

# Recovery: The Journey

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# Disability of Mental Illness: The Evolution

- Mental illness and psychiatric disability are distinctly different
- Psychiatric disability evolves from living with mental illness over time

# The Experience From the Inside: Shame & Fear

- Fear of loss of dreams
- Fear of loss of sense of self
- Less chance to develop life skills and learn from life experiences

# What Do I Do Now?

- Poor decision-making
- Family/friends exhausted
- Increased sense of powerlessness
- Relinquishing my dreams
- Loss of self

# When the Treatment is Worse Than the Illness

- Hierarchical systems with the client on the bottom
- Culture of control
- Low expectations
- Medication side effects

# The Experience From the Outside: Social Factors

- Poverty
- Oppression
- Discrimination
- Diminished expectations
- Dismissing my own strengths

# Acceptance of the Status Quo

- Passive acceptance of perception of disability by
  - Treatment providers
  - Family
  - Support system
  - Myself

# “I Am Mentally Ill”

- Loss of hopes and dreams
- Loss of sense of self
- Belief that the disability and the illness are the same thing (they are not!)
- Making decisions which often result in increased harm in my own life and the lives of those around me

# Recovery: The Journey

- Mental illness and psychiatric disability are distinctly different
- Recovery begins when a person is able to believe that they are more than the disability
- I am more than an illness!

# Recovery is Possible

- Considering that recovery is possible gives me hope
- Having hope leads to a sense of personal responsibility

# Recovery is My Choice

- Recognition of the importance of choices in the direction of my life
- I need support if I am going to be successful on this journey
- Beginning to question who I am – my identity is shaken again

# I Am Nanette

- Abilities more prominent than disabilities
- New decision making skills help highlight my strengths and result in less harm to self and others
- I have hope for the future

# Recovery is Real

- Actively engaged in making difficult choices and actions
- Increased personal strengths and abilities
- New job
- New home
- New friendships

# Life is Worth Living

- Strong sense of self
- Value of the process of recovery
- Choices result in leading a meaningful and contributing life
- Have a life plan, with hopes and dreams

# Thank You!

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