

Issue 378



**Harmony Center**  
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# Building Better Mental Health Through Connections

*This article was taken from Healthtalk Australia...[www.healthtalkaustralia.org](http://www.healthtalkaustralia.org) Several people were interviewed as to what personal recovery meant to them.*

## Personal Recovery

In the past, it was believed that recovery from mental health concerns was rarely, if ever, possible. Treatment and care was centered on the clinical management of the ‘illness’. There is now an increasing focus on personal recovery that underpins mental health-related policies and laws at a national and state or territory level in Australia. Mental health community support services and clinical services now see supporting people’s personal recovery as an important part of their work.

Clinical recovery is defined as having fewer or no symptoms. In contrast, personal recovery is understood to mean living a meaningful life as defined by the person themselves in the context of their experience of mental health concerns. Personal recovery promotes the individual’s health and well-being, including defining personal recovery goals, building self-esteem, self-confidence, resilience, the ability to maintain relationships, and having a sense of purpose. Personal and clinical recovery are not mutually exclusive, but can go hand in hand.

*Vicky said recovery is different for everybody. She thinks it is about making social connections, gaining insight and ‘accepting what’s happened’.*

### What recovery meant

Most people talked to considered themselves recovered at the time of the interview, but recovery was described as something personal and unique for each individual. It could mean simply being well at the time of the interview, like Vanessa who said, ‘You would say probably I am pretty well recovered, but it doesn’t take much for me to start to spiral down’. But for most, it meant a longer-term change in their relationship with their illness. According to Chris, ‘Recovery is a journey. Recovery does not have a destination. Recovery is seeing the light at the end of the tunnel and getting through that tunnel towards the light’.

Many of those who spoke about recovery had a strong sense that it meant being able to better manage symptoms or prevent them from becoming worse. This could mean structuring life in such a way as to avoid stress  
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# Monthly Recipe

## Butternut Squash Pastasotto

2 lbs. Butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cut into 1-inch cubes	1 lb. Penne pasta
4 tbsp. Olive oil	1 ½ cups dry white wine
6 tbsp. Unsalted butter, cut into cubes	3 ½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
10 whole fresh sage leaves, plus 1 tbsp. chopped fresh sage	
Half a small onion, finely chopped	¾ cup grated parmesan cheese
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper	¼ cup walnuts, toasted and chopped, optional

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Toss the butternut squash with 2 tbsp. olive oil, ½ tsp. Salt and few grinds of pepper on a baking sheet and bake, tossing halfway through, until tender and golden brown, about 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat the butter and remaining 2 tbsp. olive oil in large heavy bottom pot over medium-high heat until the butter has melted. Add the whole sage leaves and fry until crisp, but still vibrant green, about 3 minutes. Use tongs to remove them to a paper towel-lined plate.

Add the onion to the pot and cook, stirring frequently to make sure the butter does not burn, until tender and fragrant, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the pasta and stir to coat in the butter and onions. Toast the pasta in the pan, stirring frequently, until golden brown in spots, about 4 minutes.

Pour in the wine and cook, stirring frequently, until the liquid has been absorbed, about 5 minutes. Add 1 cup broth, and cook, stirring frequently, until absorbed, about 5 minutes.

Repeat 2 more times until all the broth is absorbed and the pasta is cooked to al dente. Fold in the butternut squash, chopped sage, parmesan cheese, 1 ½ tsps salt and few grinds of pepper and stir until combined and creamy. Garnish with fried sage leaves and walnuts if using.



## Tips For Eating Healthy:

### Healthy eating on a budget:

- Plan your meals
- Make your own grocery list
- Buy seasonal produce
- Buy frozen or canned
- Avoid processed foods
- Check for deals
- Homemade snacks
- Repurpose leftover ingredients
- Buy local
- Buy in bulk
- Cook at home
- Buy generic
- Pick vegetarian and vegan protein
- Buy whole foods
- Grow a garden
- Use coupons
- Budget for groceries
- Buy store brands



*...Personal Recovery continued from front page...*

or learning techniques to deal with the symptoms themselves. Maria, who saw recovery as an ‘every day’ thing, described how she takes Mondays and Tuesdays off to give herself time to recharge. She said by doing this, she feels she can do things she couldn’t before.

Some people spoken to didn’t have a clear idea of what recovery meant for them. Quite a few struggled with the term itself, or were still discovering what recovery might look for them personally. Paddy said recovery was ‘trying to focus on what enables you to get back to a bit of stability’, but added that he couldn’t ‘really pin it down’.

It could be hard to reconcile the term ‘recovery’ with the challenges of living with mental health concerns and some felt the term caused difficulties by creating expectations for them.

*Allen said he tries not to compare himself to others, and focuses on the small things he can achieve.*

*For Anna, recovery was ‘elusive’. She thought it was better to talk about ‘living with and surviving’ mental health problems.*

For some people the idea of recovery was difficult to think about because they still felt isolated or, like Allen, were dealing with constant change: ‘The ground beneath has been moving all the time’.

*Brendan understood that recovery was about nurturing interests and relationships but wasn’t sure how that worked in reality unless you had someone to support you.*

### **Support and social contact**

For many people having supportive family and friends was critical to recovery. Chris felt he was ‘actually able to develop and go to places he never thought possible’. He attributed his new outlook on life to having somewhere to live, feeling supported, and taking medication. He said that he enjoyed living with a friend, and know his parent were ‘just a phone call away’.

*For Simon recovery was about having friends to support you.*

Because mental health concerns could lead to breakdowns in relationships and isolation, the development of nurturing relationships and supportive networks were an important sign of personal recovery for the people talked to. Nicky thought that the development of social connections was very important for recovery generally.

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# OCTOBER at the Harmony Center

## Peer Support Schedule

**Mondays-** 1:00pm- *Hybrid*  
6:00pm- *Hybrid*

**Thursdays-** 3:00pm w/Andrea

**Tuesdays-** 1:00pm  
(w/Williston Center)- *Hybrid*

**Fridays-** 1:00pm

## Recovery “Living Well” Schedule

**Tuesdays at 2:00pm-**  
Tech Help Day

**Wednesdays at 1:00pm-**  
2<sup>nd</sup> - Book Club w/Williston  
9<sup>th</sup> - TED Talks: Coping Mechanisms  
16<sup>th</sup> - Music Appreciation  
23<sup>rd</sup>- Mindful Minutes  
30<sup>th</sup> - Let’s Talk About Grief

**Thursdays all day-**  
What do you need help with day?

**Fridays at 1:30pm on 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>-**  
Membership Meetings

## Social/Recreational Schedule

**Mondays at 11:00am-**  
Cards

**Tuesdays at 11am-**  
Games

**Wednesdays at 10:00am-**  
Fitness Time

**Thursdays at 1:00pm-**  
Audio Book Club

**Fridays at 2:00pm-**  
4<sup>th</sup> - Hot Chocolate Social  
11<sup>th</sup> - Bingo  
18<sup>th</sup> - Cheese Sampling  
25<sup>th</sup> - Halloween Wacky Bingo

*(Please note that you can play cards/games or watch a video at anytime throughout the day, on any day, as long as it doesn’t interrupt a scheduled activity.)*

## Special Events

4<sup>th</sup>- Hot Chocolate Social  
18<sup>th</sup>- Cheese Sampling  
28<sup>th</sup> – Beer Cheese Soup & Brauts 5:00pm\* *(Must sign-up)*  
31<sup>st</sup>- Happy Halloween... Card games and snacks all day

# Community Stuff...

# OCTOBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	Cost ? <b>Salsa Showdown...</b> Oak Park... 4:00pm	<b>1 Free Vets for Vets Peer Support Mtg...</b> 720 Western Avenue... 5:30pm	<b>2</b>	<b>3 Free Ward County Candidate Forum...</b> Minot City Hall... 4:00pm	<b>4</b>	<b>5 Cost? Midwest Monster Con...</b> Municipal Auditorium... 10:00am
<b>6</b>	<b>7 Free Mondays Are For Murder...</b> Minot Public Library... 6:00pm (Must Sign-Up)	<b>8</b>	<b>9 Free That's Craftastic:</b> Minot Public Library... 6:00pm (Must Sign Up)	<b>10</b>	<b>11 \$20.00 Downtown Haunted House...</b> Drop Zone... 9:00pm	<b>12 Free Pumpkin Walk...</b> Woodland Trail... 6:00pm
<b>13 \$3.00 Dakota Flea Market...</b> ND State Fair Grounds... 10:00am	<b>14</b>	<b>15 Free Vets for Vets Peer Support Mtg...</b> 720 Western Avenue... 5:30pm	<b>16</b>	<b>17 Free Veterans Stand Down...</b> Minot Armed Forces Reserve Center... 10:00am	<b>18</b>	<b>19 Cost ? Farmers Market...</b> Oak Park... 8:00am
<b>20</b>	<b>21 Free Visit the Minot Public Library...</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24 Free Call a friend</b>	<b>25 Free Pride of Dakota Showcase...</b> ND State Fair Grounds... 3:00pm	<b>26 \$10.00 Minot Minotauros Hockey...</b> Maysa Arena... 7:35pm
<b>27</b>	<b>28 Free Attend Peer Support Meeting at the Harmony Center ...</b> 1:00pm & 6:00pm	<b>29</b>	<b>30 Free Watch a movie</b>	<b>31</b>		

For more **OCTOBER** activities in the community go to... [visitminot.org](http://visitminot.org)

### Soup Kitchens in Minot:

Monday-	11am-12:30pm-	Faith United Methodist Church,
Tuesday-	11:30am-12:30pm-	Christ Lutheran Church
Wednesday-	11:30am-12:30pm-	Immanuel Baptist Church
Wednesday-	5:30pm-6:30pm-	Cornerstone Presbyterian Church
Thursday-	5:30pm-6:30pm-	St Leo's Catholic Church
Friday-	11:30am-12:30pm-	1 <sup>st</sup> Lutheran Church
Saturday-	9:30am-10:30am-	Congregational United Church of Christ
Sunday-	11:0030am-12:30pm-	7 <sup>th</sup> Day Adventist Church

# OCTOBER WORDFIND



OCTOBERAVENSPOOKY  
 WSKULLSWHATDOOLBP  
 LPSJABTIDSHAGSAOE  
 SIEACOAWARLOCKSNE  
 TRICKORTREATAGHER  
 AIBKCGGFKGHOULSSC  
 BTMOAEHRGNILLIHCE  
 HSOLTYOIOFSTDSORM  
 EPZASMSGRAVERFWE E  
 XEANVATHONWROI LAT

TCSREDIPSKELTONSTHGI LNOOMA  
 COSTUMES EDSLEESEFSSTESRTSR  
 RFHOCUSPOCUSRR?BIUOCBCANDY  
 OFERRYPIETHGINDIMLWIHTHICER  
 NISCRPETRIFIESVAMPIRESEAM!A  
 ENOTSDAEHHPDRACULAPSELKCAC  
 SYHALLOWEEP HANTOMONSTERSN!S

OCTOBER  
 BATS  
 OWLS  
 RAVENS  
 SPIDERS  
 TOADS  
 RATS  
 BLACK-CATS  
 VAMPIRES  
 DRACULA  
 FANGS  
 GHOSTS  
 GHOULS  
 MONSTERS  
 WITCHES  
 WARLOCKS  
 PHANTOM  
 SPIRITS  
 ZOMBIES  
 BOOGEYMAN  
 MUMMIES  
 MIDNIGHT  
 MOONLIGHT  
 SKELETONS  
 SKULLS  
 BONES  
 BLOOD  
 GRAVE  
 CEMETARY  
 COFFIN  
 HEADSTONE  
 CAULDRONS

JACK-O-LANTERNS

SPELLS

HEXES

SCREAMS

HOWL

CACKLES

CRONES

HAGS

CREEPY

FRIGHTFUL

DARK

CHILLING

SCARY

EERIE

SPOOKY

PETRIFIES

COSTUMES

TRICK-OR-TREAT

CANDY

HOCUS-POCUS

(LEFTOVER LETTERS SPELL OUT HIDDEN MESSAGE)

*...Personal Recovery continued from page 3...*

As well as receiving support from friends and family some people spoke about the benefits of belonging to a church and community.

*Religion was an important part of Evan's recovery. He said prayer, and connecting with people gave him hope.*

## **Medication**

Quite a few people talked about the role of medication in their recovery. Michelle described medication as 'definitely a part of her recovery'. For many people, medication was seen as one tool among many that helped. Helen, who at the time interviewed was taking medication and seeing her psychologist, said 'life is good'. She acknowledged that 'no one's ever 100 per cent', but thought she was 'getting close to it'. For Susana, 'recovery means taking medication', as well as being with people who understand you, and taking care of yourself. Ann said medication was only 30% of the 'recovery work' and that 'the rest of it has to come from within'.

*Maria has taken a mood stabilizer for 25 years and now also takes an anti-psychotic. Although she has ups and downs she feels she has 'more control' and said medication has helped with her recovery.*

## **Identity and looking to the future**

While feeling unwell for some people meant seeing no future and feeling isolated, personal recovery was often associated with looking forward to the future, making plans and developing social connections. For Tanai, making plans for the future was key to her personal recovery. She said she gave herself a time-frame to try and avoid being unwell and it got longer and bigger 'because there were more things to do'.

While finding an identity for oneself going forward was considered an important aspect of people's personal recovery, several acknowledged that it could take time. As Nicky explained, 'it takes a while to feel yourself again and to feel your own identity'.

Mental health concerns and the personal recovery process could shape people's sense of who they were and build resilience. Lisa described how being with other people with mental health concerns had shaped her identity. She said, 'I very strongly identified as someone who is mentally ill'. Some people spoken to felt that their experience of living with a condition diagnosed as a mental health concern had made them a stronger person. Although Niall considered his journey to have been a 'relentless struggle', he said he'd 'learnt a lot along the way'. He felt that the journey had given him 'inner strength' as well as resilience in his recovery.

*Alice feels different now and thing maybe her mental health concern was a 'wake up call' to make her more resilient.*

Not all the people spoken to wanted to associate their sense of who they were with their struggle with mental health concerns. Tanai, for example, couldn't 'stand' those people who identified  
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With being recovered. She thought that it was as if their past ‘illness’ was ‘everything’, and that they had lost every other part of their identity ‘save for the sorry one of “I was sick”’.

*Ann described recovery as getting in touch with who you are now, rather than who you were before, and finding things that are meaningful to you.*

## **Acceptance**

Quite a few people described how acceptance had led to a change in their relationship with their mental health concern, though it was acknowledged that this took time. For Taylor it was important ‘to accept what you’ve got’ but she said this took her ‘a while’. Chris, who heard voices, described how he spent five weeks in hospital trying to figure out what was ‘real’. He said it took two years for him to accept that the ‘voices were not a real person, a real entity’ but were just a part of his ‘imagination’.

Acceptance was deeply personal for the people spoken to. For some it meant realizing that mental health concerns were going to part of their life, and that was ‘okay’. For others, it was about gaining a better understanding of their illness. In Tanai’s view, ‘you never get rid of it completely’. She felt recovery was more about accepting that her thoughts and feelings exist and ‘learning how to live around them’.

*Carlo mentored others living with mental health concerns. He said ‘true happiness’ and ‘peace’ came through embracing the ‘difficult stuff’.*

Feeling as though they were not alone in their suffering or that depression and anxiety were ‘normal human emotions’ was helpful for some. Charlie found it comforting to realize that she wasn’t the only one suffering: ‘everybody has issues... and mental illness is just part of my path’.

*Evan identified several important aspects of recovery- acceptance, self-responsibility, hope, and being part of the community.*

