

## International Recovery Perspectives: Action on Alternatives University of Toronto, June 5, 2008

Panel: Soteria—The Proven Model for Recovery  
Communities  
Jim Gottstein—The Development of Soteria-Alaska

## Genesis & Early Steps

- Late 2002—Read about Soteria in *Mad in America*
- Early 2003—Incorporated Soteria-Alaska, Inc.
- 2003—New Director of Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) Supported Opening a Soteria-Type Program & Soteria-Alaska Deferred.
- 2004—CMHC Soteria-Type Project NIMBY'd & Abandoned. Soteria-Alaska Moved Forward on Own. Applied for 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Status (received 2005).

## Alaska Mental Health Board (AMHB) 2002-2004

- Alaska Mental Health Board: Statewide Planning board for Mental Health
  - Makes Recommendations to Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (Trust)
- December, 2002—Robert Whitaker Presentation
  - Formal Response-Just taking Information, not Endorse
  - Many Convinced
- August 2004—Asked & Received Recommendation to Trust for \$1.1 million Pilot Project funding would have started July 1, 2005).

## AK Mental Health Trust Authority (Trust) 2004-2008

- September, 2004—Didn't Make Trust Cut
- July, 2005—Didn't get Consumer Run Grant for Planning
- November 2005-\$10,000—Received Small Project Grant to fund development plan with milestones and timeline.
  - Hired Aron Wolf, MD, MMM, CPE, as consultant.
- February, 2006--\$78,000 Planning Grant from Trust.
  - Added Alma Menn as Consultant (met at Ireland INTAR in December of 2005)
  - Formal Business Plan Submitted August 2006
  - Regulatory Issues Not All Resolved
- October, 2006--\$120,000 Project Development Grant
- July, 2007--\$360,000 Beneficiary ("Consumer Run) Project Grant
- July, 2008—Operational Funding Going Forward, looking to State Participation

## Opinion Shift—Soteria-Alaska

- 2002: Not Endorse -- Just Educational
- 2003: Implies Need Non-Drug Alternative
- 2004: Needs More Development
- 2005: Not If, But How
- 2006: Trust Formally Supports
  - Wanted State Participation in Funding
- 2007: Funded by Trust for 2008 Opening when didn't get in State Budget.

## Challenges

- Funding Agencies
- Stakeholders
- Zoning
- Licensing
- Facility Acquisition
- NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard)
- Hiring
- Training
- Fidelity

## Suggested Reading

- *Soteria: Through Madness to Deliverance*, by Loren Mosher and Voyce Hendrix with Deborah Fort (2004)
- *Community Mental Health: A Practical Guide* (1994) by Loren Mosher and Lorenzo Burti
- *Alternatives Beyond Psychiatry*, Peter Lehman & Peter Stastny, MD, Editors (2007).
- *A Fight to Be: A Psychologist's Experience from Both Sides of the Locked Door*, Ronald Bassman, Ph.D. (2007)
- *Psychotherapy of Schizophrenia: The Treatment of Choice* (Jason Aronson, 1996), by Bertram P. Karon and Gary R. Vandenbos