

Making Visible Unseen Disabilities

a History of Mental Health system from a Survivor

Ty Smith

*Grew up in systems: Mental Health
Special Education, Juvenile Justice &
Foster Care*

*Started as a Y.A.P.S. - Now, I have
over 20 years as a policy maker and
peer employee*

*National consultant in Trauma
Informed Care, international expert
on Soteria House and Peer Respite,
Peer & CSX leader*



Outline

Topics Covered

Diagnoses, Labels, and Systems, Oh My!

History -The Dark Side and the Pursuit
for a Cure

Co-Occurring: Physical Health and
Behavioral Health

Peer Support and Self Determination

I'm more than a Diagnosis

*I'm a person but my treatment is limited by my
diagnoses. And sometimes my diagnoses &
treatments impacts my life*



Unseen System Impact

Scenario: Audience Participation Time!

Normal Consequences

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- No longer friends
- Trouble in School
- Feelings Hurt
- Property Damage
- Physically Hurt

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System Involved Consequences

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- Medication
- Taken Away from Home
- New Diagnoses
- Law Enforcement
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- Over exaggerated

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Long-Term Impacts of These Consequences

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Long-Term Impacts of These Consequences

- Who Knows?
- Stripped of social support network and social skill building
- Confusing labels
- Juvenile Justice record and experience
- Denial of life lessons
- Negative mentality



History

- *A trip to the Asylum*
- *Focal Infections*
- *The Ice Pick Lobotomist*
- *Chemical Imbalance*

*The Serotonin Theory of Depression: a
Systematic Umbrella Review of the Evidence*
[Joanna Moncrieff](#) and others



Dr. Henry Cotton

Focal Infectious Disease Theory

- *By 1923, he was claiming cure rates as high as 85% among those who survived. His postsurgical mortality rates, however, were 30% and higher for colon resections.*
- *Falsified Data*
- *Self treatment*

- *Phyllis Greenacre*

Scull, A. (2007). Madhouse: A Tragic Tale of Megalomania and Modern Medicine. Yale University Press.

(32.9%)

In 2018, an estimated 17.4 million adults with disabilities experienced frequent mental distress

4.6x higher

The frequency is almost 5 times more as compared to adults without disabilities.

Frequent Mental Distress Among Adults by Disability Status, Disability Type, and Selected Characteristics

Peer Support!



Peer Run Respite

My dream career



Peer Specialist

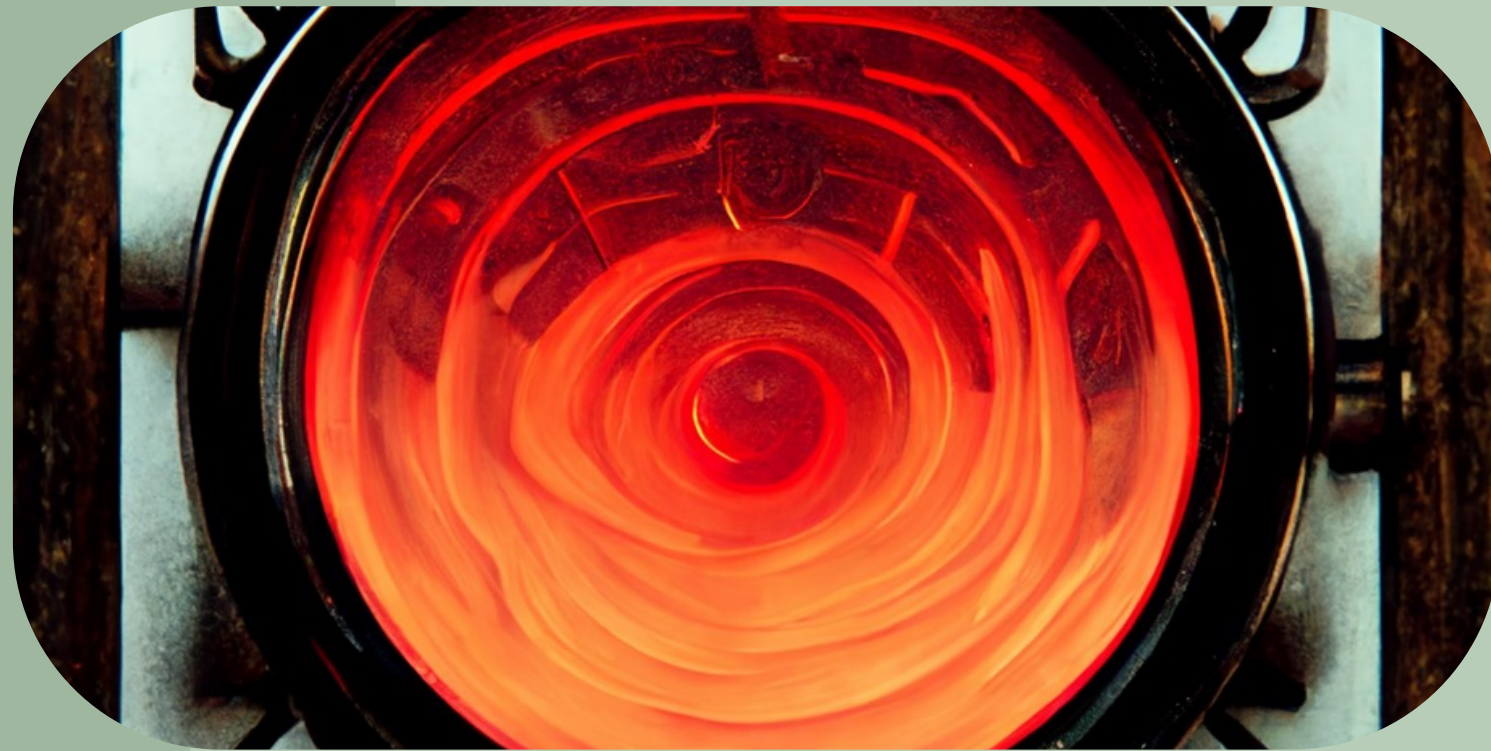
*What have we gained
and at what cost?*



Civil Rights

*Forced treatment is a
failure of the system*

Chance to Fail Is a Chance to Grow

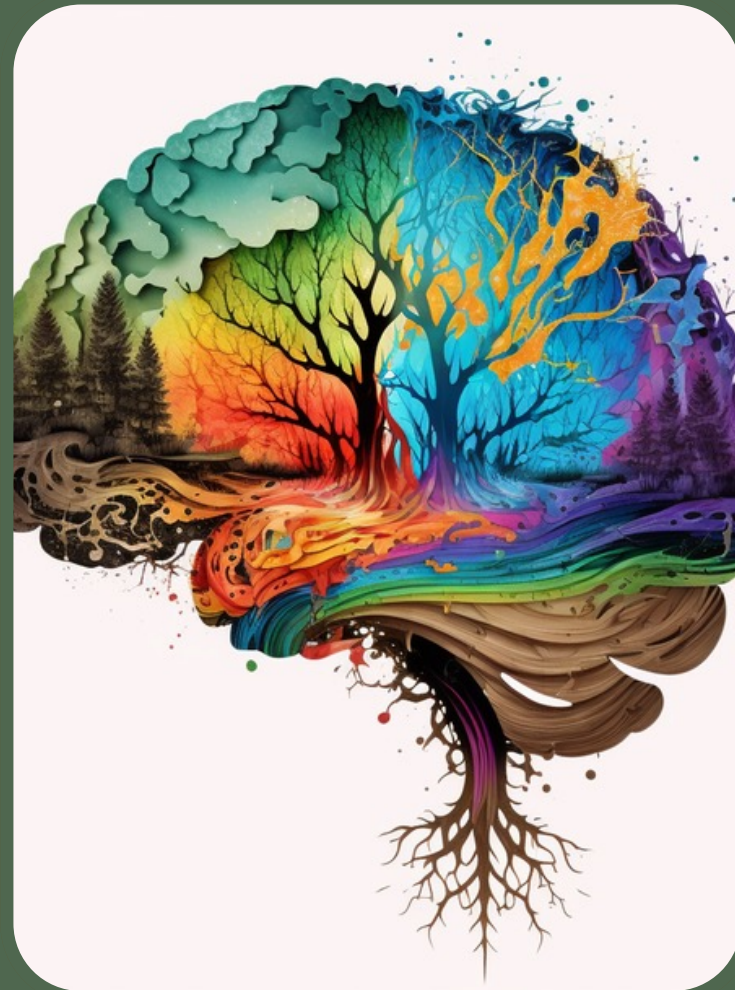


*We learn through failure
No matter what our mom says we
won't learn what a hot stove is till we
touch it!*



*“There is no innovation and creativity
without failure. Period.”
Brené Brown (born 1965), Professor in social
research*

What can we do?



Rights for our peers

What is happening in the UN, other Countries and other Movements



Choice of Treatment

Peer treatments, Peer Providers, Trauma Informed Care, Talk Therapy



Quality of Life

Employment, Social Support Networks, Housing, Meaningful Activities basically the IL community

Thank You
Questions / Comments

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