

PMHCA Recovery Conference And the Un-Masquerade Ball

All I can say is wow! The PMHCA conference was great, and I had the opportunity to be a part of it all. The conference started with Kathy Quick, the opening speaker, as she thanked a lot of people who helped put together the conference, like Jen Crame. She also talked about the CPS pilot program and how Mark Davis is her hero. YES, because we all deserve life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

There were workshops that were so much fun like The Power of Play. We played and danced and realized that as adults we forget about fun and play. The other workshop was about relationships versus people and how much power we have with different scenarios: how to help, grouped together and working on them by listening to other thoughts to work them out.

The second keynote was Jen Smith, Deputy Secretary of the PA Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS). Then there was the Horton brothers, Lee and Dennis, who had the room so quiet as they told their story of the work they did while serving a 28-year jail sentence, how they became Certified Peer Specialists (CPSs) in prison, and how WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) knows no boundaries.

I enjoyed the peer support and how it can work – even in hard situations. “Life gives you what life gives you. “If you have darkness, bring the light.” These were quotes that made people understand the positiveness of changing your perspective on life. There was holistic wellness yoga and reiki which help your spirit center.



And last but not least, there was “The Un-Masquerade Ball” where we were dressed in long gowns donated by CIC and others. It was a grand time! Kathy Quick had us unmask and throw them down asking, “What do you still have now that the mask is gone?” YOU were left good, bad or indifferent.

Leadership and Advocacy ended the workshops. The awards that were given were the Shelly Bishop Award, the Mark Davis Award and the Pat Madigan Award. I was really glad I went and that our team got to experience the power of peer support.

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