre-written — all you need to do is copy it onto a free advertising post on Craigslist weekly. The Utah/Wyoming Area Treasurer has been doing this job over the last year and says it only takes five minutes each week. The response has been tremendous — our Craigslist postings have attracted many newcomers to our meetings. If you are willing/interested, first ENDORSE, and then second, please contact Karen Allgood at (801) 419-2214.

Job Two: Are you interested in blogging? Chris Jorgensen, Recovery's Director of Marketing and Communications at Headquarters, is starting blog feeds on Recovery's worldwide website. He will do RSS feeds from anyone who is blogging about Recovery. For an example, on the Recovery website in the Press Room under "Latest News" see how a blogger named Doug posted accounts of his first Recovery Intl. meeting on his blog, *I Am Living With Anxiety*. He writes, "Maybe this (Recovery Intl.) is the beginning of something wonderful for me." If you would like to see your own blog on Recovery's website and help spread the news about our wonderful organization, please contact Chris Jorgensen in Chicago at (312) 337-5661 or email: chris@lowselfhelpsystems.org.

Note: Volunteers can achieve great feats. Recovery Intl. is living proof of that. *As long as there are humans, there will be the need for Recovery and its volunteers.* ◇

Treasury Matters



Thank you to all who have donated over the past months. Our treasury *does* matter.

The suggested contribution is \$4.00 per person per meeting. (Headquarters has calculated expenses and believes it takes between \$4.00 - \$6.00 per person to run each meeting.) As always, please know that we want you to attend our meetings, though, regardless of your ability to contribute.

Note: For Group Leaders — Occasionally our Area Treasurer receives cash in the mail from some of you. Due to postal mishaps, checks are a safer way to send money. Please keep the cash you receive at meetings, and write a personal check to "Recovery Intl." for the cash, mailing your personal check along with any other checks you receive to the Area Treasurer.

It is important to know that contributions help keep Recovery growing not only in our community but around the world. Here is an example sent from Headquarters showing how Recovery has helped others:



Cal, a man previously convicted for crime in his pre-Recovery days, had followed directions and shown up at a free dental facility at 4:30 in the morning as directed. But when he arrived at the facility, they had already filled up, and he was told to come back another day. Instead of blowing his stack and ending up in

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jail, as he had usually done in former days, he used his Recovery training and chose peace over power. He decided, planned, and acted, showing up at the dentist's at 3:00am the next time and eventually got his teeth fixed. He is so glad he learned our system to help manage his emotions. ◇

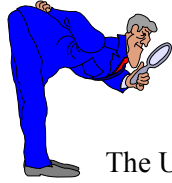
Recovery in Practice: Featuring an Example From Orem, Utah's Group Leader Ron Cottle

♪ We got a new singing member in our group, *Sentimental Journey*. He is pushy and wants the group to do things his way all the time. When he pushed last week is when I started to work myself up.

I became tense. I felt like saying something rude. I thought he was way out of line and had to work at fixing my thinking. My impulse was to jump in and take over the practice.

I spotted angry temper at him and at having to deal with it. I expressed myself with calmness and courtesy and was group minded for all. I was not a doormat and realized I couldn't control outer environment, I could only favorably influence it.

Before I had my Recovery training, I would have refused to drop it and not sung with this guy. I would have expressed anger big time and become uncivilized. ♪



Area Statistics

The Utah/Wyoming area maintains seven active meetings throughout the region. Here is a glance at our area's stats for the second quarter of 2009:

Average Attendance/Meeting = 7 Attendees. *(The highest attendance for the second quarter of 2009 goes to Shannon Martindale's St. George group with an average of 11 attendees per meeting. Way to go, St. George!)*

Average Voluntary Weekly Contribution = \$2.23 Per Person/Meeting. *(The highest contributions for the second quarter of 2009 goes to Karen Allgood's Kearns group with an average weekly donation of \$2.61/ person. Good job, Kearns!)* ◇

**The Wisdom of Dr. Low:
"In Recovery, the patient is made to realize the fallacy of the romantic estimate that life is either supreme bliss or dreary desolation. He learns that there is a middle ground of solid averageness in which the tonic quality of realistic action does away with the hectic hunt for picnics which have a sorry way of turning into panics."**

(Found in Dr. Low's book, *Selections*, pg. 33. These quotes are compiled by our very own Regional Leader Cliff Brown and edited by Dr. Low's daughter Marilyn Low Schmitt.)

A Story of Recovery from a Grateful RI Member

By Group Leader Jay Finlayson of the newly opened St. George, Utah meeting.

Four years ago in June, I was hospitalized for mental issues for the fourth time. My stay lasted five weeks. It was an awful experience for me as well as my family. During my hospitalization, I only saw the doctor five minutes a day. I spent much of my time simply coloring or listening to somebody play the guitar. The hospital wouldn't release me until I could sleep through the night, so I faked sleeping to get out.

After I was released, I could hardly leave my house. Looking at the front door gave me so many sensations/symptoms. Then I rediscovered Recovery meetings which I had attended a few years earlier and had stopped going to for some reason.

I started re-attending Recovery meetings — still with a lot of sensations and lowered feelings. The first Recovery tool I used was to "endure the discomfort, and comfort would come." That spot helped me to just get out of bed.

I have recently started my own meeting a month ago. I'm so grateful to Dr. Low and for all the previous Recovery leaders I have had. I feel like I'm looking at the world with color now instead of black and white. One of my biggest highs is to see somebody turn their own sadness into a smile. The tool I work on now is: "Take the danger out." And also, "to lower my expectations." ◇