

# peer press

**Recovery-Focused Community Newsletter**  
**Bringing the Community Together**

**Presented by Jade Park (he/they), CPC**

# Agenda

- Intro
- Community Newsletter
- The Power of Storytelling
- Creativity
- Advocacy
- Affirmation
- Q&A and Feedback





Letter to my son by *Noel I.*

Gratitude by *Angie K.*

Meeting a peer bridger by *Ken M.*

What I learned by *Juliana B.*

Insight by *Christina W.*

Strange medicine by *Dr. Dana Dieringer*

Up close & personal by *Shelley G.*

Sal and Goldi by *Jeremy E.*

Distinguished Staff  
Nominee Teri Jo  
Punteney

Interview by Maria P.

HMHAS News

Peer Support

S.T.E.P.

O.B.O.T.

Resources

Shelters

# Intro

- Harborview Medical Center  
Inpatient Psychiatry  
Mental Health & Addiction Services
- Peer-driven
- Recovery-focused
- Monthly/Bi-monthly

# Community Newsletter

- Engaged
- Informed
- Connected
- Empowered
- Celebrated



# Community Newsletter

- Relevant Content
- Tailor to the Purpose
- Authenticity
- Visual Presentation
- Consistency
- Advocacy

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Bringing the community together

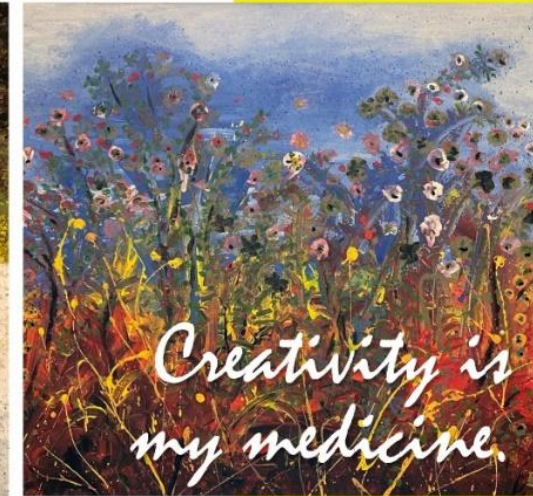
"Mental health is too important to leave to the professionals alone."

- Vikram Patel

Harborview Medical Center

Psychiatry

Mental Health and Addiction Services



*I'm not the only one by Carlette B.*

*On forgiving my mother by Virginia L.*

*On porcupines and relationships by Owen R.*

*When rock gets contemplative: Songs of support for those coping with suicidal ideation by Ken M.*

*Poems by Jason P., Felicity V., and Teresa W.*

*Up close and personal with Liza N.*

*Interview with Quil F. by Maria P.*

*Art by 5WA peers*

*Photography by Teri Jo P.*

*Jazz Love by Lucca K.*

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Harborview Medical Center

Psychiatry

Mental Health and Addiction Services



I saw God's face by Jason P.

One last time by Liza N.

Don't give up by Jade P.

Interview: Jac D. by Maria P.

Coming out by Ari L.

Return policy by Heath B.

Traffic light by Allen K.

Coffee beware by CJ H.

Interview by Jeremy E.

## Safety, Restraint, Seclusion Taskforce

by Dr. Dana Dieringer

# The Power of Storytelling *Empowerment Authenticity*

# I Saw God's Face

By Jason P.

I saw God's face. It was a nurse who ran around in a too poor over crowded hospital in Renton. They ran too fast moving and grooving and helping everyone they saw. That person with the smoothest voice looked and sounded like a god to me. They saw my friend Jose and saw that Jose needed help the most that night. That person looked like a god to me. God to me looked like a non-binary peer counselor who showed up to every meeting with the tools of healing and hugs even though those were frowned upon. This counselor just held us strong almost as if just by their strength they could fix and mend the broken in us. And maybe they did. They gave us their culture and made us feel seen and human. When others, doctors and nurses, made us feel like patients. They made us feel like friends and human. They believed in us and their rock hard solid belief in us helped us find our way back to ourselves. I saw a god in this solid as a rock person.

I see God everyday in my brother. When my mom's hands were too shaky from giving her dad's eulogy, my brother took her into a room to feed her himself. When I was at my worst most manic and needing someone to just let me walk and talk out some steam, my brother did that for me even though it was a super hard confusing walk for both of us and gave him lots of anxiety. He fought the whole damn confusing health care system for me and got me as he always did and has done home. He showed up with such brotherly care, fear, and compassion. I see god in him. I see God in all three of these people as Les Miserables taught to love another person is to see the face of God. My mom raised me on that play and those words are the crescendo and I know them to be true. We can all be gods but only in that we love others and care for them fully and without constraints. To fully love another person requires forgoing our ego and leaving it on the altar as sacrifice only in that path can we see another as purely and truly as is needed. My bipolar eyes see this and know it true. You can trust me as I have walked and ran with gods as most gods don't really stop running; they have too much to do.

# Don't give up.

Anonymous

The first time I saw him in the inpatient psychiatry, he se He was there, but he wasn't really there. It was not beca his hope.

"What happened to him?" I thought to myself. I saw mys peers. Complete hopelessness. The darkness suffocate know what hopelessness feels like. I know what it did to It wasn't that long ago when I learned what dissociation lost, confused, and disconnected. Hundreds of thousan year-old-self staring at the breathless human bodies. U was me. That's what happened. I watched myself hangl ready to throw me against the wall. Dissociation. I watcl The abuse lasted for another ten years. I grew up in fear die. I stopped talking. I stopped existing. Every night I wi morning and save me. My wishes never came true. I stop Home? Home is a place of abuse. Home is a place of te safe anywhere. I got really good at covering up my fear, I knew what I was feeling. No one knows what I feel.

The tiny light inside me never died. No, it wasn't tiny. It v There was something out there for me. My purpose.

He didn't talk. He didn't make eye contact. I invited him One day he came. He sat down quietly. He drank the tea thanked me and left. He came to every tea group since t flickering light inside him. Hope. I saw hope.

One day he asked me quietly, "I want to get GED. How do I do that? Can you help me?" I saw more and more flickering lights inside him. Fragile and timid. But they were alive. I felt a shift in him.

Sadly, his depression and psychosis were overpowering. He struggled. One day he told me, "I wish my mom would take care of me." I felt a stabbing pain in my heart. We are not much different. We feel the same. I remembered the silent wishes I had when I was growing up.

Despair. A failed suicide attempt. Hopelessness. Substance abuse. Risky behaviors. More self-destructive behavior. That's how things go. Story of my life.

Someone said this to me. "You can't fix everything. That's not your job. Just be there for your peers. That's important, too." But I want to fix everything for the peers. I know I can't. That makes me angry.

Things weren't going well for him in the psych ward. It was decided that he couldn't stay with us any longer. Is this the end for him? What's going to happen to him? Another loss.

The last time I saw him was in his seclusion. Empty room. Gloomy ceiling light. The maddening construction noise. Couldn't get any worse. He seemed completely detached from this world. He was just lying there unable to move. Hopelessness had completely consumed him. The flickering lights had disappeared without a trace. He turned his head and looked at me.

"You came to see me? Good to see you. Thank you, Jade."

I held his hand and told him, "Don't give up. Don't ever give up on your life. You still have hope. Don't give up! I'm still here."

"Thank you, Jade. You are my brother. I won't give up. I promise."

He squeezed my hand.

"When the officers come to take you, don't resist. Just go with them, OK? Don't fight with them."

I left the room and walked away feeling lost.

I hope he doesn't give up. I hope he doesn't forget his promise. I hope his tiny flickering lights come back. Every hope matters. He matters. That's what I believe.

## MY STORY



I spent the vast majority of my life homeless. Some of my earliest memories are of traveling, drifting from family member to family members/ family friend's places, sleeping on the floor or camper. Other times, sleeping in a van or staying in a shelter, like Salvation Army in Ocala, Florida or a women's halfway house out in the boonies of Missouri (how fitting that was in Washington County if memory serves).

I remember my mom exhausting herself with various factory jobs trying to take care of me and my brothers. Things started looking up when my mother met my dad, Jack. He helped to alleviate a lot of the burden on her in the form of support and love I can only dream to have one day, though my mother still worked a lot. Jack, though he was sick, still was able to help keep her head up and come out of herself. One of my biggest regrets is that he and I started off not on the best footing. I'm just glad we grew close in the end.

By the time I was maybe around the age of 13 or 14, I started venturing out on my own more and more. When I was 15, I stayed briefly with my biological father. I grew to despise him, and things got overwhelming, so I officially struck out on my own. I made my way to Springfield, Missouri on foot. A few folks picked me up along the way and helped me get closer to Springfield a little bit at a time. Once there, I decided to continue to be self-sufficient and gather resources.

After a few years I was doing well. My partner and I had a place, though my name wasn't on the lease. Then we both grew weary of Springfield and Missouri as a whole. We started doing research and building a list of resources and comparing information with options for Seattle. Travel guides, YouTube videos, the works. We stumbled across a video of a Mr. Lantz Rowland giving a tour and explaining the concept of self-managed encampments. It felt like magic, it was such a beautiful concept. We made our plan and headed out.

## MY STORY

We arrived in Seattle after 3 days on a cramped Greyhound bus and hit up the outdoor meal site under the bridge on 6<sup>th</sup> and Cherry, then headed to Tukwila to check in at Tent City 3 on Halloween 2012. Since then, I have been an active activist and participant of Share/Wheel and Nickelsville off and on. I've even taken up leadership roles and spoken to City Council, in other forums, and at other events.

Back there in Missouri, my mom's going for a job that makes 18 dollars an hour. That'll cover everything, rent, bills, food. Up here it's different. While the pay here is much more, so is the cost of living, making getting back on your feet quite the struggle. Yes, it's doable but not in such a strict timeline as the city gives most shelters for how long a participant can receive assistance.

When we got the stimulus checks during Covid, here in Seattle the money went quickly. Rent costs more and a single stimulus check doesn't cover it; meanwhile multiple months of rent with it. It was ludicrous to not have the area's average cost of living so that it actually assisted

At Tent City 3, Jarvis, the camp's bookkeeper gave me a lot of help. About a decade later, I got into Nickelsville. There, it was started working at Amazon and was able to move in with a friend, and went to work at Funko, but lost that when the contract at Nintendo. I moved back to Missouri when I came back to Nickelsville 2 years ago.

That's when I learned that living at Nickelsville had given me what I didn't have the self-advocacy and the skills learned just by having the credentials to do what I'm doing now. Working with a person has their own story, and their own rate of recovery. It's also what I learned from self-management: person of staff telling you what to do. It gives you a sense of purpose staying in this hole.

I worked for 3 months while living at Nickelsville, saved money was 90 days, but I needed a lot longer than that. Sadly, instead of building a decent nest egg of funds, to ease the experience that putting any timeframe on folks recovery is a deterrent to any hope of people to get back on their feet.

What I said earlier, about everyone having their own reason for dissociative identity disorder, I used to just wake up and not see what other people see in the mirror due to my trauma. It took me 20 years to take off the mask. That's not the

## MY STORY

for us who are anti-social, Nickelsville helped, because I had to go to meetings, I had to pass people on my way to the bathrooms and showers. These small brief interactions, while minor to some, were instrumental to my recovery and adjusting. It kept me from totally withdrawing into my shell.

That time I spent at Nickelsville, I was also developing the skills I use in my job as a peer support specialist. All of PC or triad stuff we were doing, everything we naturally do as leadership, managing what everyone else is going through, trying to find some way to connect to people, meet them at their level... It's all experience for peer counseling. Most of the things we're doing here at work were things we were doing at the village.

Now I'm still organizing with SHARE and Nickelsville. I drew up a list of self-managed shelters to give to people. A staff member at WHEEL reached out to me to come to WHEEL and talk to people and offer peer support services for participants. There's one guy who needs professional medical help but is too anxious to get it. I could help him as a peer support specialist. There are lots of people like that in shelters I could start talking to. Before, I'd be too anxious to do anything like that, but now I've got all this experience through SHARE and Nickelsville, and I'm doing it all the time.

Draven speaking for Nickelsville at STOP THE SWEEPS rally  
November 2, 2022





*\*Of note: all identifying information re: the client and many specifics of the clinical situation have been changed to protect privacy and ensure confidentiality.*

Em was in her second trimester of pregnancy when she walked through the office door, announcing her medications were running low and that her partner was worried. She told me she was spending hours a day staring at the light from a flashlight – an activity that protected her from visiting demons. And I (a know-nothing, relatively brand-new doctor) found myself Em's psychiatrist.

Our near weekly visits soon ballooned with complexity. She and her partner were fighting at times. She hated her medications. The flashlight wasn't helping. Her extended family was far away. This and so much more.

And then these occasional voices began. Voices that would sometimes suggest she would be better off dead. And nothing I could think of – including all those meds I kept urging her to take – seemed to help.

Some weeks before she gave birth, we had a particularly long session. I was frustrated and exhausted. I was terrified something – a *something* that my brain would barely even let me name – was going to happen to her or her baby.

At the end of that appointment, my body did something unconsciously: I crumpled. Without meaning to, I let my helplessness show. Em noticed it immediately. She *saw* me. She reached out and lightly touched my arm and said, "Dr. Dieringer, it's going to be okay." She said this in such a way and with such a true smile. I'll never be able to fully put words to it because it was one of those moments that is genuinely and generously given to *just* you by another person: a moment that I can only ever know.

*I* should have been comforting *her*. But the not-so-secret secret Em saw was that I wasn't just terrified for her. I was also terrified I was a bad doctor. That I would let her down. That everything is – and would be – my fault.

But Em didn't see quite see it that way. *She* held the hope for us in that moment. She got me back into my body, back in the room, back to working *with* her. Over the next few weeks, I began to see I had been missing out. Missing out on opportunities to *celebrate* her pregnancy with her. Missing out on her tremendous humor and kindness that would – and ultimately did – serve her so well as a new mom.

Here I was, working out how to be a good doctor, and alongside me the whole time, Em was working out how to be a good mom. We were two people looking for connection in a really difficult situation, and Em had been the one brave enough to see if we could find it in one another.

Each week, she would take two buses to come to see me even though we sometimes disagreed on treatment steps. She trusted me even though I was far from perfect. She forgave me. She cared for me. She hugged me. She invited me to the hospital to meet her daughter, just one day old. I was one of the first people to welcome her into the world.

I came to medicine to heal others, never knowing there would be times it would heal *me*. Never knowing, there can be a strange, powerful type of medicine that is made, in part, of our own wounds and weaknesses.

I suspect that I am not the only one in mental health care – whether a staff-person, provider, client, or patient – who carries a voice that says some version of: *I am not enough*. But, often, there are folks – like Em – at our hearts' door, knocking furiously. Healthcare is at its best when we let their knocking echo and drown out that voice. Open the door, let them in.



## INTERVIEW

acquired through her experiences to help her continue moving forward.

M: What gets you through tough times?

**A: Have a good routine, ask for help, seek help. Reach out to my family as much as I can. Tell myself, 'It's okay to feel that way, even if it's uncomfortable.' I kind of use my body, my sensation my grounding... Church, I've been going every week.**

Aaliyah also utilizes self-care, sharing that having good hygiene, taking care of her apartment, going to church regularly, singing and dancing, fashion, and doing her makeup and hair are activities that make her happy.

As 2024 marks the 10-year-anniversary of her move to Seattle, Aaliyah reflects on how she's grown and what she's accomplished over the last decade.

M: I was just thinking about, with it being 2024, ten years since you came to Seattle. When you look back on 2014, how have you noticed how you've changed or how you've grown since then?

**A: I've grown as a woman... I think that explains it right there. I've grown as a woman, I've grown as a person, I've grown as a human being, I've grown as a child... Mostly I've grown as a good human being.**

I greatly enjoyed my conversation with Aaliyah and the opportunity she's given me, as well as the clinic staff and clientele, to learn about her experience with mental health and her struggles as a black trans woman navigating a completely new city on her own. As I hear how she has approached and embraced change with determination and courage, I am conscious of my own struggles with adjusting to personal change and how I can implement some of Aaliyah's insight into my own life. Working with this community has allowed me to witness time and time again the grit and resilience of human beings, especially in the face of uncertainty, adversity, and change.



*\* Maria is a mental health practitioner here at HMHAS. She is originally from Hawaii but moved to Seattle in 2015 for school at Seattle University. Maria enjoys cooking, taking photographs, and spending time with her basset hound.*

Maria (L) and Aaliyah (R) in HMHAS.

J: Sure. If you say so. That was the last question for the interview. How do you feel?

**O: I feel great. It feels good to talk about this stuff. I always say that here in the hospital or anywhere, the best I get is from other peers. It was a pleasure talking to you. It makes me feel freer.**

J: I'm glad. Thank you for being honest, vulnerable, and open with me and Peer Press.



iff. I know everyone is busy but it  
gs.

ion. I'm a big baseball fan. I would like  
1. I would also like to go back to school

rat would it be?

ifferent times in history just to check  
ould be fun.

ould you choose?

he first African American baseball  
f in such difficult situations. I admire

re is something interesting about  
he has that psychopathy. If he wasn't  
tuff like that. So, I want to understand

## INTERVIEW

M: So financially, and increasing engagement by sharing with clients what's available, letting them know the events.

**D: Peer Advisory Bureau was formed years ago. We became very strong right before COVID. It's been a hard road to get that involvement again. Although, we are going that way because people got used to being isolated, staying at home, and not getting out for groups, especially PAB. That's where we're at right now.**

M: Yeah, I feel like when I first started here as an intern in 2022, at that point there were talks about restarting PAB. It's cool to hear it has progressed to the point where you are now. It sounds like that has been the work of you and Tim spreading the word, getting events going, and things like that. It's something that's very important to you and helpful to your mental health as well.

**D: It is. It keeps me going. It's a full-time job and Tim doesn't have quite as much time as I do, but**

**he tries. Yeah, and he's there for me and I'm there for him. We're on the same page as far as that goes.**

M: Did you meet Tim through the clinic?

D: Yep, I met him through PAB. The state asked me, "Who do you know that would make a good caregiver?" I said, "My friend in town. I trust him immensely." I can leave the apartment and not worry about anything being taken. And I'm pretty hard to get along with sometimes and he laughs. He does a great job.

M: Cool. Anything else you feel like sharing in the interview or anything? Any messages you want to send to the clinic?

**D: The only thing I want to share is it's good to be able to recognize the blessings that God gives you through other people, because a lot of our blessings come through that. Nothing significant, but that's it right there.**



Donny (L) and Maria in the drop-in

*Seattle in 2015 for school at Seattle University. Maria enjoys cooking, taking photographs, and spending time with her basset hound.*

Chris and Maria



## IEW

make changes. But it would be nice to have  
y and move those ideas forward.

lly want one. I like those big Bernese Mountain

dead or alive, who would it be?

capacity to see things in a unique way. I would

iness. It had a huge impact on my journey. It  
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only thing that will ever exist. You can save  
diety, and fears live in those places that are

ding at inpatient gave me very helpful insight into  
requently. I left our conversation wondering  
tpatient and inpatient services. I am grateful for  
he embodies the spirit of who we all aspire to be  
ind deeply about others, who seeks to

## CONVERSATION

# From Strangers to Friends

A conversation between Jarek P. and Kyla E.



**Kyla:** Can you share a little bit about the experiences you've had that brought you to HMHAS initially?

Jarek: It's a situation that started five years ago where all of a sudden, I started hearing voices in my head and it seemed like voices of various people that I didn't know, complete strangers, male, female, young, and old. The emotions were being projected too, so the individuals were happy or angry. And at first there were a lot of angry individuals. And this situation, once it started, would continue throughout the day. It simply didn't stop for me. It's not a situation where I might hear something once or twice during the day. It's something that starts the moment that I wake up and it ends the moment that I fall asleep.

**K:** What effect has this had on your life?

J: The voices were very angry and very disrespectful, and it seriously caused depression in my mind. I was also isolating myself from people, getting angry. When I was at home alone, I would yell at the voices physically. I stopped doing that because it doesn't do much. It made me even more stressed. The stress caused me to not be able to fall asleep for about two days at a time and then out of tiredness I would fall asleep on the third day and then again 2 days of no sleep and then again very tired. It made me extremely tired.

**K:** Some people might call what you experience voices or auditory hallucinations, but I understand

## CONVERSATION

that doesn't resonate with you. What do you prefer to call them and why is it important to have a name for your experience that fits for you?

J: Consciousnesses. I call them this because I want to understand the condition to some extent and being from a somewhat scientific

background, the word consciousness fit of my body and part of me in that they're I hear others refer to them as voices, I in my head that they are more than just voices, natural and easier in my mind to call the voice. If you give it a more personal name like a disease and more like a condition, yourself like a person with a disease that negatively upon you for having, but instead experience that is worth spending time investigating further. I've noticed that the more I feel better because I don't think there is something wrong with me. If we're going to be a disease.

**K:** If you don't see it as a disease, what

J: A gift.

**K:** Can you share a little bit of the history of the Consciousnesses?

J: At first, I would consider them strange negative towards me. They want to be nice during the day. Like, if I drink tea, they shouldn't drink tea. You should drink water to encourage me or give me positive support, negative stuff.

**K:** And how has your relationship changed?

J: In the last year they turned into friends.

**K:** Can you say more about how that has

J: Over the past five years, every time a friend during that week we are going to be celebrating something. We have a place to live. Life we should be happy about that. So, I enjoyed

I tried that on occasion, but it didn't last every day. I notice it's something that has to do with just focus on the one day when the whole month. And then I notice that maybe Christmas. So, I now have from Thanksgiving

## CONVERSATION

Christmas is coming up. So, let's do positive things to get ready for Christmas. And then New Year's Day is coming up and then Valentine's Day is coming up. And then my birthday is coming up. And then Easter is coming up. And then my mother's birthday is coming up. And then 4th of July and then so on and so on. So, I use these as kind of like milestones or markers. And the time before that is when I tell them especially about

positively instead of negatively because I we start evolving, we start thinking, we start people together and things evolve and eventually like that, and there is no negativity between separate. Nobody wants to hang out with education stops, the progression of art is positive because that is productive. Don't look at the last five years, what you guys I was completely wasted. It might not seem years old, I'm going to be sitting there that were completely wasted. And I don't want will be like a third of my life was wasted because So, something had to be done, so I've been

**K:** Can you say more about the specifics?

J: As I said, as Thanksgiving was coming I thankful for the food that we're going to be thankful for. Some of them said, I'm thankful and I was like, wow, they're giving me color think this way. They said there are positive things to kind of trigger something. And I said that. They started saying from the moment: We need to say positive things. Don't say immediately stood up, kind of like to protest Thanksgiving went by really well. They enjoyed food, which was nice.

I told them Christmas is coming up and the week that just passed was really nice. An behavior, you're going to see a change in going to be able to sleep normally. And we between Thanksgiving and Christmas. We about the game that I'm playing and then that I had in the previous years about game an idea to make a new game. And from that were all related to computer programming brainstorming sessions right now for maybe So, we're now in the second phase now a actual game design. Now we're working on

**K:** What inspired this change?

J: I've always been the kind of person that the religious holidays because I'm from Poland, it was never right. Maybe my dad

## CONVERSATION

something like that. As a child, I always thought, I would like holidays where we all sit down at the table, it's fun, everybody is happy and joyful. And because I missed that kind of life, I've been trying to, like, encourage that in my family and with the Consciousnesses.

**K:** What are the effects of this new approach on you and your life?

J: Yeah, everything. I sleep normally now. I sleep about 8 hours, and I wake up rested. And I want to start the day and do what I normally do. I feel like my life is now turning back around. After five years of stress, the stress is now passing. Now I think about all the projects that I want to do. I want to be productive again. I want to start a company and do something that I always wanted to do, kind of fulfill some of my dreams. And since I have these Consciousnesses in my head and I can't get rid of them, I might as well learn to have them with me, be positive and be productive together. And then at the end of my life, when we look back, they'll be able to say, yeah, I helped Jarek write a book, or I helped him create a game and I was successful and I'm happy about that.

**K:** I'm curious about who or what has supported you or allowed you to make this huge shift in terms of how you relate to your experiences?

J: I would say it is just the way that I look at life and just the way that I live. Since this happened to me, I've gotten used to the fact that they were there. I just didn't like the negativity. I overall don't like negativity in people. I prefer positiveness. I have this saying that love brings people together and hate separates people. Nothing happens when hate is the primary emotion in life. Whereas love brings everybody together and cool things happen then.

**K:** Where did you learn that?

J: That's just the way I live, just the way I perceive the world. Being born in Poland during the communist years, I saw a lot of negativity there towards my family. My dad was part of the solidarity movement, so there was a lot of negativity towards him and I didn't like that from the beginning. And then when I came to the United States, I started seeing happiness and love. And I saw how productive it can be and how it changes things. I'm seeing the importance of that too, because Poland is now democratic. So, things are evolving now in a good way. There are still the people that are kind of in the mentality of communism. They're still left over there, but they're now, you know, the senior citizens. So that's kind of fading out.

**K:** Is there anything else that feels important for others to know about the way you relate to the Consciousnesses and the impact this has had on your life?

J: This is something that must be kept up. It needs to be maintained so that the voices or Consciousnesses or whatever you call them, don't forget about the goal, and you don't forget about the goal. At this point after more than a year of living like this, they are behaving positively without me constantly having to reiterate to them to behave positively. It gets easier basically.

If anything in this conversation caught your attention or might shift how you think about things moving forward, Jarek would love to hear. Please feel free to share your feedback for Jarek by emailing Kyla at kevans13@uw.edu.

# Cocoa Butter Kisses

*By Felicity V.*

I have cocoa butter kisses  
 Cocoa butter kisses  
 Then I stained October blue while my angel is still looking at you.  
 But you can't play pretend  
 If you plea, if you flee,  
 you must be running from something. I call it suicide.  
 Who do you, what do you mean, best friend  
 I told your lies.  
 I told you I'll get you high.  
 If you, you mumble too much, kid  
 You got to get my chances a try to see if fuck around  
 If you found out, If figures were my insane passage  
 Boy, wouldn't you be proud  
 Be proud to call me yours  
 because my lips are painted red to be insane like me  
 Go ahead and change my name like Merry  
 Merry-go-Round  
 You made another mistake by staying still under cocoa butter kiss  
 Tells me good night  
 I love Zero  
 Thoughts uncouncted

# Those People

*By Turtle*

**THOSE** people you say, they are you and I  
 I don't want to pry but, aren't we all trying to stay alive  
 We are just the same, made from suffering and pain  
 Thriving to survive by keeping our faith near by  
**Those people** are a joke, not like me you say  
 Only by grace and mercy did the trouble strav  
 Jumped over you but not too far  
 Can't you see it in brave hearts of ours  
 Hearts that long, and wish and hope  
 That existence has a purpose, reason, vision and  
**Those people** should be loved, understood and c  
 Why, because it is written, directed and lives on ev  
 Mirror of me, distorted, bruised and weak  
 Yet resilient, while battered by storm and ra  
 Can withstand it all the same  
**Them guys** - not looking up, glancing at identifi  
 To see where you are stationed don't reveal their r  
 Be open to possibilities of joy while giving  
 Cause them guys need to also be living  
**You people** don't despair cause love, joy, peace is  
 Or at least somewhere out there

# Archetype

*By Shelly B.*

Expressions etched in glass or carved in sculpting stone  
 Free archaic images beneath the surface throne  
 Mind's eye ever so brightly shining  
 Forecasting the future's tone  
 Granting present times conclusions to begin past memories know  
  
 Concepts flutter in the air deviating sounds of silence  
 Passing through times perception of reality  
 Acknowledging information's power of alliance  
  
 Transferring ideas exchanging in one's mind  
 Lingering on one's tongue  
 Gliding on wings widespread  
 Thoughts singing a song among gathered ears unsung  
  
 Elements of nature unearth true colors shaping a future yet untold  
 Searching for a path still unchosen  
 Occurring as history unfolds

## POETRY

# Meaning

By Stanley R.

Meaning of meaning

Meaning of colorful flowing poem

Of emotions reaching

Touching

Feeling

Within one's own

## POETRY

# Untitled

By anonymous

I

One day a man leaves his home  
"I'm off to find what the world has to offer me" - said he  
And so he searched  
And the pack he carried burdened him  
And the sun beat him  
And the night chilled him  
And the road fought him  
And one day he found what he was looking for  
It was his home  
So he returned to her  
Bereft of his longing,  
He was no longer the same man.

II

Oh, how the mind wanders with chaos  
Revels in it  
Is the calm and beautiful too boring?  
For the chaos can be anything, after all...  
But the beautiful is always what it is.  
That allure-sure intoxicating, but always remember:  
Only toxins are intoxicating.  
When you feel love,  
Is it pure?  
Or is it intoxicating?



Harborview Medical Center

Psychiatry

Mental Health and Addiction Services



**Show Your Heart** is an ongoing community art project.

Join us at **Show Your Colors** group

Every Monday at 11:30am in R1069

**Meaning** by Stanley R.

**Interview: Teresa W.** by Maria P.

**Up close & personal** by Ari L.

**Fiction** by Jeremy E.

**Poems** by Aubrey J., CJ, Teresa W.

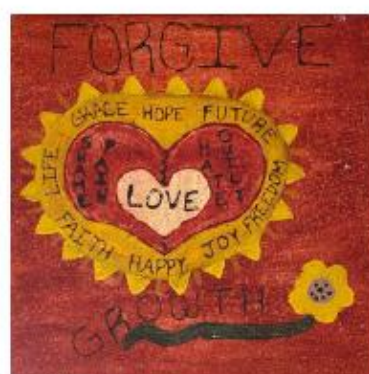
# Narrative Therapy

by Randy N., LMHC

# Creativity Art

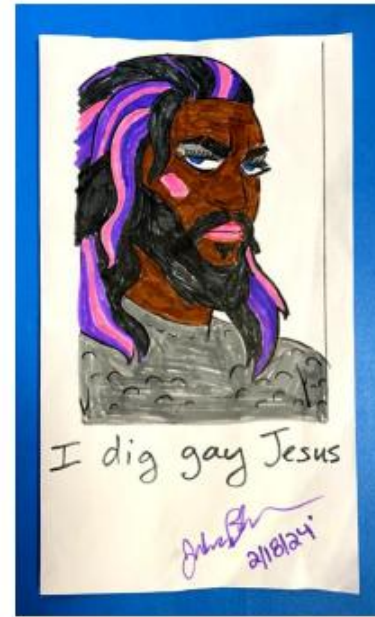
# ART

# ART





Portraits by Elaina G.



Juliana B.



Daniel L.



Daniel L.

# Advocacy

## *Strength Community*

Vol 7. January/February 2025

# peerpress



Harborview Medical Center

Psychiatry

Mental Health and Addiction Services



Interview: Donny L. by Maria P.

Titchener Circles by Owen R.

Maka, the cat by Paul S. & Keith J.

Poems by Isaiah B., CJ H., Sage L., Shelly B.

Up Close & Personal by Sarah H.

A kids tale by Paul S.

Just the two of them by Jeremy E.

**Without Shelter,  
People Die:  
The Fight  
To Save  
Brighton Village**

by Draven L.

peerpress

# Without Shelter, People Die: The Fight to Save Brighton Village

By Draven L.

Nickelsville, a pioneering organization in Seattle's tiny house village movement, has been working tirelessly to provide safe and empowering shelter for those in need. Our latest project, Brighton Village, a tiny house village in South Seattle, was abruptly canceled by Mayor Bruce Harrell, despite being in the final stages of establishment.

As someone who's lived in Seattle and in Sanctioned Encampments (*including SHARE'S Tent Cities and Nickelsville's Tiny House Villages*) since 2012, I've witnessed the devastating impact of the city's homelessness crisis. The area around 3rd and Pike, where I used to shop, has become a stark example of this crisis. Since the sweeps of homeless encampments began, I've seen a massive influx of people forced onto the sidewalks, with nowhere else to go.

The excuse given by Tanya Kim, Director of the Seattle Human Services Department, was that we failed to meet arbitrary benchmarks for community engagement. This is ridiculous, as there was no actual List of Benchmarks presented nor published by the City's Human Services Department. Furthermore it has always been our standard practice to host community meet-and-greet Q&A events to introduce ourselves and address any concerns the neighborhood may have. In fact, we held the required Community Notification Meeting on July 21<sup>st</sup> 2024.

The wording is important as that's what's required under the ordinance. The need for shelters, especially tiny house villages, is dire. Seattle has been in a state of homeless emergency since 2015, with:

- 16,385 homeless people on any given night
- 60% of homeless individuals unsheltered
- Over 400 homeless people dying unsheltered last year
- Over 200 unsheltered homeless deaths this year

Under the Harrell administration, sweeps of encampments have **tripled** to over 2,800 last year.

However, pushing homeless people from place to place doesn't solve the crisis. Instead, Nickelsville advocates for more shelters, especially tiny house villages, which are the preferred choice for many homeless individuals.

I hope you will all join Nickelsville in their call to action: Mayor Harrell must reinstate the Brighton Village project. Without shelter, people die. It's time for our city to prioritize the lives and dignity of our most vulnerable neighbors. Stay tuned for updates on our upcoming press conference.

Please use the QR code below to sign the petition to save  
Nickelsville's Brighton Village.



For any more info, please feel free to reach out to Nickelsville staff via e-mail.  
[staff@nickelsville.works](mailto:staff@nickelsville.works)



# Introducing the Safety, Restraint, Seclusion (SR/S) Taskforce

By Dr. Dana Dieringer, MD

The use of restraint and seclusion is a top challenge facing psychiatric hospitals. The painful and lasting impacts of restraint and seclusion have been powerfully and eloquently documented; indeed, publications ranging from this very Peer Press to The New York Times\* have relayed these important stories. Harborview Mental Health Services has formed a **Safety, Restraint, Seclusion Taskforce** to accelerate and amplify already pre-existing quality improvement efforts surrounding restraint and seclusion. We are working to reduce restraint and seclusion incidence and duration while promoting safe and equitable environments for clients and staff alike.

This work is complex, important, and necessarily multidisciplinary. We are a group currently comprised of physicians, therapists, leadership, and bedside staff. Individuals with lived experience of serious mental illness – particularly those who have experienced restraint and seclusion first-hand – are essential stakeholders and contributors to this work. Through peer support specialist communication and resources such as Peer Press, we aim to regularly provide updates on our progress. We welcome the ideas and perspectives of all as we work to build safe and healing mental health spaces. As one of our first steps, the Taskforce wants to share Harborview Mental Health Service's new vision statement:

*Harborview Mental Health Services commits to treating all persons with dignity, respect, and individualized care. We pledge to safely reduce restraint and seclusion incidence and duration in our psychiatric emergency services and inpatient units. We acknowledge that these interventions are without intrinsic therapeutic value and recognize they pose physical and emotional risk to clients and staff. Building from evidence-based guidelines, staff expertise, and the experiences of individuals with serious mental illness, we will work together in collaboration. We will develop interventions, policies, and treatments to create a future where the use of restraint and seclusion is unnecessary.*

\*"In the House of Psychiatry, a Jarring Tale of Violence" by Ellen Barry, published May 21 2024 in [The New York Times](#)



# Spreading LOVE Is Medicine

By Lucas McDermott

"Breathe in the world, breathe out love" is my mantra another day. Today, I would like to think about what it means to practice in self-healing, a medicine created within, but also in the presence of others. Part of this does require some humility, much too much of a novice in to speak on. What I do want to share is of cultivating love, meditating on love, in order to spread it. It tends to rub off even on one's own unworthy self.

At risk of wading into depths of spirituality that I may not mean by love. Buddhist teachings would call it loving-kindness, the ability to care and cultivate compassion for others. Tagore, a love for all of humanity. From a Christian perspective, whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in us.

It is a concept I have pondered previously, but began to explore amid much national turmoil and collective aggression. I read the book *Fierce Love*. The good Reverend stands in the tradition of revolutionary love, who walked the path of peace through the movements in the here and now. The byline to her book is courage and rule breaking kindness that can heal the world. I have many help books, but this one offers a way of being that puts love at the center.

As strongly as I feel about this form of medicine, I rarely talk about it with patients. The "L word" is wrapped up in all sorts of meanings and bringing it up may feel like I am coming on too strong, being too corny or woo-woo perhaps. One of the few occasions I was brave enough to share it came with a patient with all the reasons to see the futility of fruitless expressions of love for one another. From a childhood full of trauma, to a young adulthood haunted by a society that fears him and criminalizes him for the color of his skin, to a manhood challenged by physical and mental health challenges, he has all the experiences in the world to doubt a loving universe. Still, he was seeking help, seeking healing and community, attempting to become a better man for his family. He expressed his well-earned cynicism about putting himself out into the world, given what he has gotten in return so far. All I could offer is that spreading love is not about the immediate response, but about cultivating love within to shine into the world. I know my words did nothing to change his history, and probably little to soften his cynicism, but in that moment I know he felt my love for him manifest in my true desire to help heal his pain.

It was this moment of connection that it is all about. It is being bold enough to be vulnerable, brave enough to show emotion, to step outside of our comfort zone of politeness and from behind our shield of professionalism and offering ourselves to our fellow humans. When I shared the idea of spreading love as medicine initially on my clinic's white board, I tongue in cheek attributed it to the Brooklyn School of Medicine, which a quick Google search tells me is part of the State University system of New York. I of course was referring to the late, great Notorious B.I.G. shouting out "Spread love, it's the Brooklyn way." The Brooklyn of the 80s Biggie grew up in was politically disenfranchised and economically disconnected, but the sense of belonging to one's community was strong, forged by hardship, but also by human connection, by spreading love.

As vulnerable as it feels to feebly put this into words, I want to share this with you all, our community, a community not short on hardship. It is my hope that we continue building this community by spreading love, showing compassion for each other, and healing ourselves as we go.



# Celebration *Engagement*

Vol 5. August/September 2024

# peerpress



Harborview Medical Center

Psychiatry

Mental Health and Addiction Services



Chair Yoga on Wednesdays at 10am  
Room 1090 HMHAS

My Journey by John R.

A Seattle Fairytale by Teresa W.

Interview: Oatmeal M. by Jade P.

Medicine & Healing by Shelley G.

Poems by Felicity V., Teresa. W.,  
Turtle, and Megan E.

Up close & personal by Maria P.

Fee Fi Fo Fum by Jeremy E.

Art by 5MB Peers

## From Strangers To Friends

by Jarek P. and Kyla E.

peerpress

## HMHAS

### Annual Picnic at Madrona Park in August



### Animal Sanctuary Visit in August



## 10th ANNUAL

## GLOBAL PEER SUPPORT CELEBRATION DAY

**Thursday, October 17th, 2024**

**Global Peer Support Celebration Day** is an annual celebration of peer supporters and their work in helping peers with mental health and addiction challenges reintegrate along the continuum of recovery and inclusion back into their communities.

## NEWS

### HMHAS Celebrates Volunteer Appreciation Week



Volunteers



Richard S. in the computer lab

John R. in the drop in center

## NEWS



Shelly B., a long time peer at HMHAS, has been working as a volunteer at Seattle Art Museum. Shelly is currently showing her collage art as a part of SAM Staff Art Show, which is displayed at the Seattle Asian Art Museum through the end of March.

Cityscape I and II (Top two pieces)

Medium: acrylic, chalk, oil pastel, magazine tears on construction paper

Attunement (Bottom piece)

Medium: acrylic, chalk, oil pastel, magazine tears, construction paper on canvas

fortitude that is nothing short of remarkable. I wholeheartedly endorse Teri Jo's nomination for the Distinguished [Staff] Award. Her legacy of impact, dedication, and selflessness is a testament to her character and her unwavering commitment to the well-being of others. Teri Jo embodies the values and virtues that this award represents, and I believe there is no one more deserving of this honor. Thank you for considering Teri Jo for this prestigious recognition. I have the utmost confidence that her story of impact will resonate with you as deeply as it



### Sophia (L) and Teri Jo at the reception



# Peer Advisory Bureau

*Build Community, Make Friends, Join PAB!*

The Peer Advisory Bureau is a community group organized and operated by clients of Harborview Mental Health and Addiction Services. **We meet every week on Wednesdays at 11am in the drop in.** We meet to plan social activities, conferences, and other events. All enrolled clients of Harborview Mental Health and Addiction Services are welcome to attend.

## Show Your Colors

Join us for  
the new  
group art project

## Diversity

Every Monday at 11:30am

Orange Room



HMHAS



- Photo Booth
- BBQ in Triangle
- Karaoke
- Halloween Music Vid
- Bag toss, horse shoe

Presented by John |

HMHAS

## It's Game Time!



LGBTQIA+ Peer Support Group

# show your colors

Mondays / 11:30am / Orange Room

Peers, staff, allies, everyone is welcome!

invited by Jade (he/they)



## MUSIC GROUP

SHARE YOUR LOVE OF MUSIC  
AND MAKE A BIT OF NOISE

SKILLS ARE COOL, BUT NOT REQUIRED  
THURSDAY AT 10:00, YELLOW RM.

Questions? See Keith or Jeremy  
(in the Lounge MWF mornings)

## Writing Group

Bring your own project or start something new, ALL experience welcome to come write in community with Megan and Jeremy!

Tuesdays at 10am in the Lounge

JOIN THE FUN & TAKE A...

## Swim WITH KIM!

MONDAY | WEDNESDAY | FRIDAY  
12:30PM - 2:30PM  
MEET BY THE ELEVATORS

Talk to Kim Haley or your case manager for more information.



## ASL Group!

American Sign Language is a visual language that uses hand and facial movements to convey meaning. ASL is a natural language with its own grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. It's the primary language of many deaf and hard of hearing people in the United States. ASL is an amazing tool being taught to more non-verbal which allows the person to open up, feel heard and safe.

Facilitated by peer supporters Brandon M. and Draven L.

Every Tuesday at 11am in the Drop-in

BASKETBALL, PING PONG,  
PICKLE BALL, BADMINTON

## IT'S GAME TIME

Join us on our visits to the fantastic Yesler Community Center!

THE 3RD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH  
MEET IN THE PEER LOUNGE AT 12:30PM

### Monday Mindfulness Group


Please join Jeremy on Monday mornings for some mindfulness based conversation and guided breathing and meditation exercises.

**What:** Beginners Mindfulness Group  
**When:** Mondays at 9:30am  
**Where:** Yellow Room #1002

### Spirituality Group

Please join us for a group focused on providing a safe place for people who seek to nurture their faith, trust and hope in life. This group aims to embrace all belief systems and everyone's truth.

**When:** Thursdays from 10am to 11am

**Where:** in the Drop In Center  




Interview: Thomas M. by Jade P.

10 Fundamental Components of Recovery

Poems by Shelly B., Dr. Fast-Rock

The Gift by CJ H.

Up Close & Personal - Aubrey J.

The Event by Paul S.

In a Dark and Loud Bar by Jeremy E.

# Affirmation *Resilience*

The wound is  
the place  
where the  
light enters  
you.

- Rumi



Your life has purpose.  
Your story is important.  
Your dreams count.  
Your voice matters.  
You were born to make an impact.

Source: unknown



When you can't look on the bright  
side, I will sit with you in the dark.

Source: unknown

**"Mental health** is too important to leave to the professionals alone."  
- Vikram Patel

**"Don't walk through the world looking for evidence that you don't belong.  
Because you will always find it.  
Don't walk through the world looking for evidence that you are not enough.  
Because you will always find it.  
Our worth and our belonging are not negotiated with other people. We carry  
those inside of our hearts.  
I know who I am. I'm clear about that. And I am not going to negotiate that  
with you. Because then, I may fit in for you, but I no longer belong to myself.  
And that is a betrayal I am not willing to do any more."  
- Brené Brown**

**"Diversity** is a fact. **Equity** is a choice. **Inclusion** is an action.  
**Belonging** is an outcome."  
- Arthur Chan



# Q&A

- Thoughts
- Feelings
- Emotions
- Opinions
- Suggestions

# Thank you

**Jade, CPC, Executive Editor**

**Owen, LICSW, Staff Editor**

**Sage, CPC, Staff Editor**

**Maria, LMHCA, Staff Editor**

