Recovery Resilience Solutions

PEER REVIEW

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Peer-to-Peer Insights from Crestwood Recovery Resilience Solutions

"Recovery and healing happen in relationship." - PSL for the 21st Century

A Message from Patty Blum

Creativity at CRRS

Crestwood Recovery Resilience Solutions (CRRS) is excited to celebrate our 5th Anniversary this summer! During the past 5 years we have grown, evolved and become more innovative. As we celebrate, we are also reflecting on what we have accomplished, our current path, and plans for the future. As part of this process, we have been looking at how we **discover**, how we **create**, how we **activate** and how we **sustain** our resilience. Last month we explored the topic of discovery, and this month we will be looking at **creativity!**

Creativity

Creativity is defined as the ability to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others and entertaining ourselves and others (*California State University, Northridge*). Creativity connects the purpose and meaning of what we do with the soul. It is at the deepest level allowing our divine purpose to be evident in this world. Researcher and author, Arne Dietrich, has identified four types of creativity with corresponding brain activities:

1. Deliberate and cognitive creativity.
2. Deliberate and emotional creativity.
3. Spontaneous and cognitive creativity.
4. Spontaneous and emotional creativity.

Creativity allows our originality, something not often seen or recognized today, to be present and highlighted. It is a place to exercise imagination. This is where creativity does not even have to be beyond our own ethos or spirit. Resourcefulness and critical thinking are rooted in creativity. This is the asking of questions, evaluating situations, leading to judgment and strategic intention. Creativity is the mother of all inventions. It is the core of our humanity. It is what enables us to grow, to fall and get back up, to thrive and to inspire at the highest level.

Creativity is at the core of who the CRRS team is and what we do! May we continue to explore our own creative interests as we celebrate CRRS' 5th Anniversary, along with honoring May as Mental Health Awareness month.

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Storing Light in a Hurting Jar

By Chris Martin

One warm summer evening when fireflies were lighting up my grandparents' farmyard, my seven-year-old sister had a brilliant idea. Since she was a year older and a lot wiser, I usually followed her lead. And this time **she proposed we collect as many fireflies as we could and put them into a large mason jar.** We figured if we could fill the jar, we would have a light so bright and powerful, it would light up a room in the house - maybe even two. So we asked our grandfather to nail holes into the lid of the mason jar; then we stuffed grass into the bottom so the fireflies had something to eat. We figured they ate grass.

By the time our bedtime neared, we must have stuffed about a hundred fireflies into that jar. **But the light wasn't as bright as we had expected.** The fireflies weren't all blinking at the same time. In fact, some seemed not to light up at all. All of them were crawling around the jar like they were looking for an opening. We decided we would need to collect many more the next night. But our grandfather had a different idea. **He told us that by keeping them in a jar overnight, we would be hurting them.** So we reluctantly opened the lid and let them go.

Years later, I learned that fireflies actually light up to keep from being hurt. Their light wards off predators by reminding them they don't taste good. This is due to a chemical in the fireflies' bodies called *lucibufagins.* The other purpose of their light is to help them connect and communicate with each other to procreate. Perhaps an irony is that it's also their light that sometimes gets them put into hurting jars by children on warm summer evenings.

I've discovered that the human heart can sometimes be like a hurting jar. **Our light can be dimmed when we stuff in real or perceived hurts.** It lowers when we measure and get measured against others instead of remembering we're sisters and brothers. It gets faint when we keep a tally of every wrong while the burden gets heavier and the list becomes long. It can start to flicker when we focus too much on being right rather than being light. You see, I know what it means to hold onto a hurting jar; do you?

So what does it take to open it up so our light can reach its connective and creative purpose? The most difficult part is loosening the lid, especially when it has tightened over time. It can take a lot of strength to turn it toward the right. And that right way is sometimes about doing the hard work of forgiveness or maybe it's just about forgiving ourselves. It can be about generously giving grace and looking for what's good and positive in everyone. **It takes a strong resolve to overcome the reluctance that contains our light.** But as we let it go, it ends up freeing all that can be hurting us on the inside. And as always, love makes the turning around a lot easier.

When we release our light, then we can shine it so brightly that it will not only illuminate our way, but also give light to the path of others. So the next time you watch the fireflies light up the sky on those warm summer evenings, you can be sure that someone somewhere has opened up another hurting jar. And the proof is in all that light.

Self-Love

By Denise Coderre

How many of us
Truly love ourselves?
How it shows
Just like hieroglyphics.
We need to take the time
To enjoy the little things.
Instead of wasting away
All our individual gifts.
We need to forgive ourselves,
And give ourselves some grace.
We need to turn our Worlds around,
And actually live a different way.
We need to live for today,
Always hoping for tomorrow.
We need to leave the past behind,
And stop trying to hit rewind.
We each learn from our yesterday's,
Believing in ourselves.
For each of us is enough,
Worthy of all our Love.

The Simplest Way to Build a More Connected Life

By Gloriana Hunter

When I started my peer support career, I kept a ritual to help me stay connected with the people I served at work and be present in my personal life outside of work. **On my morning commute, I'd play music to help me engage in positivity.** When I parked, I would get my badge from the center console and ceremoniously clip it on. When I left work, I would unclip my badge, tuck it back into the console, and turn on music to focus on relaxation and fun.

This small action gave me the mindset to stay connected with people who were struggling and feeling beaten down. It helped me hold space in conversations for them to take the lead and express themselves. I was tuned into underlying messages that weren't expressed. I held the hope when they felt hopeless and focused on their strengths and potential.

It also helped me with my colleagues. I was patient with system changes and kept an attitude of collaboration. I spoke up when needed, with kindness. I kept optimism, gratitude, and helpfulness in the forefront. I kept myself accountable and made internal changes as needed. I leaned into a servant leader's heart.

As I grew my career, I mostly worked with people entering or building their careers in peer support or with leaders who were equally collaborative with our shared vision. I didn't wear a badge or have a regular commute, and the music and badge ritual drifted away.

Then, not long ago, I spoke with my spouse about an unshakeable heaviness in my heart. "You're carrying your workday into the evening," she said. "Every day, you support people's hopes and dreams, but you're keeping them with you. They're not yours." Her insight continued, "You prep for work every morning but do nothing else. What can you do to release everyone else's energy so you have room for yours?"

With her wisdom in mind, I created a ritual – small enough to do and big enough to create mindfulness and intention. I fill a little bottle with water every morning and set it on my desk. At the end of the day, I imagine everyone's hopes and dreams leaving me and swirling into the water. Then I go outside and, with gratitude, empty the contents into the roots of a tree.

It is working, too. **Since starting my ritual, I have felt more connected to that inner place of peace and more relaxed at work and home.**

What rituals do you use to stay connected to yourself at work and home? What are you inspired to try? Email your ideas to us. We would love to share it.

Time flies when you're having fun! It's hard to believe how quickly these weeks are flying by—and for us, it's because the CRRS team has been incredibly busy doing the things that we love—**supporting Communities of Wellness.**

We ended March with an invitation by Santa Barbara Behavioral Wellness to present at the California Southern Counties Regional Partnership annual event in Pomona, March 26-27, that was focused on Whole Person Integrated Care. **We presented on the importance and value of having well-trained Peer Support Specialists truly integrated into the service delivery team.** It was also a great opportunity to attend highly informative, inspirational, and interactive presentations, to connect with our HCAI Grant partnering agencies and friends, including Santa Barbara, Orange County, San Diego, and Kern counties, and to make new friends. There was a lot of synergy around peer support and its impact on recovery outcomes. **Thank you, Santa Barbara for our invitation!**

Throughout the month of April, CRRS was engaged with our Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Crisis Care Mobilization Unit Training Academy as we continue working with some truly dedicated and inspiring leaders there to create a robust recovery culture to support their communities' recovery needs and goals.

CRRS continues with our Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification (MC PSSC) Training (MC PSSC)--"Peer Support Learning for the 21st Century"-- both online and onsite. **Visit RecoveryResilienceSolutions.com** to pre-register for our scheduled online MC PSSC Training. We've also had the pleasure of facilitating Peer Support Learning for the 21st Century onsite in Orange County, Stanislaus County, Fresno County, and are gearing up for heading back to Orange County, in June. **If you are interested in bringing us to your site for the 80-hour MC PSSC Training, we'd love to connect with you.**

CRRS is also in the planning stages of scheduling CMPSS Specialization Training for Parent, Caregiver, Family Member Peers and Peer Support for Individuals who are Justice Involved. We will be reaching out to our agency partners to begin scheduling those 40-hour online trainings. Please stay tuned as these opportunities develop and get calendared.

We look forward to the beautiful May blossoms of recovery and resilience. **We wish you a joyous and fruitful month!**

- **Jim Ritchie, CRRS Director of Operations**

Viva la Evolution!

A podcast on Growth, Resilience, and Transformation

- Promote the recovery process with individuals and teams.
- Shift your organization's culture to a recovery focus that builds resilience
- Listen to interviews with important leaders in the recovery field and hear from people who are in recovery and how they got there.
- Discover unique ways peer support specialists can support your team and enhance recovery service outcomes.

Join The Conversation!

Recovery Practices for Leaders Bootcamp

Re-imagining Recovery Service Leadership for the 21st Century

Tuition: $1,500 per person, or $1,200 per person for agencies that register three or more people.
Join us in the near future for a fun, exciting, and engaging action packed three-day professional recovery leadership development workshop in beautiful San Diego, CA. Crestwood's Recovery Resilience Solutions Team ensures you will:

Restore, re-energize, and re-ignite the passion for your work as a recovery service leader.
Gain certification as a Resilient Culture Playbook Coach.
Receive confidential/ anonymous feedback from your direct reporting staff on your recovery leadership skills.
17 Continuing Education (CE) units authorized by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and Board of Registered Nursing (BRN)

- Pre-workshop assignment to customize your learning experience
- Post-workshop technical support at 30, 60 and 90 days

Contact Us to Register
Jim Ritchie | James.Ritchie@cbhi.net
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When: Dates TBD | 8:30AM - 5:00PM
Where: The Peer Employment Learning Center at 4085 Colts Way, San Diego, CA 92115

Inaugural Recovery Practices for Leaders Bootcamp training. San Diego, CA. March, 2024

What our Bootcamp leaders have to say:

"Thank you! An unexpected, informative fun, and a new start opened my perception of how to be a leader."

"Classroom learning is hard for me. It is difficult for me to sit in one spot for too long or maintain focus. I was dreading an 8-hour classroom day for this reason. My expectations were far exceeded. The class was engaging and actually fun. It was not just information dumping which will help me retain more of it."

"Wonderful leadership workshop and amazing insights."

"Amazing workshop, and great team-building, I learned an abundant amount of knowledge to bring back to my own facility."

"One of the most informative trainings I've been to. Great work you guys."