

Becoming a Radical Advocate for Self-Determination

*A Revolutionary Perspective in the PSR/
Recovery Movements*

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What we will cover today:

1. Brief history of the the recovery movement & the similarities between the recovery movement.
2. Worldview.
3. What is Self-Determination.
4. Becoming a radical advocate of self-determination.

I. History — *(not the put you to sleep kind...I hope...)*

What is a (social) movement?

a group of people working together to advance their shared political, social, or artistic ideas.

synonyms: political group, party, faction, wing, lobby, camp.

Famous movements and causes:

- Civil Rights Movement
- Women's Suffrage Movement
- Labour movement
- LGBTQ social movements
- Occupy Movement

Recovery Movement

History of the Recovery Movement

Peer Support Movement has championed the message and process of recovery over the century but only recently has it's message been recognized in the mental health system:

- “Alleged Lunatics’ Friend Society”: 1854, London
- The Mental Hygiene Movement: Clifford D. Beers early 1900s
- Recovery Inc, Group of 30 ex-patients 1937
- US Civil Rights Movement encourages marginalized groups to organize themselves for social change
- Consumer Survivor Movement. Began in the 1960-1970 fights against poor conditions

History of the Recovery Movement

- In 1975 the Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) organization called IAPSRS (International Association of Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services) was formed.
- Mad Pride – Toronto, Canada–September 18, 1993
- 1997 Mary Ellen Copeland conducts a study that becomes WRAP

Key Radical Advocates to know in the Consumer/Survivor Movement.

- As mentioned before – Mary Ellen Copeland - *WRAP*
- Judi Chamberlin
- Pat Deegan – *Common Ground*
- Shery Mead- *Intentional Peer Support*
- Dan Fisher – *National Empowerment Center*
- Pat Caponi

Long held message of the movement validated
by longitudinal study.

Courtney Harding's Vermont Psychiatric Hospital Study 1987

- Studied outcomes for 262 severely disabled discharged patients
- **68%** recovered completely or made significant gains in both psychiatric status and social functioning
 - 34% fully recovered
 - 34% improved significantly

Definition of Recovery

A deeply personal, unique process of changing one's attitude, values, feelings, goals, skills and/or roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life even with limitations... Recovery involves the development of new meaning and purpose in one's life as one grows beyond the catastrophic effects of mental illness.”

-Bill Anthony, PhD

“The goal of recovery is not to become normal. The goal is to embrace the human vocation of becoming more deeply, more fully human.”

– “Recovery as a Journey of the Heart” (online article) by Pat Deegan

2. What is Worldview?

Worldview

- **1.** The overall perspective from which one sees and interprets the world.
- **2.** A collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or a group.

*“Every person carries in his head a mental model of the world—a **subjective** representation of external reality.”*

~ Alvin Toffler

Our worldview is composed of all of this, and more:

- *The city we grew up in. Was it rural or did we grow up in the city?*
- *Our cultural background.*
- *Our religious background.*
- *Family and birth order in our family.*
- *Our family's socioeconomic position.*
- *Our experience of death.*
- *Have we experienced abuse or bullying?*
- *What access to the media have we had, what books have we read?*
- *What kind of education did we have?*
- *What's our experience in the workforce?*
- *What do we believe about wellness and recovery?*

Where our worldview gets in the way...

Everything we know is subjective.

If we perceive the world through our worldview, then we interact with the world through the lens of our worldview.

We interpret stimulus that comes our way through the filter of our worldview. Our perceptions come from the subjective “knowledge” we have gained through living life

“A worldview is a way of viewing or interpreting all of reality. It is an interpretive framework through which or by which one makes sense of the data of life and the world.”

~ Norman Geisler and William Watkins

“A worldview...is a conceptual scheme by which we consciously or unconsciously place or fit everything we believe and by which we interpret and judge reality.”

~ Ronald H. Nash

Autopilot

- Alvin Toffler compared our worldview to a giant filing cabinet.
- If we had to stop and think about how to drive to work, or how to do regular daily activities, it would be difficult to get anything done.
- Living on autopilot can be a problem when we don't make the realization that everything we do and think stems from our personal worldview.

Little j, **BIG J** Judgments

little j: making choices quickly about things like how to get somewhere, how to make coffee, what to do when you spill water on your computer...

BIG J: Broad, sweeping judgments where we fill in narratives about things we don't know and we make assumptions.

Mindfulness

Ellen Langer defines mindfulness as the act of noticing things.

Since the state of being 100% non-judgmental is close to impossible, we can strive to be mindful around when we find ourselves making judgments about others.

3. Self-Determination

Self-Determination – how do we support others in their journeys?

self-determination

n

1. the power or ability to make a decision for oneself without influence from outside

2. (Government, Politics & Diplomacy) the right of a nation or people to determine its own form of government without influence from outside

Self-Determination

“When you speak to me about your deepest questions, you do not want to be fixed or saved: you want to be seen and heard, to have your truth acknowledged and honoured.”

~Parker J. Palmer

Self-Determination

In our culture there is a strong tendency to look to others (experts) to fix us, or give us answers and advice. Society tends to focus on problems, rather than strengths, and problems need a solution. We have a “let’s fix this” mentality a lot of the time.

So who else do we look to fix those glaring problems?
Well the “*experts*” of course!

Here’s a thought; What if you are an expert on you? AND
What if everyone you know is also expert on themselves?

A paradigm shift.

Clinician's Illusion (coined by - cohen and Cohen 1984) :

“The clinician's sample is biased toward cases of long duration, since the probability that a case will appear in a prevalence sample is proportional to its duration, hence "the clinician's illusion.”

4. Becoming a Radical Advocate of Self-Determination

- Advice vs Support
- Letting go of the need to own an outcome. (holding the system need for outcomes loosely).
- Learning to sit with our own discomfort.
- Facilitating a dialogue with people we support, around finding their why (the big questions underneath goals). How do you want to feel?

Support vs. Help

- Support the person's inner teacher/expert, and their resilience.
- Sometimes the expert we are, gets lost in the muck and mire.
- Support is about shining a light on someone's strengths, being an encouragement, rather than fixing, or doing things for someone.

Here's another illustration of this important point.

“A man found a cocoon of a butterfly.

One day a small opening appeared; he sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole.

Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no farther.

Then the man decided to help the butterfly, so he took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the Cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings.

The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time.

Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly.

What this man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting Cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon."

- Author Unknown

In Conclusion

This shift is simple, but radical:

1. It involves understanding the *history* of where we come from, what recovery means, and the resilience we all have.
2. Understanding our *worldview* and biases and how they affect the service we provide.

In Conclusion

3. Knowing what *self-determination* is, and becoming mindful about the role our worldview plays in supporting others.
4. The importance of sitting with the discomfort that might come from holding back “help”, and making space for *the person to choose their own outcome*.