

The Transformation Triangle

"Consumer" Is A Culture!
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Mental Health Recovery Stories

Jim Gottstein

In 1982, when I was 29, I got into a situation where I didn't sleep for days. I tried to do too much. I went psychotic. When I heard someone coming down the hall, I thought the devil was after me and jumped out of my father's second-floor window in the wee hours in my underwear (since I knew how to do a parachute landing fall, I really didn't think I would get hurt, and I didn't). After I was captured, I was taken to Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API) in a straight-jacket, and pumped full of a whole lot of Mellaril.

Prior to this, I was a practicing attorney. I had gone through college in three years at the University of Oregon by averaging 21 hours a term, rather than the normal 15 hours. After graduating from college I was admitted to Harvard Law School. Since graduating from law school, I had been practicing law in Anchorage. Before my episode I had never run into a situation where I couldn't do all the work that "needed to get done."

When I woke up in the hospital, still groggy from the medication that forced me (finally) to sleep, a young man was sitting in a chair at the foot of my bed with a clipboard. He asked me what day it was. I asked him how long I had been asleep. He wrote down that I didn't know what day it was. Things didn't get better from there. I was somewhat belligerent since I was used to being free and being able to make my own decisions. Sometimes I would just go home to make them catch me. One time, they didn't catch me before my head hit

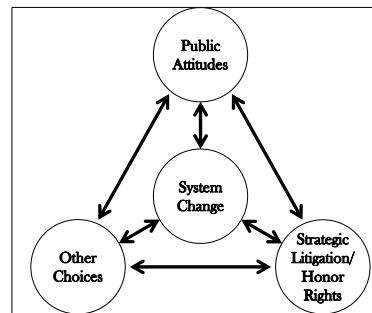
Law Project for Psychiatric Rights (PsychRights®)

- Founded in 2002 After Reading Robert Whitaker's *Mad in America: Bad Science, Bad Medicine and the Enduring Mistreatment of the Mentally Ill*.
- Mission: Mount a Strategic Litigation Campaign Against Forced Psychiatric Drugging & Electroshock
- Adopted Addressing Massive Over-Drugging of Children & Youth as Priority in 2006.

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Transformation Triangle



While Some People find Psych Drugs Helpful . . .

- Psychiatric Drugs Causing Massive Amount of Harm
- Current System Does Not Allow Non Drug Choices
- Legal Right to Other Choices is Ignored
- Hugely and Unnecessarily Expensive
- Huge Unnecessary Human Toll

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Harm Caused By Psychiatric Drugging

- Life spans now decreased by 25 years
- Greatly diminished quality of life for most
- Prevents Recovery/Increases Chronicity
- Six Fold Increase in Disability Rate Attributed to Mental Illness

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Even Long Term Consumers Can Recover

"every chronic schizophrenic outpatient maintained on an antipsychotic medication should have the benefit of an adequate trial without drugs."

Source: Maintenance Antipsychotic Therapy: Is the Cure Worse than the Disease, *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 133, January (1976), page 32-36

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Other Choices: Work Better for Many

- Soteria
- Open Dialogue (Finland)
- Longitudinal Studies (Harding)
- Research cited at <http://psychrights.org/Research/Digest/Effective/effective.htm>

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Finland Open Dialogue Approach: Five Year Study of Psychotic Patients

- 82% did not have any residual psychotic symptoms;
- 86% had returned to their studies or full-time jobs;
- only 14% were on disability; and
- 71% never took any antipsychotic medication.

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Psychotherapy Research, 2006; 16(2):214-28.

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WARNING

- Quitting Psychiatric Drugs Can Be Very Dangerous/Should be Done Slowly Under the Supervision of a Physician
 - Withdrawal Often Causes Psychiatric Symptoms
 - Often accompanied by Adverse Physical Effects

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Alaska Peer Support Consortium

The Alaska Peer Support Consortium is a network of Alaskan behavioral health peer support organizations. The Consortium fellows meet face to face three times yearly. We get to know each other's history, mission, flavor, and dreams, address funding issues, organize peer support education and training, and share information. The fellowship develops the assumption of commonness rather than the assumption of isolation and separation. By pooling energy and information, there is a wider base from which to grow. In finding our common denominators, our needs become less personal, more general, and therefore more possible for the behavioral health system to effectively respond. A spiral of energy emerges in which our collected voice becomes clearer. The more stable and unified peer directed organizations become, the stronger and richer the Alaska behavioral health system is for all.

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Alaska Peer Support Consortium

- Alaska Mental Health Consumer Web
- Alaska Women's Recovery Project (AWRP)
- Alaska Youth And Family Network
- Beth Shamar
- Bushmamas
- CHOICES, Inc.
- Creekside Meeting Center
- DBSA HOMER
- Ionia, Inc.
- Law Project for Psychiatric Rights
- NAMI Alaska
- NAMI Anchorage
- NAMI Fairbanks
- NAMI Juneau
- NAMI Ketchikan
- Polaris House
- Soteria-Alaska

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Public Education in Alaska

- Whitaker in 2002, 2003, 2007 & 2009
- Perlin in 2003
- Menn in 2007
- Numerous Newspaper & Some Broadcast Coverage
 - Myers Case
 - Feature Front Page Story in November 2005
 - Zyprexa Papers local coverage
- Accept All Speaking Invitations


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Opinion Shift— General Alaska Attitudes

From everyone on psych drugs for ever, of course → Other choices should be available.

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Soteria-Alaska

- Non-coercive, Non-Drug option for Newly Diagnosed with Psychotic Disorder.
 - Be With, Not Do To
 - Expect Recovery
 - Let People Be “Delusional”
 - But Insist on Safety/Responsibility
- Replicate Original Soteria-House
 - 6-8 People
 - Two staff at all times.

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Soteria-Alaska Progression

- 2002: Not Endorse -- Just Educational
- 2003: Implies Need Non-Drug Alternative
- 2004: Needs More Development
- 2005: Not If, But How
- 2006: Alaska Mental HealthTrust Formally Supports
 - Wanted State Participation in Funding
- 2007: Funded by Trust when didn't get in State Budget.
- 2009: Opened

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C onsumers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Consumer” Run • Non-coercive, Non-drug (& drug) Choices In Community • Available for people in the system a long time • Started Providing Services in July, 2007 • Now Valued by System
H aving	
O wnership	
I n	
C reating	
E ffective	
S ervices	

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Peer Properties

- Peer Run Housing
- Allows Non-drug Choice
- No “services,” but peer support principle
- One 4 bedroom House Owned & Operated
- Proven Concept, but
- Needs infrastructure support

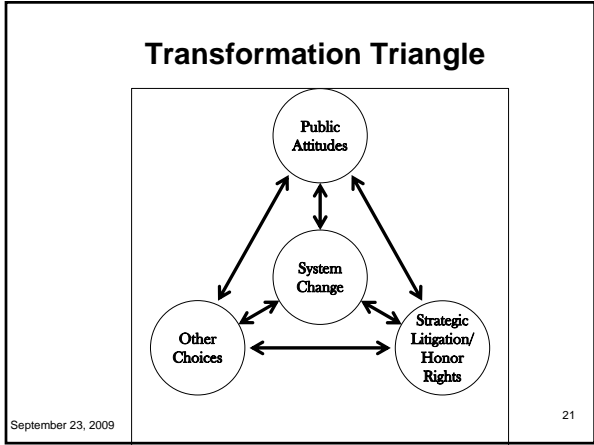
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PsychRights in Alaska

- **Myers (2006)**
 - Best Interests
 - No Less Intrusive Alternative Available
- **Wetherhorn (2007)**
 - Unable to Survive Safely in Freedom
- **WSB (2008)**
 - Judge has to be given transcript or listen to recording of hearing
- **Bigley (2009)**
 - “Available” Alternative means “feasible” -- Have to provide or let go.
 - Petition has to include information on proposed drug as well as alternatives.

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Suggested Reading

- *Mad in America: Bad Science, Bad Medicine and the Enduring Mistreatment of the Mentally Ill* (2001) by Robert Whitaker
- *Alternatives Beyond Psychiatry*, Peter Lehman & Peter Stastny, MD, Editors (2007).
- *Agnes's Jacket: A Psychologist's Search for the Meaning of Madness*, Gail Hornstein, PhD (2009)
- *A Fight to Be: A Psychologist's Experience from Both Sides of the Locked Door*, Ronald Bassman, Ph.D. (2007)
- *Rethinking Psychiatric Drugs: A Guide to Informed Consent*, by Grace E. Jackson, MD, (2005)
- *Brain Disabling Treatments in Psychiatry: Drugs, Electroshock, and the Role of the FDA*, Ed. 2 (2008) by Peter Breggin, MD.
- *Community Mental Health: A Practical Guide* (1994) by Loren Mosher and Lorenzo Burti
- *Soteria: Through Madness to Deliverance*, by Loren Mosher and Voyce Hendrix with Deborah Fort (2004)
- *Psychotherapy of Schizophrenia: The Treatment of Choice* (Jason Aronson, 1996), by Bertram P. Karon and Gary R. ²³Vandenbos

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Suggested Reading (cont.)

- *Schizophrenia: A Scientific Delusion*, by Mary Boyle, Ph.D. (2002)
- *Let Them Eat Prozac*, by David Healy, MD. (2006).
- *Creating Mental Illness*, by Allan V. Horwitz (2002).
- *Toxic Psychiatry: Why Therapy, Empathy, and Love Must Replace the Drugs, Electroshock, and Biochemical Theories of the New Psychiatry*, by Peter Breggin, MD (1994)
- *Commonsense Rebellion*, by Bruce E. Levine (2001)
- *Blaming the Brain : The Truth About Drugs and Mental Health*, by Elliot Valenstein (1998).
- *Escape From Psychiatry*, by Clover (1999)
- *How to Become a Schizophrenic: The Case Against Biological Psychiatry*, 3d Ed., by John Modrow (2003)
- Other books at <http://psychrights.org/Market/storefront.htm>

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