



**Spread the Message: Revolutionary Activists
Do More than Survive..They Thrive!**

Dear Fellow Travelers,

In this issue of our Newsletter, we are introducing our office staff to you. When the extraordinary number of people call our office, either Sarah or Kelli will answer the phone. In their limited number of available hours, and although the voicemails accumulate, they make every attempt and often are successful in returning calls within one day.

Listening to calls from people who are in pain or trying to help a loved one, desperate for answers, help, suggestions or advice--make us aware of how little is available in communities. Having been MFI's Executive Director for almost a year, I have become aware, and I am impressed with Sarah and Kelli's compassion, dedication and belief in our mission. Beyond answering phone calls, their ideas and suggestions for expanding MFI into becoming a more formidable power is what we all believe in.

Our intention is to advocate and fight for genuine alternatives that promote choice and personal autonomy rather than having to submit to harmful disempowering incarcerations and a medical model of treatment that relies on drugs to the detriment of what really drives recovery/transformation – that is the transformative power of support and personal relationships embedded in community inclusion.

Although the needs of our resilient community of survivors of harmful treatments greatly exceeds our capacity, our mission is too important for us to give anything less than full effort and commitment to making it better for those who follow us - to have it better than we and our loved ones suffered through.

I am one of the lucky ones. I was diagnosed with Schizophrenia and hospitalized twice for more than a year when I was in my twenties. I was not lucky for being shocked and forced to undergo 40 insulin comas and heavy doses of Thorazine and Stelazine. I was not lucky to lose my memory for more than a year. My luck was to have my spirit survive despite the terrible treatments. My good fortune is to be able to do the meaningful work that I have been doing for the past 40 years culminating in being able to lead MFI.

There are 3 principles that I think of when the going gets tough for me. From the Talmud:

"Whoever destroys a soul, it is considered as if he destroyed an entire world. And whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world."

Another is the Helper Therapy Principle, from psychologist Frank Reissman, He observed that

"the act of helping another heals the helper even more than the person helped."

The third is from anthropologist, Edward Hall, who said:

"Failure to fulfill one's potential can be one of the most devastating and damaging things to occur to a person." Hall goes on to say, "a kind of gnawing emptiness, longing, frustration and displaced anger takes over when this

occurs. Whether the anger is turned inward on the self or outward toward others, dreadful destruction results."

As survivors, we know the difficulty of re-starting the journey of becoming who we were meant to be when we lose our preferred path.

Is it any wonder that those who have made it through the fire and have been transformed, have chosen to become activists who are united in change communities of shared values? If you have read this far, my request is for you to ask us how you might volunteer to work with us. We need you for one or more of our projects, be it Shield, starting or joining an Affiliate. Or suggest what you think you could do to help spread and implement our message.

Ron Bassman



SAY HELLO TO KELLI BRANDT

Dear Members, Sponsors, and Affiliates...

Thank you for welcoming me on staff at MindFreedom International! I come to this role with inspiration, gratitude, and a background in the areas of psychology and public health. It has been amazing to see the network of support among psychiatric survivors and those wanting to dedicate their efforts to improving the lives of others. I learned about MindFreedom through a close friend in Eugene and instantly wanted to learn how I could be included in such an important revolution.

[Read Kelli's Story](#)



SAY HELLO TO SARAH SMITH

"Because of David, I was able to see the world through my daughter's eyes, the terror of the 'treatments' to which she was subjected: forced injections, seclusion, labeling, restraints, the horrors of our modern psychiatric industry. In return, I served as MindFreedom's first Development Director for several years and helped increase funding for human rights"

[Read Sarah's Story](#)



If you are interesting in starting an affiliate, joining MindFreedom's Shield, or simply want to learn more about winning rights for psychiatric survivors in your community, contact Sarah or Kelli by emailing office@mindfreedom.org. Renew your membership or make a donation today [HERE](#). For more information visit our website [HERE](#)

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