Way to go Sonia!

Life is what you make it to be. Even if the odds are against you, you can conquer the mountains in your life if you just keep fighting. My name is Sonia and I live in Tucson in my own home. I am happily married and a mother of seven children. I have a beautiful career as the program coordinator of Helping Ourselves Pursue Enrichment, HOPE, Inc.

I grew up in a family filled with gang violence, drug addiction and mental illness. By the time I was an adult, I had seen many things that no child should ever see, and experienced things no child should experience. At 25, I was diagnosed with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) and was placed in the SMI program. My doctor told me I would never be able to have a family, live on my own, go to school and have a regular life.

That seemed to be my fate for many years until 2005 when I saw a Recovery Support Specialist for the first time during a group therapy. That encounter inspired me to go back to school for my Bachelor of Arts degree. Today, I’m a certified Recovery Support Specialist and life is great. My recovery is strong, one day at a time. I strongly believe all is possible even when it seems impossible.

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month

March 2013 will be marked as Brain Injury Awareness Month by the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAAA) and their network of state affiliates, including self-advocates, families and volunteers across the nation. Each year 1.7 million Americans sustain a brain injury. It is an effort of great importance because a brain injury can happen anytime, anywhere, to anyone!

The Behavioral Health Vision: All Arizona residents touched by the public behavioral health system are easily able to access high quality prevention, support, rehabilitation and treatment services that have resiliency and recovery principles at their core, which assist them in achieving their unique goals for a desired quality of life in their homes and communities.

DBHS manages Arizona’s publicly-funded, statewide behavioral health system. Learn more at www.azdhs.gov/bhs/.
Arizona Peer and Family Coalition Update

Two members of the Arizona Peer and Family Coalition’s Advocacy Committee met with the Arizona House of Representatives’ Health and Human Services Committee on January 23, 2013 to provide testimony on a very important bill, known as House Bill 2066: "definitions; archaic language; removal." This bill amends sections 1-215 and 26-121, Arizona Revised Statutes, relating to general rules of statutory construction.

Jill Hogan, Arizona’s long-time mental health advocate and a peer in recovery, and Krista Long, a mother of a child with mental illness, provided testimony on behalf of the bill and shared their personal life experiences in dealing with mental illness. Stigma is a major barrier to individuals seeking treatment and the archaic language that still exists in our state statute continues the ugliness of stigma and its effect on individuals and families. Due to the excellent, heartfelt words from Jill and Krista, the bill passed unanimously out of the Committee, which was a huge victory for the Coalition. Members will continue to watch the bill’s progress and advocate for it passing the Senate, where it was heard on February 27th in the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

Coalition members also continue their efforts on developing a resource list in response to the Newtown school shooting tragedy and a product should be coming out soon.

Family Involvement Center Celebrates 10th Anniversary

The Family Involvement Center (FIC) recently celebrated 10 years of service in Maricopa County as a family-operated non-profit organization. FIC provides parent-to-parent support and navigation of the child-serving systems to parents and primary caregivers of children with emotional, developmental, behavioral, mental health, and substance use disorders. FIC parent leaders continue to be involved in the transformation of Arizona’s children’s behavioral health system. The growth of youth support and leadership development programs was also celebrated.

Light refreshments were served while family members, community guests, and professional partners from child-serving agencies reflected on the evolution and rapid growth of roles for parents and youth peers in service delivery, policy and program development in Arizona. Those at the event agreed there was much to celebrate. The family and youth movement has grown substantially, not only in Maricopa County, but across Arizona and the United States and the FIC has played a role in this growth. Board president and school psychologist, Joanne Quinn, PhD., spoke about several of the accomplishments of FIC and future goals of the organization to continue the agency’s mission of Empowering Families….Strengthening Youth…..Educating Communities….Transforming Systems.

New Community Engagement Initiative Rolls Out

The Community Engagement Initiative is an exciting project regarding the upcoming changes in the Maricopa County behavioral health system. An invitation-only event is scheduled for March 6 at S.T.A.R. in Mesa. Key leaders, stakeholders, and community members will come together to strategize and develop a communications plan to keep peers and family members informed and engaged during the member transition. The initiative will compile questions and concerns expressed by peers and family members to measure the impact of the transition.

This project is similar to the “Raise Your Voice” initiative, where peers and family members were trained to conduct public forums. Many of the elements identified from “Raise Your Voice” were included in the deliverables of Arnold v Sarn. As this Initiative progresses, please check back with Recovery WORKS or the DBHS Blog to keep informed and learn ways to get involved! For any questions, contact Victoria McCloney.
Healthy Weight, Healthy Life

The current Quarterly Health Initiative (QHI) topic is HEALTHY WEIGHT. If you’re looking for motivation and tips to help you achieve your weight goals in 2013, this handout may be helpful.

A healthy weight will help you improve your overall health, including your self-esteem and mental health.

Learn what a healthy weight is for you and how to take steps to achieve it. The handout also has links to helpful resources and some help with questions you can ask your doctor at your next visit.

### Five Action Steps to Help You Control Your Weight

1. Make physical activity a fun part of your life! Do it with friends, use downloadable apps and games, participate in group classes or competitions that get you moving.

2. Drink water and unsweetened drinks instead of sugary drinks. Giving up two 12-ounce sodas a day can help you lose 30 pounds in a year!


4. Shop for food after you have eaten a meal. Start in the produce section and work your way through the store through the outer aisles where you will find fresh meats and dairy foods. Avoid the inner aisles and those that have processed foods, cakes, cookies and munchies (except for the occasional “prize” for your great weight management behavior!)

5. Get plenty of sleep each night (7 – 8 hours is recommended for most people).

### Healthy Recipe

#### Hearty Kale Salad

**Ingredients**

- 6 cups kale, very thinly sliced; about 1/2 large bunch; tough stems removed
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, coarsely chopped
- 2 slices center-cut bacon
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups button mushrooms, sliced
- 2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons whole-grain mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

**Instructions:**

Place kale and eggs in a large bowl. Cook bacon in a large skillet over medium heat until crisp. Leaving the bacon fat in the pan, transfer the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate. Chop when cool enough to handle. Add oil and onion to the pan and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring, until softened, about 2 minutes more. Remove from the heat and stir in vinegar, mustard, pepper and salt. Pour the mushroom mixture over the kale and eggs. Add the bacon and toss to combine.

**Nutritional Information:**

- Calories: 182; Fat: 12 g; Saturated fat: 2 g; Mono Fat: 7 g; Cholesterol: 97 mg; Carbohydrates: 14 g; Dietary fiber: 3 g; Protein: 9 g; Sodium: 268 mg; Potassium: 623 mg.

**Prep:** 25 | **Total Time:** 25 | **Makes:** 4 servings | **Serving Size:** 1 1/2 cups | **Source:** WebMD
Services in the behavioral health system have undergone many changes in the past 50-80 years. One change with measurable positive results has been the shift to the role of consumers as providers and partners in the delivery of services. What was originally an informal supportive relationship between persons who received services is now a network of organizations and a structure of services that are uniquely identified as consumer operated services. The federal government, through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), has recognized “Consumer Operated Services” as being an “Evidence Based Practice” – one that has been identified through formal research and data analysis as having a higher rate of effectiveness in helping the person recover.

Changes in the 1980s and 90s led to formation of more consumer operated service organizations (COSOs) across the country and in Arizona. COSOs are grounded in the following organizational values: belief in peer-based support, partnering with professionals, voluntary membership, egalitarianism, a lack of bureaucracy and they are informal. Services are to be based on empowerment, independence, responsibility, choice, respect and dignity, and social action.

Research shows that persons involved in COSOs have greater gains overall than people involved in traditional behavioral health services alone. Outcome surveys show that an individual’s participation in a COSO results in tangible increases in well-being and sense of empowerment. Learn more about the History of Consumer Operated Services.

In Observation of Black History Month, Recovery Works Would Like to Highlight...

African American history is bittersweet: filled with glorious victories, but also rife with tragedy and pain. In honor of Black History Month, here are a few examples of famous people who have challenged their difficulties with mental illness.

Halle Berry is the only African-American woman to receive the Academy Award for Best Actress winning in 2002 for her role in the 2001 film, “Monster’s Ball.” She is a Revlon spokes model and is one of the highest paid actresses in Hollywood, earning over $10 million per film. After the end of her first marriage to former baseball player David Justice, Berry publicly stated she struggled with depression. She went into therapy soon after. “I know it sounds cliché, but you have to find a way to hold on because time really does heal all wounds,” she said. Source: Adversity is a Gift

Jazz great Thelonious Monk struggled with mental illness during much of his later career. The pianist and composer was at the forefront of the bebop movement in the 1940s and 1950s. Though his highly individual style was at first unpopular, he contributed a long list of standards to the jazz repertoire, including “Straight, No Chaser,” and “Round Midnight.” His recordings, which often coincided with erratic behavior, influenced a new generation of legends such as Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. And in the 1960s his work at last became popular with mainstream fans, earning him the cover of Time magazine in 1964.

If you would like to read about other famous individuals with mental illness, click on NAMI Virginia.

In recent years, Herschel Walker, a Heisman award-winning running back and former NFL player, has gone public about his troubles with dissociative identity disorder (DID), a complex mental health disorder. People with DID are influenced by two or more distinct personalities, or identities, which prevent them from acting like themselves. Walker has received treatment for the disorder and wrote a book about his experiences. "I feel the greatest achievement of my life will be to tell the world my truth," he said in an interview with ESPN. Source: Psych-Week

A native of Seattle’s Central District, boxer Quanitta (Queen) Underwood challenges our common perception of victims. In February, she opened up about being sexually abused by her father in an interview with The New York Times. He was eventually convicted and spent six years in prison but that closure was not enough for Queen to avoid long bouts of depression. Though she was able to make a decent living as a pipe layer, she started to get serious about boxing. The owner of a local Seattle gym, Cappy Kotz, was impressed by her natural talent and ended up coaching her, helping her become a five time U.S. champion. Source: Famous People
Humor in the Workplace Benefits Everyone

Most people spend an average of eight hours a day in the workplace. Our work environment often becomes like a second home. For some, occupational wellness is about feeling satisfied about their job and life purpose. For others, it also includes how you feel when you are at work and how your work environment supports your goals for wellness. Humor is an easy way to improve your life at work. Of course, you have to be careful and considerate of other people’s feelings and beliefs. Whenever you can, try proper, positive jokes, games, and activities that encourage laughter without causing too much distraction or offending others. Laughter has many benefits, including:

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<th>Physical Health Benefits:</th>
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<th>Social Benefits:</th>
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<td>• Boosts immunity</td>
<td>• Adds joy and zest to life</td>
<td>• Strengthens relationships</td>
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<td>• Lowers stress hormones</td>
<td>• Eases anxiety and fear</td>
<td>• Attracts others to us</td>
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<td>• Decreases pain</td>
<td>• Relieves stress</td>
<td>• Enhances teamwork</td>
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<td>• Relaxes your muscles</td>
<td>• Improves mood</td>
<td>• Helps defuse conflict</td>
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<td>• Prevents heart disease</td>
<td>• Enhances resilience</td>
<td>• Promotes group bonding</td>
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Three simple tips for using humor at work:
1. Use humor to lift people up, not to put them down. Don’t laugh at people – laugh with them.
2. Don’t force it – if you’re trying too hard to be funny, your humor will fall on deaf ears.
3. Use your humor to make people feel more comfortable rather than more awkward.

Clean Workplace → Occupational Wellness

The work environment affects one’s productivity, mood and behavior. De-cluttering your work space can help relieve stress. It allows you to bring out your innovative juices, keeping you on a positive note for the rest of your day. Here are five things that can help you reduce the clutter in your office.

1. Prepare the things you need. Don’t go to war without the needed weaponry. Use the reliable tandem of a shredder and trash bags to get rid of things you don’t need.
2. Learn the art of sorting. Visualize the office look that you want. Throw away flyers and papers you will no longer use.
3. Maximize desk space. Don’t put unnecessary items on your desk. Decide if you have to put things on your desk or if your drawer can house them.
4. Drawers are not your enemy. Put an end to the time and effort wasted in search of your lost pen, clip, or gadget.
5. Tame those cords. Offices need computers, printers, copiers, and other equipment and that means there can be cords dangling all over your place.

To read the entire article, click on How to Do Things.com.

Eating Smart at Work

- Pack food and beverages for the week ahead – this will save you money and time while also giving you healthier options.
- Stock up on nutrition – fill your desk drawers, office fridge or briefcase with a healthy variety of tasty snacks and quick meals such as instant oatmeal and trail mix.
- Pack lunch while you cook dinner – make an extra serving or two and pack them to go as you clean up the evening meal.
- Switch to a fruit dish – if you’re tempted by the cookie jar or candy dish at work, try having a fresh fruit bowl, or a jar with different, delicious dried fruits.
- Include protein – for long-lasting brain and body power, add some protein in your snacks such as nuts, seeds, soy nuts, yogurt, milk, jerky, and nutrition bars.
Upcoming Events

Family Involvement Center Holds Contest for Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week

This is the sixth year for Arizona’s Children’s Mental Health Awareness week, which will be observed May 5 – 11, 2013. This year’s theme is “Out of the Shadows: Exposing Stigma!” National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day is May 9th.

The Family Involvement Center is accepting entries from youth across the state for their poster and essay contest. The deadline for entries is March 11th. For more information about Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week events, contact Dianne Warren at the Family Involvement Center at 602-412-4067.

Ninth Annual Cesar Chavez Conference

TERROS is hosting the Ninth Annual Cesar Chavez Conference on March 29, 2013 at ASU West. The conference theme, “Social Determinants of Health: Examining the Roots of Health Inequalities and Trauma in Diverse Communities” recognizes and pays tribute to human rights icon, the late Cesar E. Chavez. Admission is free and includes a continental breakfast and lunch. Participants may earn 7 continuing education units (CEU) for attending the conference. Click here to register.

Creating a Future Free of Bullying

MY LIFE youth will host their sixth annual youth festival, MY Fest ‘13, from noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday, March 24, 2013 at Tempe Beach Park. This year’s theme is “Creating a Future Free of Bullying and Suicide.”

Help the youth promote this year’s event by downloading the English flyer and Spanish flyer! MY LIFE is also looking for volunteers (click HERE) and offering exhibitor space (click HERE) at this year’s MY Fest.

Community Engagement Kickoff

You raised your voice! We raised the bar!! Change is possible! Change is now!

The Arizona Department of Health Services, Division of Behavioral Health Services, Office of Individual and Family Affairs will host an invitation-only kick off meeting on March 6th for the transition to Integrated Health Care. You have raised your voice and we raised the bar. For more details, view the Raise Your Voice Report or contact Victoria McCloney.

The DBHS’ Blog Connection

Bring Mental Illness Out of the Shadows

Fifty years ago Tuesday, President John Kennedy shattered the national silence when he delivered a message to Congress in which he called for a bold new community-based approach to mental illness that emphasized prevention, treatment, education, and recovery.

In the half century since, we’ve made tremendous progress as a country when it comes to attitudes about mental health. But recent events have reminded us that we still have a long way to go to bring mental health fully out of the shadows... read entire blog post.

To submit an article: email your article to DBHSCommunications@azdhs.gov no later than the 15th of each month for publication the following month, pending on space available. Maximum length is 200 words, must be in an editable word document and picture(s) included within the document. By submitting an article you authorize the Editorial Board to edit as appropriate. Bylines or independent writers’ names are not included in the publication, instead you can include a link to your website or resources within the article. Thank you!

Mental Health: Everyone Has It!