"Committed" to being heard

Conceived December 2014

A voice indefinitely
"Committed" to being heard
TELL ALL YOUR FRIENDS

Monthly Publication

Issue : 4

June - 2023

Any questions and/or comments leave them at:
Sixx|R @ 218-351-1900 Ext. 70887 (voicemail only)
Terry L. Branson @ 218-351-1900 Ext. 97666 and mail via
1111 Highway 73 Moose Lake, Minnesota 55767
branson5@gmail.com

Friday noon, May 19, 2023

To: Residents at St. Peter and Moose Lake:

A resident at St. Peter, called early this morning to say that he had a phone call yesterday (Thursday, May 18) from Sen. John Hoffman's Human Services Committee administrator, Kevin Parker. (The Senator had hoped to be on the call but was called to another mtg.) the resident said that the aide asked lots of informed questions and told him that the House and Senate committee chairs would visit MSPO facilities sometime after the session ends. That's the good news.

A resident at Moose Lake called a few minutes ago (he was on his 10 minute restrictions break on unit 1E) to offer more details about the three incidents at ML, and the resulting penalties. The disciplinary action is, from my point of view, calculated and misdirected.

The legislative session will end in a few days without making changes we hoped for. It's disappointing, but this is not the time to stop trying. DHS and the MSOP administration are trying to protect their interest and unwilling to take action that would address their assigned mission of therapy and healing envisioned many years ago. Our continued action can keep chipping away at their intransigence.

Political action is seldom easy and is almost always confronted by self-interest of the status quo, but it is a powerful tool. (That's one of the reasons they don't want me to teach a course in state politics.) Teaching and learning the elements of civic live are not "anti-therapeutic". Just the opposite. It is simply a threat to them. They don't want to admit that offering residents a way to make changes in their lives—to recognize their own strengths and reform—is highly ***positive***.

Years ago, when I began teaching school, I read a book called The ***Soft Revolution*** by Postman and Weingarten about ways to change schools. "Focus on your opponent's strength" (in this case, the political strength of a state agency and its bureaucracy) and "find its vulnerabilities" (in this case, our ability to use the rights of citizens—voting and freedom of speech).

If MSOP can isolate you from the public and suppress your voices, they win. If the legislature hears your voices (and thinks about your votes!) they will begin to

(Continued on page 4 "Residents at St. Peter and Moose Lake")

"The purpose of law is to bring the person back into the fold, to heal him. People do the worst things when they have no ties to people." Lorraine Stutzman, Amstutz

"Committed" to being heard

MISSION STATEMENT

This newsletter has the full intent and purpose of presenting a continuous uncensored, thought provoking informative service within the space it resides in. Its functions are to spread a message which offers a better understanding of what transpires within the Minnesota Sex Offender Program ("MSOP"). We believe every individual ultimately possess a natural ability to overcome every negative force which impacts their daily life. Through understanding and obedience of Universal Law we are afforded a more informed "freedom of choice". Freedom of choice allows each of us to encircle ourselves with those who share the same interests and values. Freedom of choice is making decisions for yourself; decisions which does not inflict harm upon another human being.

Disclaimer:

Statements, viewpoints and opinions expressed in articles, letters to the editor, or from other writers, are those of that individual author; and **do not** reflect the position/opinion of this newsletter. All submissions become the property of "Committed" to being heard and may be eligible for reprint without that authors consent.

Guidelines: This newsletter will attempt to perform research, conduct interviews and gather information in an effort to create content that will inform and educate its readers about activities, events of interest which transpire throughout the M$OP's detention facility. We possess the right to not publish any submitted materials. As editor(s), We may edit any submitted materials to bring the material into conformance with acceptable journalistic standards to the best of our knowledge, ability, and/or available space. This newsletter reserve the right to publish employees name based upon their relevant involvement to the circumstances pertaining to identified articles. All articles submitted for publication must include the authors first and last name. The editor(s) reserve the right to submit questions for reader's views and comments on any subject matter published within these pages.

Minnesota Constitution
ARTICLE I—BILL OF RIGHTS

Sec. 3. Liberty of the press. The liberty of the press shall forever remain inviolate, and all persons may freely speak, write and publish their sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of such right.

Thought for the Month

Winds stirs water by penetrating it. Thus the superior man, when aligned to judge the mistakes of men, tries to penetrate their minds with understanding, in order to gain a sympathetic appreciation of the circumstances. In ancient China, the entire administration of justice was guided by this principle. A deep understanding that knows how to pardon was considered the highest form of justice. This system was not without success, for its aim was to make so strong a moral impression that there was no reason to fear abuse of such mildness. For it sprang not from weakness but from a superior clarity.

Inner Truth pg. 236 of the "Book of Changes" by Wilhelm/Baynes

Conscientia dicitur a con et scio, quasi scire cum Deo.

Commentaries

- Stop It **Now!** Is a sexual assault prevention organization. Please make a valuable financial donation to Stop it **Now!**, 351 Pleasant Street, Suite B-319, Northampton, MA 01060. 413-587-3500. donate online: info@stopitnow.org. www.stopitnow.org.
- ***Who are the real sexual predators within MSOP?*** Why is it every time a new female employee gets hired male staff come out of the woodwork vying for their attention? It's usually the A-Team male staff. *Guess what?* MSOP has a top-secret history of male staff exploiting their job positions as superiors preying on new female employees. They even get together to make jokes about *"Whose going to be the first?"* Is it any wonder why there's a high turnover rate involving the female staff at MSOP? Anyone can be a predator.
- ***How harmful is it to become emotionally disconnected from others?***

Letter From Minnesota Office of Ombudsman

I am writing in response to the concern you expressed regarding lack of services from Michael Woods. Michael is following the directives of the management of the Office of Ombudsman for MH/DD (OMHDD). In the past, the OMHDD had worked on issues related directly to sex offender treatment. This has changed.

The OMHDD legislation is clear that our clients are individuals receiving treatment for mental illness, developmental disability, chemical dependency or children with an emotional disturbance. Sex offence related diagnoses do not fall in these disabilities. In the past, the definition of mental illness in the commitment act contained DSM diagnoses that included some sex offender diagnoses. That definition was changed and no longer includes those diagnoses.

In accordance with our statutory, mandate, it was decided that the only issues we will work on related to MSOP are issues related directly to services received for a mental illness, chemical dependency or developmental disability. We will also work on issues related to resident's health or safety. Any issue that is raised regarding sex offender treatment will be referred to MSOP administration.

This letter was written by Roger Schwab Regional Ombudsman Supervisor, Office of Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities.

I find it questionable as to why they would put in quotation brackets *"Giving Voice to Those Seldom Heard"*.

Who does speak up and protect our rights when they are being violated? Apparently all these agencies that are listed throughout the facility are only there to make it look good.

It's become very conceivable as to how Nancy Johnston has the ability to violate court orders. There is not one agency representing individuals civilly committed to the Minnesota Sex Offender Program. We are citizens who had their civil rights restored once discharge from prison. Yet we have less rights than those currently serving sentences specifically designed to punish.

Have you finished reading your copy of "Committed" to being heard?
Why don't you give it to someone you know; let them read it; and keep sharing it. Leave it behind at the laundry mat, grocery store, bulletin board, or courthouse. Why not mail it to a friend. If you are interested in getting your own copy you can leave me a voice message at 218-351-1900 ext. 97666 or you can write me at the address listed on the front page. Your support is greatly appreciated.

(Continued from page 1)

listen. That's their vulnerability.

That's not going to be easy because the MSOP administration will be as aggressive as they can to keep you quiet when ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS BE ACTIVE, RESPONSIBLE, AND ENGAGED CITIZENS, TRYING TO PREPARE FOR REINTEGRATION TO COMMUNITY AND FAMILY LIFE.

Your first step? Registering everyone to vote. You may as well take an oath of silence unless you are registered to vie. It's essential. Remember: All citizens, 18 and older, with the exception of *incarcerated* felons, now have the right to vote.

At the same time:

1. Contact your state representative and state senator for Moose Lake (they're both Republicans) and ask them if they would come and talk with residents. (Remember! You're giving them a chance to talk with more than 200 voters at St. Peter and more than 400 voters at Moose Lake.) Tell them you want to hear about the results of this session and how you can WORK TOGETHER to make MSOP WORK BETTER. Send copies of your letters to the Commissioner and to the Speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives, Melissa Hortman.
2. Write to Commissioner Harpstead, the Governor, Speaker Melissa Hortman, Nancy Johnston, and other identified at the end of this letter, telling them of your interest in state government's influence on treatment and helping you return to personal and professional lives – and that's why you want MSOP to allow in-person meetings with elected officials.
3. I'll contact the secretary of state's office to make sure you can vote as residents in Moose Lake and St. Peter.
4. I'll also continue to ask for the opportunity to teach a course on state politics in -person at both facilities, and continue to ask Commissioner Harpstead to visit both ML and St. Peter.

One other issue: I've fallen behind on my correspondence. Many of you have sent letters or called in the last month and I haven't been able to answer personally. Some of that has been because I've tried to be active at the legislature, some because of family commitments. I'll try to catch up, but it will be a little harder to keep up with phone calls and correspondence. I'm grateful for your understanding and patience.

Best of all,

Steve Sandell

- Executive Director, Nancy Johnston 651-431-4390
- Deputy Director Operations, James Berg 651-431-5616
- Director of Health Services, Nicole Boder 218-565-6095
- Executive Clinical Director, Jannine Hebert 651-431-4377
- Legal and Records Director, Jessica Geil 218-565-6234
- Medical Director, John Barry, M.D. 218-565-6000
- Reintegration Director, Scott Halverson 651-431-5886

Where's the Breakdown in *Our* Communication Styles?

By Sixx|R

Dialogue is a unique communication process because it focuses participants attention on listening for understanding. Dialogue works best when participants listen for what might be correct, true and insightful about what others have stated. The listeners try to find ideas with which they can agree, and potentially combine those with their own ideas to build a larger truth than any side has on its own. This is not what happens in the MSOP, in particular with Terry Kneisel, Nancy Stacken, and their inferiors.

There is more debate than dialogue in the MSOP. This is because the intention is to assure the culture of an "us" versus "them" is sustained. It is how the power and control of this program has existed for multiple decades. Let me identify some differences between those who are educated in the population (the detainees | RAFC) who are trying to work to, I guess "reform" the program versus the MSOP administration, starting with the MSOP Executive Director Nancy Johnston, Clinical Director Jannine Hebert, Direct Care and Treatment, Health Systems Chief Executive Officer Marshall E. Smith, and MSOP Medical Director John Barry.

MSOP Debate	Detainee Dialogue
The goal is to "win" the argument by affirming one's own views and discrediting other views	The goal is to understand different perspectives and learn about other views.
People listen to others to find flaws in their arguments.	People listen to others to understand how their experiences shape their beliefs.
People critique the experiences of others as distorted and invalid.	People accept the experiences of others as real and valid.
People appear to be determined not to change their own views on the issue.	People appear to be somewhat open to expanding their understanding of the issue.
People speak based on assumptions made about others' positions and motivations.	People speak primarily from their own understandings and experience.
People oppose each other and attempt to prove each other wrong.	People work together toward a common understanding.
Strong emotions like anger are often used to intimidate the other side.	Strong emotions like anger and sadness are appropriate when they convey the intensity of an experience or belief.

This debate mentality is established at the top (DCT/DHS) and then is trained into their MSOP inferiors and the subordinates pass it down to the clinical, supervisors and therapist, and security counselors who influence almost all other MSOP employees.

Research tell us that people who often prefer to be with others they perceive as similar to themselves. People who see themselves as significantly different from another person or group create boundaries that distinguish "us" from "them". The less people interact with each other, the more they are likely to perceive each other as strange, wrong, or even evil. A fundamental goal of dialogue is to explore participants experiences and perceptions so they can potentially understand why those in different groups may view reality differently. *(Continued on page 10)*

The Importance of Positive Support

by: Terry Branson

Because of a relationship I've had with another person I was able to reunite with my X-wife Mary. I never thought this to be possible, as I was led to believe that Mary was dead, by others.

But my friend (Stacey) was adamant her belief in how important it is to have family in ones life. Stacey is also the person who reunited me with my Mary.

I'm not going to say this reunion went along smoothly. We had our arguments and their was a lot of bumps along the way. And, Mary and Stacey became really good friends who demonstrated a great amount of respect for each other.

I will say that Mary did an excellent job in raising our kids on her own. Mary often said we can't change the past, but we can build on what we're going to accomplish for the kids and grandkids for their futures. Like Stacey, Mary was all about putting the needs of our family first.

Although Mary had plenty of ammunition to shoot at me regarding how I was never their, how I failed as a husband or father. She rarely brought that up, the past in our conversations. Instead, she stayed focused on what more I'm willing to do for the now and the betterment of the families future.

As a mother her objective was always about taking care of the kids and grandkids.

Because I was never around when the kids was growing up, she'd tell me stories about what they got involved in while they was growing up. She'd also tell me stories about the grandkids. Mary loved quilting and was proud of the fact that she was able to complete several quilts for the kids and grandkids.

Mary was the matriarch of our family. Like all mothers, she had expectations and I do believe that everyone in the family lived up to her expectations. Yes, she even convinced me that I could be a better person by listening to her advice. She was very vocal about not allowing anyone to bring any harm into the family. If I said something that didn't quite go with her agenda in maintaining a positive attitude she'd let me know her thoughts and opinion.

Mary became one of my two positive supports within this program. Although I hadn't been a contributing member of the family for well over 40 years, I was still a part of the family and she protected all family members equally. So, when she didn't like something that was happening to me, she'd make a call and express her opinion to whomever answered the phone. It became apparent that she knew how to communicate with those in charge and she'd express herself in a manner that let people know what her expectations of them was. And, if the person she was talking to didn't live up to her expectations she'd let not only them know, but those above them as well.

I could have never expected to care so strongly about my x-wife again. Yet we rebuilt a bond based upon forgiveness for what we couldn't change. For the short time that I've gotten to reacquaint myself with Mary, I've learned how important and meaningful it is to have positive support in the community.

Although Mary recently passed away this year (June 2023), I still consider myself very blessed. I can only remember feeling this emotional upheaval once before when Betty (the woman I identify as Mom) passed away. It is an emotional upheaval of mixed feelings that I don't fully comprehend. But I refuse to shut those emotions off; as I had so easily done throughout my past. It has become a very important process that I must figure out how to work through.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

While Mary may no longer be with those of us who loved her. But, I can say she impacted my life through her kindness and understanding. Unbeknownst to me, at the time; she planted a seed that surrounds the simplest of concepts. Having a positive impact upon the lives of others while engaging in positive actions which develop into stronger bonds.

My life has been drastically impacted due to Stacey's own values pertaining to the importance of family. Many people who witnessed the ongoing relationship between Mary and myself often said we was like an old married couple.

What I found to be very surprising is that although Mary is no longer with us; she is still having a positive impact upon my life. Mary has solidified my relationship with Stacey, and with my granddaughter. But to my surprise she had also been working behind the scenes in opening the door to where my son and myself have started communicating. And while my world is far beyond being perfect, I know that regardless of what harm is being done to me I have an ever increasing number of caring and loving people who are offering me their positive support.

Before Mom passed away I made her a promise which I kept. Mary knew of this promise/commitment I made to Mom. Those who knew Mary knew she could be stubborn and determined to achieve her objective of uniting the family. She knew and understood our families history. She'd experienced how much hatred and abuse transpired frequently and did everything in her power to protect the kids from the abuse while letting them make decisions for themselves. And while I ran away Mary stayed there. Mary continued fighting that battle while simultaneously raising the kids to become the people they are today. She was very proud of who the kids became, and what they'd accomplished in their life.

I acknowledge that there are many articles within this newsletter that appear to be negative. It's important for everyone to understand that with the help of others we strive to achieve our highest potential in developmental growth. I am stronger today because of my relationships with Mary and Stacey. Through my own personal experiences and tribulations I've been able to recognize the things I fear. I've become more capable of challenging those fears head on.

I'm finding that when I'm heading in a direction which promotes positive change others also start wanting to participate in that process. And, with more people sharing in that philosophy the message becomes more powerful effectuating positive changes.

I'll say this in concluding this article. It's very easy remaining negative while doing nothing to make changes. It's a part of that hopelessness that we've become accustomed to by those who enjoy creating chaos and fear. We have politicians, the attorney general's office and many others who have spent years portraying "us" as the worst of the worst. They've prospered at our expense because they've been able to instill fear through lies and deceitfulness. They've been able to accomplish this out of our own fear of being identified as someone society has come to loathe. They hate us because they don't know us. They only know what they see and hear. If my x-wife was capable of showing me love after all the wrong I did to her. then what makes anyone believe that I won't be accepted back into society?

You want to know who I am or what I'm attempting to achieve? I'm someone who is going to stop living in fear and do all I can to make positive changes!!! Loving someone is a lot more enjoyable than hating someone. Thanks to both Mary and Stacey for allowing me love again!

"Make the world better."
Lucy Stone's last words to her daughter, Alice Stone Blackwell

MSOP Contraband Notice

by: Terry Branson

Jessica Laukka, who works in the MSOP mail room issued a contraband notice to a patient proclaiming that the June 2023 issue of Remind Magazine violates media possession by clients citing MSOP policy 420-5230 A3g (pg. 3 of policy). According to Ms. Laukka Remind Magazine published "Pictures or reading material showing the unclothed or clothed figure of a minor child posing in a sexually suggestive posture or sexual manner."

Frankly this is very troubling to me. Now I must question did Ms. Laukka file a notice with any child protection agency; notify the Post Manager General; or contact the Minnesota Attorney General's office? Did Ms. Laukka, as a mandatory reporter ask anyone to file charges against the publisher(s) of Remind Magazine?

But I have another questionable thought that I'd like to present. Is Ms. Laukka's interpretation of what the picture content suggests based upon her position within the Minnesota Sex Offender Program? Would she have this same interpretation if she wasn't a stake-holder?

I'm very curious how many other individuals, who also received the June 2023 Remind magazine (in society), was also appalled by the image printed in this particular magazine? Are there other subscribers of Remind magazine, who seen the image, also find the that the clothed or unclothes figure was actually posing in a sexually suggestive posture or sexual manner?

While I may never know what the actual image was, or what Remind magazines intent was for publishing what has been deemed "contraband" by an MSOP employee whose sole position it is to interpret anything that she disapproves of as contraband. To me this is the definition of censorship.

Again, I question where Ms. Laukka's mental state is at when she has been trained to see and identify children as sexual objects capable of posing in sexual positions; whether they are clothed or unclothed. Perhaps Ms. Laukka should start seeking some form of therapeutic services. I base this concern upon her ability to objectify children as sexual objects.

When she provided the very vague description on the contraband notice, we are left with the question of whether the minor child was clothed or unclothed, whether the image was actually in a sexual position? Again, I keep thinking... If this is what her perception suggests to herself, then has she started developing a sexual attraction towards children? Is she also starting to adopt and recognize sex offender patterned behaviors within herself?

It is this writers personal opinion that many MSOP stakeholders are capable of relating to sex offender patterned behaviors. I've witnessed several demonstrations throughout my 10 years of being confined here how many stakeholders have adopted and exhibited such behaviors.

There are a number of stakeholders who've been caught sexually acting out since my being detained. I'm quite sure that there will be a lot more stakeholders who will become entrapped through their inability to recognize their own sex offender patterned behaviors. It's easy to continue stigmatizing others we dislike while refusing to acknowledge how closely our own behavior patterns are very similar.

A thought - *Has Ms. Laukka started becoming sexually attracted to children?*

"I've always thought that the best solution for those who feel helpless is for them to help others." Aung San Suu Kyi, 1996

Gratitude

By Sixx|R

Appreciativeness . . . For the Women in our lives who have shown us patience, tolerance, mercy, time, understanding, investment, tenderness, and so much more than we can put into words. Simply put, it is a wonderful feeling of gratitude!

For those of us, who aren't holding resentments and are not demonstrating self-imposed insecurities, projecting mental and emotional pains and spiritual miseries onto those who are showing us compassion, ***we see you!***

"Committed" to being heard recognizes your time, your devotion, your dedication and your discipline to be an *Angel* in our darkness and to open your wings of resilience, acceptance, and kindness. We not only see you, we also hear you!

And, we believe that is very important! When individuals are silenced they continue being victimized. ***YOU'RE BEING SILENCED MUST COME TO AN END!***

While we have limitations being forced upon us every day; we still have a voice that's "Committed" to being heard. Because we are "Committed" to being heard, we want to provide our assistance to those of you who also have a need to be heard.

You can remain anonymous is you so choose, we will respect your request. Write or talk with us an share your story. "Committed" to being heard does not condone, promote, endorse, sexual violence in any shape, form or nature. We are an meant o be an informative and educational circular with the focus of sexual violence prevention education.

As First Nation Anishinaabeg, my values and beliefs are inspired from a matriarchal mindset. I desire to promote these values in every aspect of my life to encourage the positive growth and nurturance of future generations. Mii gwech for the Women in our lives who keep us on the Red Road! ***You are appreciated!***

When *the* PROTECTOR become *the* PERPETRATOR

By: Terry Branson

I've been informed that another MSOP security counselor is under investigation and sitting in the Pine county jail pending criminal charges. It's alleged that he made sexual advances towards a female teenager.

I offer the following thought to ponder upon.

Has MSOP's administration created such an environment where staff are expected to disconnect from their emotions. And, now due to this MSOPs' employee becoming so disconnected from reality he's become incapable of differentiating between right and wrong?

MSOP's administrative officers developed policies, procedures including the staffs' training specifically designed to instill distrust between all employees and the patient population. Staff have zero accountability; they are led to believe that everyone deserves to be here. They are encouraged to have no empathy when it comes to communicating with the patient population. The administration has even placed the concept of win, win, win into the employees' position description when it comes to making decisions involving what's best for their stakeholder(s).

Many MSOP employees are being led by the hatefulness of their superiors. They use the excuse "I am just following directives". Are we able to correlate how his following directives (when it came to repeatedly disconnecting from his emotions) may have lead to him becoming a predator involving a female teenager?

"Make the world better."
Lucy Stone's last words to her daughter, Alice Stone Blackwell

(Continued from page 5)

Dialogue, in its purest sense, is different from other forms of communication. Yet, other communication styles can have aspects of dialoged as well. Communication is fluid and often moves in and out of various modes. A good dialogue can have the loose nature of a conversation; the focused approach to learning of a training; or the heated passion, vigor, and even anger of a debate.

While this article focuses on using dialogue with planning and intention, it is important to note that the essence of dialogue—respectful listening, learning, and sharing of experiences that shape our beliefs—can be adapted to almost any conversation involving two or more people. Accordingly, anyone can employ facilitation skills to steer a meeting or conversation away from antagonism and toward dialogue.

Effective dialogue between people of diverse experiences and beliefs usually requires the guidance of a facilitator. The role of the facilitator in guiding the conversation makes dialogue different from other communication forms. Facilitators help create a safe space by setting ground rules or guidelines to keep dialogue participants focused on listening to and working with each other. Facilitators guide the dialogue process without deciding who is right or wrong, or declaring a "winner" as a moderator does in a debate.

The intention behind a dialogue is its most definitive characteristics. Dialogue works best when the people involved are open to learning and changing. The role of the dialogue facilitator is to encourage this kind of attitude.

Most people either consciously or unconsciously believe that there is only one right way to believe or act. For this reason, some people discredit dialogue because it requires them to recognize that they may be able to learn from people who believe differently. When people believe that they alone hold the whole truth, there is no need to listen to others.

Dialogue works best when participants bring curiosity and a sense of wonder about others, and a desire to learn more about people and their experiences. It requires humility to recognize that one person or group does not have the whole truth. In dialogue, people acknowledge that they can benefit from listening to and learning, talking, and working with others. Participants come to understand that what they believe about an issue is shaped, in part, buy their life experiences and other factors such as age, class, religion, ethnicity, geography, or gender.

Openness to learning from and about others helps to create a space where people can be honest about their similarities and differences. In a dialogue process, participants are asked to respectfully listen, learn, and share their experiences with others.

From my years of experience, dialogue prompts greater emotional understanding of others and one's own self, stirs passions, and motivates people to act. Sometimes dialogue helps people identify resentments they have unknowingly carried toward individuals or groups. When it works well, dialogue helps expand people's sense of empathy for others and prompts them to act to change a situation.

Dialogue facilitators foster, at a minimum, a basic level of human caring for all of its participants. Though this sense of caring is not unique to dialogue settings, it is not necessarily the norm in society, especially among strangers. This experience of deep caring can expand people's sense of community connectedness.

Dialogue often affects people in significant and lasting ways. Years after an in-

(Continued on page 11)

"Dialogue helps participants gain insight to their own lives."
Lisa Schirch & David Campt

tense dialogue between people who have felt great trauma or conflict, participants sometimes talk about how much the experience changed them. In some cases, people are touched so deeply that they change their careers to address the issues discussed in the dialogue.

A primary goal of dialogue is to help participants gain greater insight into their own perspectives, values, patterns of thinking, and biases. Most people do not realize how much their unique life experiences shape the way they believe and act. People develop different perceptions of what is "true" or "right" or "good" through their life experiences. Different perceptions or "worldviews" – ways of seeing the world – can cause disharmony and lead to interpersonal conflicts. If a dialogue is successful, people leave the process more keenly aware of the way their personal experience shape how they view or interpret their experiences.

Many people engage in dialogue do so because of the positive effects it can have on a groups of people and entire communities. In the MSOP, people increasingly lead independent lives, rarely knowing or relating to each other, especially since the administration Terry Kneisel and Nancy Stacken imposed a form of "institutional Marshall Law". Dialogue can build relationships where people have no established patterns of relating to each other. Dialogue can help create a sense of cohesion among disparate people, largely because dialogue begins with people sharing their experiences. This can be done when clinical leadership such as Jannine Hebert construct ongoing listening session held in the MSOP-ML gymnasium to allow those participants want to participate in open dialogue to create a legitimate therapeutic environment that inspires hope.

A palpable sense of togetherness or unity develops when people find similarities between their own experiences and the stories of others. Dialogue does more than gather together very different people; it intentionally works at building a sense of community.

So, how can Jannine Hebert improve communication patterns in the MSOP? Dialogue facilitators model and encourage participants to develop a wide range of skills that include: active listening, speaking honestly and assertively about experiences and opinions while remaining sensitive to others, following group ground rules for communicating effectively, and identifying common ground. The attitudes and skills needed in dialogue are useful for improving communication in many settings, and are the foundation of all conflict transformation and peace-building processes.

Training helps people learn something, usually by transferring knowledge from the trainer to the student. Learning also happens in dialogue, but not through a direct transfer. Dialogue helps people generate their own new collective understanding of a situation through exchanges between participants.

Let's encourage Commissioner Jodi Harpstead of the Department of Human Services and Marshall Smith of Direct Care and Treatment to employ a Dialogue Specialist to immediately beginning mandatory dialogue training for all of the MSOP employees. It's either that—or simply just end MSOP!

In maxima potentia minima licentia.

~Where power is greatest freedom is least.~

Questioning Dental Services

By: Terry Branson

I believe it was back in November of 2022 when my upper plate broke while eating. Here it is now June 2023 and I still have no dentures. My question is why?

The dentistry department did weld my upper denture together a couple of months ago, but that weld didn't last even a day. It was a surface weld which did not properly penetrate into the material. It was flimsy at best.

I've been writing the dentistry dept. and the dental assistant (Jolee) keeps responding with the same message. You have been put on a waiting list and when an opening comes up, or a cancelation occurs you will be called in. I've also been issued a pass for an appointment - July 25, 2023 @ 11:30 p.m.

So for what will be approx. 8 months I will have gone without dentures and will then only have impressions done. Only then will the impressions be sent to wherever they send them to to have new ones made. Nor do I know how long this will take.

The MSOP staff consistently talk about immediate gratification, and how patience must be a learned behavior. I've come to understand patience, but I've also come to understand ineptitude; and how inept many of those individuals working here are.

I've had impressions made before. So I am not speaking without knowledge or experience. In fact when Dr. Oliver (MSOP's current dentist) went to repair my broken upper plate he mixed up some goop and to make an impression of the upper denture. At that time he could have just as easily broke out the fixtures to make a full impression and put an end to this issue.

The rationale behind my not being provided dentures is based upon the number of MSOP patients who need emergency dental care. I find this written response to be absurd. If this is the case, then all those currently working within the dental department need to be relieved from their duties and replaced with more qualified personnel.

What I do know from observations of how other staff perform their duties throughout the facility is simple. We all know from experience that a new employee is very gung hoe when they first start. But as time passes, they realize they still get the same amount of pay regardless of their performance.

Here is something else that I know from personal experience. It is not good practice to eat without dentures. First it is impossible to properly chew whatever it is your eating. Food doesn't digest the same as when properly chewed. Abrasive types of foods also deteriorate a persons gum.

Apparently immediate gratification doesn't have a time frame.

Terry L. Branson
terry_branson@protonmail.com
1111 Highway 73
Moose Lake, Minnesota 55767

Name
Street Address
City, State Zip Code