

Support Dogs for PTSD



Service dogs for veterans with PTSD turn lives around

Master Corporal Bill Nachuk, an active Canadian Armed Forces member, is a veteran of the conflicts in Bosnia and Afghanistan. His PTSD was so severe, he attempted suicide four times. His life has turned around since he applied for and was given Gambler, an Australian Cattle Dog, who has become his constant companion. Since Gambler came into his life, Nachuk is off medication and can continue his military career and is on his way to a promotion to Sergeant, however the dog is always ready if Bill's PTSD symptoms appear.

"If I get very emotional for an extended period of time, he'll actually sit up or he'll whine," said Bill. "He'll put his head on my lap. He'll do something to break me out of that moment and bring me back to now."

Read more: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/w5/dog-tags-takes-on-new-meaning-in-program-for-soldiers-with-ptsd-1.1040190#ixzz3NtvzUQFK>

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PERSPECTIVE

Canadian Mental
Health Association
Kings County Branch
Mental health for all



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February 1- 7, 2015



Atypical Depression

When we think of depression, most of us understand it as prolonged sadness, feelings of hopelessness and guilt, and even major fatigue, but there are many subtypes as well. Atypical depression, though common, seems to be less understood as a form of depression. In addition to the regular symptoms of depression, atypical depression can include weight gain, excessive sleep, difficulty making decisions, and feeling mentally paralyzed – all of which affect productivity.

According to WebMD, atypical depression is “believed to be the result of impaired functioning of brain circuits that regulate mood, and that allow one region of the brain to communicate with another.” A psychiatrist may recommend antidepressant medication to balance the brain’s mood chemicals, and/or psychotherapy. The best chance at recovery requires your commitment at home:

- Stick to the treatment – attend all psychotherapy appointments and always take prescribed medication
- Learn about the illness – knowledge is power; it will encourage you to continue treatment as well as help your family to support you
- Identify warning signs – learn your triggers and avoid them
- Get exercise – it will reduce your symptoms
- Avoid illegal drugs and alcohol – over time they can make your symptoms worse and harder to treat

On those days when you are feeling mentally paralyzed, there are simple and necessary strategies you can implement to accomplish tasks:

1. Write down problems and choose one to work on.
2. Write down several solutions to that problem and choose the one you think would be most effective.
3. Make a plan – what resources you will need, who can help you, and how much time you need.

You can learn more at <http://www.depression.org.nz/waythrough/self+help/problem+solving>. Here you will find information on at-home solutions to many depression-related problems. During times of crisis, call the Nova Scotia Mental Health Crisis Line at 1-888-429-8167.

By Dena Walker

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A MENTAL HEALTH
PERSPECTIVE

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PROJECT HOPE (Formerly “Shelter Me”)



Project H.O.P.E. is designed to assist individuals living with mental illness in Kings County who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to implement long-term solutions to obtain and retain housing. The services include housing placement, eviction prevention, referral to appropriate agencies, skills training, ongoing support, and case management to minimize barriers to finding and retaining housing.

To reach Project H.O.P.E., call 902-679-

7573 or email hope.lead@cmhakings.ns.ca.

Annual Christmas Party Acknowledgements

On Friday December 19th, CMHA-Kings hosted their 2nd annual seasonal celebration for clients, staff, families and volunteers. Thanks to community sponsors, 86 people ate a full festive meal, and presents were given to 24 children and 34 adults. A “Big Thank You” goes out to all sponsors and volunteers who made the party a success.

Thank you

Peer Support: Together We Are Strong

Peer support occurs when two or more mental health consumers get together to share their experience, strength, and hope with each other. It is a great feeling when people can connect with others experiencing the same thing and know they are not all alone in life.

Peer support is not based on psychiatry and professional/patient treatment methods; rather it is based on people sharing a common experience with each other and finding ways to help each other find recovery. There is nothing more powerful than people engaging in this type of self-help. Psychiatry deals with a different aspect of treatment than does peer support and while it is an important part of treatment, especially prescribed medication, people getting together and sharing with each other is very beneficial.

There is a "From Recovery to Discovery Peer Support Group" that meets in Halifax. It is a joint effort between the Schizophrenia Society of NS and the Healthy Minds Cooperative. This group is for anyone with any form of mental illness as well as family members or friends of people with a mental illness. The meetings provide the opportunity to share strengths, gain self-empowerment, and find ways to live a life of meaning and purpose. The meetings are held once a week. During the first hour there is a presentation. The second hour is devoted to a group discussion. The group gets together every Thursday between 6:30 and 8:30 pm. The meeting place is the Atlantic Superstore at 1075 Barrington Street. If you wish to contact the group or find out the subject for the week you can call 1-902-465-2601 or e-mail ssns@bellaliant.com.

By Tony Legere



References:

"What is Peer Support?" [Centre of Excellence in Peer Support](http://www.peersupportvic.org/what-is-peer-support). 12 December 2014.

"From Recovery to Discovery." [Healthy Minds Cooperative](http://www.healthyminds.ca/index.php?page_id=50). 2014. 12 December 2014.

In the News

Having a strong identification with a social group, such as a choir or a sports club, can help protect you against mental illness. In a study, Professor Fabio Sani and his colleagues at the University of Dundee investigated the link between group identification - one's sense of belonging to a group, coupled with one's sense of commonality with in-group members - and mental health.

In the study, Scottish adults who did not identify with any group were found to be almost 20 times more likely to be depressed, and three times more likely to have been prescribed antidepressants in the last six months than those who identified with their family, their local community, and the social group of their choosing.

Professor Fabio Sani says: "Group life may shield people from depression. In addition, the more groups we identify with, the better our mental health is likely to be."

The Protective Power Belonging to Social Groups.
<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/286445.php>



A new study suggests that working in shifts rather than fixed hours could lead to impairment of the functioning of the brain. Researchers examining the impact of shift work have found that long-term shift work - for 10 or more years - had a strong negative impact on the health of the brain, and although the effects could be reversed, full recovery could take as long as 5 years. Their work has been published online in *Occupational & Environmental Medicine*.

Could Shift Work Impair Brain Functioning?
<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/284827.php>

AVD CLUBHOUSE INVITES YOU!

**FREE!
ALL WELCOME!**

ARTS PROGRAM
Thursday 1-4 @ Wolf Baptist Church & Friday 1-4 @ CMHA-Kings
(pre-registration required for art programs)

Indoor floor hockey
Tuesdays 1-2:30 Louis Millett

MUSIC JAM SESSION
WEDNESDAYS, 10-12 | MILLETT COMPLEX, NEW MINAS

FOR PROGRAM INFO:
670-4103
facebook.com/CMHAKings
or email:
club@cmhakings.ns.ca

What has zero calories and could help you shed your weight problem?

TALKING.

Eating Disorder Information and Support
1-866-NEDIC-20 or 416-340-4156
nedic.ca

nedic 30 years National Eating Disorder Information Centre
THERE FOR EVERY BODY SINCE 1985

**Eating Disorder Awareness Week:
Talking Saves Lives
February 1-7, 2015**

A Mental Health Perspective Mission Statement:

The purpose of this newsletter is to bring faith, hope and courage to members of the local mental health community of Kings County, Nova Scotia, as well as others who are involved with a mental, emotional or psychological condition.



Donations (cheque or money order) to support this newsletter and other important programs and services can be made to CMHA-Kings, 11 Opportunity Lane Suite 3 Box 10 Coldbrook NS B4R 0A5
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