



Crestwood Recovery Resilience Solutions

Organizational Recovery: A Bridge to Leadership

by Dr. Lori Ashcraft

We've now completed a four-part series on culture shifting and will soon begin a series on recovery leadership. I can't think of a better way to bridge these two important topics than to share my interview with Edye Schwartz with you. There are a lot of ways to describe Edye. Her official title is Edye Schwartz, DSW, LCSW, Principal at Edye Schwartz Consulting, LLC. But this does not begin to describe the depth and breadth of her experience and knowledge since she has done so many amazing things. If I am only allowed one word to describe her, it would be "sage." Her combination of a lifetime of learning, growing, creating, and contributing gives her a broad base of wisdom to share with us.

Last spring our boss, Dr. Patty Blum, suggested we procure Edye's consultation services to help us develop a strategic plan for Recovery and Resilience Solutions (RRS). This was a very good idea because we had our heads down and hadn't looked up for a while to see where we wanted to go and to agree on how to get there. Edye's approach was so helpful and empowering. Before she left town, we recorded an interview with her so we could share it with you once we went live with Viva La Evolution.

During the interview, Edye shines the light on several key points that are crucial for developing and leading an organization whose heart is anchored deep in recovery approaches. Let me recount the highlights for you here.

- Save room for experimentation. Try new things and keep what works. Don't worry about making mistakes in the interest of finding the most effective approaches.
- Once you've settled on the theories that support your vision and mission, it's time to put them into action. Here's where the heavy lifting takes place so be ready to put your heart into creating a program that you know will support people in their recovery.
- If you catch yourself complaining, know that you are using precious energy on getting

nowhere. Funnel that energy into making the necessary changes that will be satisfying and productive.

- Consider the different leadership styles. Leaders need to know their strengths and weaknesses and surround themselves with those who can compensate for their weak areas.
- Always create a recovery culture before adding peers to your workforce. Peers are wonderful change agents, but they need a supportive environment in order to thrive.
- Create opportunities for staff to see people who are in recovery. It's hard to believe in recovery if you never see it happen.
- Be on the lookout for macro and micro aggressions. They can be blind spots that undermine your best intentions.
- When people come into your program, tell them what they can expect from you and what you will expect of them. Give them enough information about the program to make an educated decision about joining.

From a business point of view, recovery-based programs make a lot of sense. There will be better staff retention, better outcomes, easier recruitment, and good publicity.

Thank you Edye for your wisdom, your spirit, and your continuing enthusiasm for creating recovery oriented programs.

We have attached a survey tool (see below) that you can use to assess the level of recovery you have in your programs. We developed this tool a few years back and have continued to use it in various projects. We've found it to be a very helpful way to objectively determine the areas of a program that need overhauling. We suggest you also have some of the people you serve complete the survey so you'll have their valuable input on how they experience your program.

