



Clubhouse Connection

Racine Friendship Clubhouse

2000 17th St., Racine, WI 53403 [September 2017](#)

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www.racineclubhouse.org



How Advocacy Helped Me Through the Shortage of Psychiatrists

By Donna Z.

Be Prepared

By Ann E.

Now summer is gone and winter will soon be here. Get your winter jackets ready, gloves, stockings caps in full gear. Shoveling will be nice if you have the proper equipment.

I fall down a lot in my apartment— let alone on the slippery snow and ice. One time I had to drive through a two feet high snow drift. The next time I learned my lesson. When my husband tells me something! Be prepared!

I got a letter from Dr. Maudlin, that she was leaving on August 4th. I got refills to last through Sept., and a list of places that I could call. The places were full or not accepting Medicaid, or else they wanted me to pay up front and I couldn't afford it. My primary doctor was not comfortable bridging my medications until I could get in to see the psychiatrist until Jan. 25th. I talked to Lynelle at the clubhouse, and she helped me advocate with my permission to talk to the nurse at Dr. Shah's office at Aurora. As a result, they wanted to see me on September 6th and he continued my medications until I see the new psychiatrist in January.

NERVOUS FATIGUE, by Paul A.

Sometimes I get fatigued, which is a feeling of being tired. When I get this tired feeling, I must remember it is a nervous fatigue and not a real physical fatigue. The fatigue is a sense of being tired, but the problem centers in my mind. The fatigue manifests itself in my mind; the weakest point. The fatigue seems real like it's a physiological condition, but it is merely a psychological condition.

What I have to learn to do is when my muscles feel tired, I should command my muscles to move. I command my muscles to do what they fear and hate to do the most. Then I can walk on when my muscles merely feel tired. This coping skills helps alleviate nervous fatigue.

The clubhouse now has it's own chat group, which was suggested by our member, Angela P.! Look for us under 'Clubhouse Group' to join!

Mission: Racine Friendship Clubhouse inspires hope and opportunity for persons with a mental illness .

Vision:

working together to rebuild lives affected by mental illness.



An Actor Repairs, by Connie K.

Greetings and Salutations, I'm a thespian. It's a fancy way of saying an actor. I've mostly done children's theatre at First Stage in Milwaukee. It was wonderful working with children and the grown ups who still found the child in their hearts. It's called a play that we, the actors, perform. All of us did it growing up on the playground or at home with our brothers, sisters & neighborhood friends. Play, pretend; It's a great place to live, in your imagination. On the stage I can become anyone I desire to become living within the framework of the playwright's script.

Stage fright and nerves, can get to me before I go out, but once I'm on stage the character takes over. Sometimes things go wrong: someone misses a line or an entrance; a prop wasn't set prior to the show; a work lamp wasn't unplugged and accidentally my friend & classmate, Andy Garrison, was exposed in all his glory. Woops! The show must go on!

Theatre is different from television & film. It's live, anything can happen, and we don't make the big bucks. It's a poor life. Jobs are few and far between. Never quit, that's my theory, there's always a chance, and there's always tomorrow. I didn't go into acting to make money, I loved to act. With it you can change the world.

Lots of Love,

Connie Kowalski

By Tony K.

I started coming to Racine Friendship Clubhouse in 2014, because there was a NAMI Young Adults Group that I learned about from the library. I kept coming back and was stable for a long time, would talk with people, and even referred a friend there. In 2016, I had a job that I loved and lost after a month. I worked next at a place that I hated, plus had a bad medication. I was volunteering with helping children with autism create works of art. Right before my first session, my niece died. With everything else happening, I lost control of myself. I totaled my car, and almost lost my freedom. My mind was a mess. It was during this time I was finally able to accept the fact that I have high functioning autism. I was diagnosed as a kid, but I wanted people to see me as I am. I also learned that I have bipolar disorder. I have slowly gotten on the road to recovery, but I have been without reasonable transportation. I need to apply for disability just to save up for another vehicle. What would support me is to take a look at my website: tkcartoonist.info, plus support my comic and music projects through these links: buskers.bandcamp.com, and indyplanet.us/brands/tkcomics.

What is the Program Director?

By Chris Rosin

As Program Director, I live our mission of changing lives and inspiring hope and opportunity for persons with mental illness. Our clubhouse was inspired by Fountain House in New York in 1948 (which Lynelle visited recently), and now the Clubhouse International Model has spread throughout the world. In Wisconsin, there are 5 clubhouses; the other ones are in Milwaukee, Madison, Wausau and Manitowoc, and we meet quarterly. Over the last 3 years, I've visited them all, and we just had our overnight camping trip and conference with the Clubhouse WI Coalition in the Dells.

The clubhouse model is the Work Ordered Day, which parallels business hours, and gives people with a mental illness the opportunity to integrate into the social and economic community by discovering strengths at the clubhouse to reach their educational, social and vocational goals.

I work with members side-by-side as colleagues in the Work-Ordered Day in the different work areas called Units. Our Clubhouse has a Building Unit, which is the janitorial and maintenance. We also have a Culinary Unit, which members help prepare and serve the meal. In Reception, members sign members in for attendance, greet visitors, and handle lunch money. Our membership Unit involves the attendance statistics and tours, and we also have an Office Unit, in which members can help make copies, do computer entry, file, etc. Recently, we added a Vocational Unit, in which our Job Coach, Jenny, will have members assist her in shredding, making copies, passing out group surveys, etc.

Members sign their initials next to the tasks they would like to work on on the white boards. Sometimes this can take encouragement, patience, and it can take more time than to do it yourself, but it's a teaching and an investment. It's exciting when someone gets out of their comfort zone to try something new and amazes us with the potential they discovered. In my Board Reports each month, I refer to these as "Wow Moments."

The Work-Ordered Day builds skills for members to live independently, or as experience for a resume and job reference. I partner with our Vocational Coordinator, and we discuss how the program can help them prepare for what kinds of jobs they want in the community: if they want a restaurant job, they can help in the kitchen; or an office setting can help in the office or reception units, for examples.

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As we're doing things together, it boosts people's confidence in their abilities. The clubhouse standards are that we are intentionally minimally staffed so that members need to be needed. For example, when I'm working with someone on a project, and another member asks for computer help, I was able to ask another member to show her how to do it- and the person had a glow!

The idea is to give just the right amount of support so the person has the tools and knowledge they need for the tasks. The hope is that they will eventually do the task themselves, and then be able to teach other members.

The clubhouse gives members a common goal and purpose, and a place of belonging. We are not a medical model, and there is not therapy or case management. We are helping build work/life skills, job-readiness, and confidence to move forwards in recovery. People learn to believe in themselves at the clubhouse, practice coping tools, and learn social skills, as working together also builds rapport and relationships.

The clubhouse is different because we are not a hand-out, but a hand-up. We are of the philosophy that, "You give a man a fish, you feed him for a day, you teach him to fish, you feed him for a lifetime."

I encourage everyone to see the video Leadership Racine made with Ivan Barra because if a picture says a thousand words, so the video will say a million. It's on YouTube under Racine Friendship Clubhouse.

About Me, by Thomas K.

I have been a member at the Racine Friendship Clubhouse for a couple of years. I have a pet cat. Her name is Suzy- Q. I have a part-time job buying and selling autos on my own I have drove on and off for GT Autos. I live in a house on Gillen St. I have lived here in Racine for most of my life. Went to Washington Park High school, and three degrees from two Junior college.

