



**Consumer Council System
of Maine**
A Voice for Consumers of Mental Health
Services

www.maineccsm.org

**“Politics of Memory” Film Discussion Notes
CCSM Annual Meeting
January 26, 2018**

Well I define myself as a disease, and “I am a person, not an illness”?

- I am a person
- I am a person not a label
- Person without gender or ethnic label
- I am me
- Person please
- I am a person not an illness
- my name is Karen I am a person

How do I identify myself? (Part I)

• As a person with a mental illness

- A person with the advantage of a roadmap for myself
- I experienced a serious emotional trauma at 14 years old and have been seeking restoration and healing for myself and others.

• As a consumer

- Have a consumer helping others with something I’ve gone through
- I first sought help in “1969” from TCMHS send Mary’s hospital in Rumford and Lewiston, respectively. I am still trying to help them and other institutions to gain proper respect of the truth.
- As a consumer I love to take what I learned and pass it on. I am not one of these, I am all.

• As a survivor

- I am a survivor of a faults cultural narrative
- I am a survivor with a mental health challenge
- I am a survivor I have PTSD and depression
- I continue to survivalist strength in me and have my faith
- I am healthier than ever and remember from where I came

“Politics of Memory” Film Discussion Notes
CCSM Annual Meeting
January 26, 2018

- Yes, I have survived psychiatric treatment

How do I identify myself? (cont.)

- As a person with a psychiatric disability
 - I have a psychiatric “Differentiability”

- Other? please write what you prefer
 - A person with many challenges
 - A person with mental health issues
 - A person
 - A person with some unique qualities
 - Advocate
 - Me
 - A person with a mental health challenge
 - A person and human being who seeks to love.

And how does what I call myself reflect on what I feel about myself and what I want others to think about me? (Part II)

- I reflect health and well-being, while we’re calling my troublesome past
- I want people to know my story to know who I am without my labels
- I want people to get to know me and my story not label me
- I am and individual, I am me
- Labels say I don’t matter and it sends the same message to others
- Are you by the personal info to go close to me unless they bring it up.
- I call myself an advocate, I call myself a person of change, It makes me feel good when I’m helping, others people will say that person is doing things so can I
- It doesn't matter what I am, whether it be gay, straight, mentally impaired, I am an individual of many
- I have separated my labels for the judgments on myself and try to help others see them as a limitation
- I am a person who has overcome challenges
- I am my thoughts I am powerful
- I am what I think I am
- I see the need to explain more about myself
- I can move forward

“Politics of Memory” Film Discussion Notes
CCSM Annual Meeting
January 26, 2018

When we tell our story and it's ignored because it's assumed that people with mental disorders can't tell the truth will we stand up for each other?

- We absolutely have to
- People sometimes don't listen
- Every individual has their own reality
- Amen yes
- F#@! YES
- Yes, all day of the week
- Yes, we will stand up for each other there is strength in numbers
- Well yah
- 100% yes
- I will advocate for any and all, especially to tell someone else's story to help someone else.
- HELL YES

What are some ways in which we can stand up for each other, support each other, then telling truth?

- Advocates support each other listen and reflect without judgment
- Ask others to share stories, be willing to listen and share
- Through the work of the council
- Listen, be heard, tell your story people, even to death of years. Something will go through and may help someone else.
- Use our voice stand up for people that can't speak for themselves
- Help them get to where they want to go
- IPS for family members and friends
- Hold workshops on how to tell our stories and why it's important
- Gentle empathy and support, not preaching
- Have each other's back, listen reflect and believe
- Treat others with empathy respect with no judgments
- Work together
- Become leaders, get involved with groups and communities, state etc. run for positions from planning board, school board the state representative or even governor. As we get involved we write the narrative!
- We can stand up with each other, by telling a story we will see we have much

“Politics of Memory” Film Discussion Notes
CCSM Annual Meeting
January 26, 2018

more in common.

Would the world be a better place without people with a disability in it?

- *If yes why?*
 - Yes, the word and meaning of disability should be banished. No one should be forced to be disabled we all should be allowed to live in contribute!
 - Everyone has a disability weather they admit to it or see if in themselves. It's what makes life better and interesting. It's called diversity.

- *If no why?*
 - Because we are all important and can make a difference in someone's life.
 - We are all human
 - We are all humans we are all survivors of something
 - We would miss out on many different abilities
 - We all need to speak our voice
 - People with disabilities have a beautiful mind that can be used to help each other.
 - If there were no people with disabilities, there would be no people. We are all human.
 - Some of our greatest achievements would be lost.
 - People that invent things I've considered odd... Where would we be.
 - Everyone has their own strengths if they are not aware of them.
 - Hell no, we are wonderful and creative.
 - F#@! no
 - Diversity is the world's hope for the future.
 - Read "A first rate madness"

What has really changed in the mental health service over the century, and what has remained the same?

Changed

More open Communication
More people allowed not to take meds
People with lived experience of

Stayed the Same

Societies apathy for silence
Stigma
Death in mental health hospitals

“Politics of Memory” Film Discussion Notes
CCSM Annual Meeting
January 26, 2018

mental illness as change agents	Having to take meds
The method of shutting up	Still trying to shut us up!
More choice	Compliance adherence
Peer to peer support	Stigma reinforced by media
Doctors thinking they know what’s best	Doctors think pill is a miracle
Not listening to consumers.	Still using ECT as treatment

Which changes have been in our best interest? (Part I)

- CCSM - a chance for voices to be heard
- Recovery services
- Being able to speak out
- Peer movement
- Consumer organizations
- Peers telling stories
- Consumer operated service programs
- The ones we have been made - taken ourselves
- Move from inpatient to residential
- Or voice and how we say it
- Peer services
- Peers have more voice today due to the laws being put in place
- The movement to end stigma
- Making it easier for service members with mental health issues to come forward
- We have choices

And what changes have been for the worst? (Part II)

- Being in-prisoned
- The old way of thinking
- Taking away section 17 services
- Current politician to try to criminalize mental illness
- Overmedication
- Forensic Prison
- Taking away services that I needed
- More medication, take one med which lead to complications in one area and then taking a med to threat the reactions of it.
- Laws as a tool for controlling mentally ill
- MaineCare taking meds we need off the list
- Decreased funding

“Politics of Memory” Film Discussion Notes
CCSM Annual Meeting
January 26, 2018

How we live our faith in the hills of others or will we become affective advocates?

- Be a voice for those who have no voice
- I will try as I can and as I speak up for myself I am speaking up for you.

How we live our faith in the hills of others or will we become affective advocates?
(cont.)

- Use our voice and speak loudly
- We are our own best advocate, use our voice, when we speak out we are united.
- We must advocate or be controlled
- We are our own best advocate! We must have confidence in ourselves and work together.

Where can we learn advocacy skills?

- We need training programs to do this
- The DBSA website; advocating training tabs
- Make it a module for intentional peer support training continuing education class.
- By attending CCSM meetings and how each in our communities
- Certified intentional peer support specialist, hearing voices network, peer network, hope conference, alternatives, agencies who are hiring peers is across the country and the world, home, next door, church, school, government, etc...
- Learn advocacy from RPM is in people who go through the experience of advocacy.
- How to community... Where are our fellow consumers? That's what we can learn from one another.
- Getting to where we can except each other
- Peer networking
- Play what we wish others were for us! We can gain skills everywhere, but we also already have them if we just do what we know.
- CCSM sale, peer network and NAMI
- CCSM and my peers

“Politics of Memory” Film Discussion Notes
CCSM Annual Meeting
January 26, 2018

There a place for me in the consumer/survivor/ex-patient movement and what could I contribute to it?

- There is a place for me to contribute by using my voice and telling my story.
- I work from my position at any mental health agency that I work with and in the community at-large to tell the truth about my struggles, your struggles, and mine and your value in this, our world!
- I Hope so. As a mental health consumer, I plan to work to bring mental illness out of the shadows and into the light of day.

There a place for me in the consumer/survivor/ex-patient movement and what could I contribute to it? (cont.)

- I could listen to others and help them find a way to make their voice heard. And share from my family that was. And continue sharing my own.
- Hope find a way to help people get to where they need to go.

There a place for me in the consumer/survivor/ex-patient movement and what could I contribute to it? (cont.)

- I work a job in which I support other peers.
- Myself my story
- Steady resistance to the master near it over and the willingness to speak the truth in any room to add the audience.
- Yes, I am a personal email to health worker but first I'm a human being with a personal lived experience in the mental health narrative. I have a story I would like to hear yours too. Let's start there and build momentum as we go...
- Already a part of the CCSM.