

FROM RECOVERY TO EMANCIPATION

Many people hear the words “mental illness” and associate it with danger, madness or weakness. Media hype and society’s blind acceptance of medical deception imbue these assumptions. The reality, however, for most of those who get entangled within a psychiatric system or who experience severe mental distress is that traumatic life events have brought them to the depths of despair. Some may get help from mental health services though that help is often limited and in the form of drug regimes, which denies the origins of the problem. Many people for whom that regime does not work find that they have to undertake their own personal journey of recovery, and this can be painful, challenging and difficult. These are the stories of survivors, people who learned to embrace that challenge, who have learned the hard way that life is not always fair, but who have overcome life’s difficulties and gone on not just to recover but to actively thrive. Their lives may never be the same, but they have been to the edge of despair and survived. Their stories were donated in order to educate but also to inspire others to have the courage to reject the medical labels and their limitations, to move beyond mere recovery and to find a fulfilling life again.

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