

September, 2021

VOICES



Recovery Month Edition

Community Events

Walk a Mile

Join Community Mental Health Authority (CEI) and the Community Mental Health Association of Michigan (CMHAM) for the Walk a Mile Rally.



DATE: Wednesday, September 29th **LOCATION:** State Capital Building
WHO: Anyone is able to participate in the walk

DETAILS: Why We Walk:

- To enhance public awareness and remind legislators that Mental Health Matters.
- To end the stigma related to mental illness & developmental disabilities.
- To encourage equality between mental health & physical health care coverage.
- To promote whole health wellness, and show that our voices can make a difference.

TIMELINE:

- 12:30pm to 1:00pm: Advocacy Walk around the Capital Building
- 12:30pm to 1:30pm: Check-In Tent and pick up giveaways
- 1:30pm to 3:00pm: Rally Begins, includes speakers and statements

For more information:

- For information and to view the WAM packet, please visit: <https://cmham.org/education-events/walk-a-mile-rally/>
- For additional questions, please call Customer Services at 517-346-8244.

More Events

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Out of the Darkness Walk: September 26th from 1pm to 3pm in Adado Park, Lansing
Link: <https://supporting.afsp.org>
- NamiWalks Your Way Grand Rapids: October 2nd from 8am to 12pm at Davenport University - 6191 Kraft Ave. Grand Rapids.
Link: www.namiwalks.org

Need Help?



Do you have any questions or need help accessing any part of this newsletter? Contact Customer Service at 517-346-8244 or customerservice@ceicmh.org

Writing Submissions



We are still taking submissions for our Writer Spotlight! Do you have a story that you think could be shared in a future issue of this newsletter?

Make submissions to Customer Service at 517-346-8244 or customerservice@ceicmh.org

For news and information from CMHA-CEI, visit our website at www.ceicmh.org and Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CEICMH.

Highlighting Recovery Stories during Recovery Month: Brett's Story

"Writing poems is elaborating and a form of therapy for me to put everything down on a piece of paper", states Brett. This is Brett's last day at the House of Commons (HOC).

Since 16 years old, Brett has been exposed to several situations of trauma throughout his life. After spending eight years of his life in prison, Brett found himself spending another four years in prison after encountering violence on the streets. "I have been stabbed three times and have almost been killed. I have had to deal with a lot of trauma throughout the years. I used my past trauma as an excuse to get high, but I can't use it as an excuse anymore because I have faced my trauma in recovery".

Brett has attended multiple trauma group sessions at HOC, and has found these group sessions as safe spaces to share his trauma. The therapy sessions at HOC has also equipped Brett to become less passive and more assertive. Brett explained his past behavior in relationships as being very passive and almost to the equivalent of a walking door mat for others to walk over him. "It's very laid back here. I got to learn about a lot of new tools to use in my road to recovery, such as setting boundaries, co-dependency, and how low self-esteem has impacted me". Because of his past trauma, Brett suffers from anxiety, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) and takes medication to help cope with symptoms of mental illness and to live a life in recovery from his past using heroin.

Brett has enjoyed the integration group at HOC, which allows men in the 90-day residential treatment program to partake in many activities during their stay, such as going to the movies, going to the beach, and playing Frisbee golf.

Since 2020, Brett has completed several treatment centers for Substance Use Disorder. Brett has completed two 90-day treatment programs, one 30-day treatment program, a four-month treatment program, and is graduating from HOC. Like many others, HOC is the last step for Brett. "I never really knew how to live outside of structured environments. Like I said, I was I have been in prison forever and then treatments, and jail. I have to learn how to live on my own, inside society. I need to give myself a structure. I have had to live under someone else's structure, but never on my own. I am trying not to be institutionalized anymore because I have been institutionalized for most of my life".

After HOC, Brett will go into Drug Court every Tuesday for two years in Hillsdale, and then transition to Life Challenge, which is a sober living facility. Brett will work towards getting his license and has saved up enough money to purchase a car. Brett hopes to go back to school and to go into social work to help others.

Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties will be featuring four stories during Recovery Month in September. To learn more about Community Mental Health Authority and the House of Commons, please visit www.ceicmh.org to learn more.

If you or someone you know is suffering from a Substance Use Disorder or a behavioral health crisis, please give us a call at 517-346-8460 to access our crisis services. To learn more about our programs and services, please give us a call at 517-346-8318.

Recovery Month Poem: Who Am I?

Written by Brett

Who am I, you ask? I am a son, brother, uncle, and a cousin. I was a criminal, thief, and a cheat. I am one of the millions that believed the devil's little lie. He promised me that this brown powder would take away all my pain inside.

At first, it was amazing. I cannot lie. Until the day came when my skin crawled and I felt like I would die if I couldn't get that brown powder inside. So, here comes that evil whisper from inside "all you have to do is go commit more crimes. Remember at a young age you could handle doing time"?

I became a person who took all the materialistic things I could find, either it be yours or mine just to feed the beast inside by injecting into a vein. I ask myself, "why am I okay with killing myself one tenth at a time"? I tried to stay out of mind because I couldn't handle the memories of past times. The devil was always there saying "you destroyed most of your ties with family and friends, but I'll never leave your side. I'll be there until the end of time".

Whenever I tried to get away from this master of disguise, he made me believe one more lie that I owed him. He said "I introduced you to the one thing you wanted your whole life, your one true love that will be your bride and never leaving your side. I can now reveal to you her name. Her name is addiction".

I didn't know it at the time, but the devil made a crucial mistake when he gave it a name. It allowed my higher power to plant a seed. That there was a better way of life. Here, she will show you a way of life, which will give you tools where no darkness can hide.

She whispered to me, "I am true connection, compassion, coverage, love, and joy. I will give you a new family and friends. If you commit to me, I can prove to you I am the only thing that can break your love to addiction. Walk with me because here, darkness cannot hide. I am the light to guide you out. Let me first introduce myself. I am recovery".

Who am I, you ask? I am all of the things I said and more, but I no longer run from them, but I embrace them all. I am who I am. I am me. A recovering addict and proved to be.