

MindFreedom^{journal}

Summer 2011

www.MindFreedom.org

Celebrating 25 Years with MindFreedom



MFI Mom's Initiative: This group of mothers has adult children harmed by the mental health system. Left to right: Sarah Smith (Development Director for MindFreedom International), Terry Danielson, Cyndi Fisher (back), Marcia Meyers (front), Violet Oaks, Linda Mullnix.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Stopping Forced Electroshock Therapy: A Win For Elizabeth Ellis!

Mathew Morrissey: Supporting Loved Ones Who Have Been in a Psychiatric Institution

Bath, England, Mad Hatters Celebrate Mad Culture

MindFreedom Delagation Goes to Ghana

MindFreedom Starts Global Empowerment Handbook

A Look at the Past: Celebrating MFI's 25th Anniversary and More !

Published by MFI

MindFreedom International Wins Campaigns for Human Rights and Alternatives in the Mental Health System

MindFreedom International (MFI) is one of the few groups in the mental health field that is independent with no funding from or links to governments, mental health providers, drug companies, religious organizations, etc. Funding is entirely from members like you, and a few foundations.

MFI is rooted in a global movement to change the mental health system. The majority of MindFreedom's membership, board and staff identify themselves as mental health consumers and psychiatric survivors. However, membership is open to everyone who supports our human rights goals. Advocates, mental health professionals, family members and the general public are all valued members and leaders in the MindFreedom community.

MindFreedom International also unites grassroots organizations. Each

Sponsor Group or Affiliate has a liaison on the MFI Support Coalition Advisory Council.

MFI's mission: "In a spirit of mutual cooperation, MindFreedom International leads a nonviolent revolution of freedom, equality, truth and human rights that unites people affected by the mental health system with movements for justice everywhere."

If you are not yet a member, become a member or donate, now! If you are already a member, consider an early renewal donation. MindFreedom is a non-profit organization under IRS 501(c)(3) and your donation is tax-deductible. (To join or donate, see the back cover or visit www.MindFreedom.org.)

You are also encouraged to check out our Mad Market of books and products at www.MadMarket.org. Proceeds support MFI's human rights work.

MindFreedom
Human Rights in Mental Health www.MindFreedom.org

Please join!

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MindFreedom Journal #51

Table of Contents:

Electroconvulsive Therapy, A Partial Win For Elizabeth Ellis.....	4
Mutual Support Protects Human Rights.....	4
Supporting an Institutionalized Loved One.....	5
Mad Hatters of Bath, England.....	6
25th Anniversary of MFI.....	7
Mad Pride Celebrates.....	8
MindFreedom Youth Are Awesome.....	10
Global Mental Health Handbook.....	10
MFI Academic and Scientific Allies.....	11
MindFreedom Visits Ghana.....	12
Poetic Justice with Bonnie Schell.....	13
Amplifying the Voice of Mental Health Clients.....	14
Affiliates for the Revolution.....	15

You Can Help MindFreedom Moms Take Action!!!

BY SARAH SMITH, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

My name is Sarah Smith. I am excited to serve as MindFreedom International's new Development Director. I am passionate about the environment, justice, and human rights, especially since my 21 year old daughter's experience in the mental health system.

Little over a year ago, my daughter was a spirited and loving person as well as a gifted artist with deep connections to Earth. Today she is a broken and traumatized individual in need of healing from the harm caused by the psychiatric "treatment" that she received in our community.

Today, I hold her pain, as do thousands of other mothers whose children have been harmed by the mental care system. But we mothers also hold our children's hope. And our hope is justified!

We know that with groups like MindFreedom International leading the way, our sons and our daughters have many opportunities to heal, be empowered by networking with their peers, and -- hopefully -- organize with us for change!

As with many non-profit organizations, this has been a challenging year financially for MFI, yet we are primed to capitalize on new trends and opportunities within the movement for change within the mental health care system. We remain dedicated to being the independent voice for change while taking ACTION on behalf of individuals who are being abused.

Unlike other mental health advocacy groups, MFI does not accept money from government, drug companies, mental health systems or religions.

Your membership goes a long way toward enabling us to collectively confront the entrenched interests within the psychiatric system and take action on multiple levels.

A gift of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$500 or anything you can afford above and beyond your membership gift will be used for our son's and daughter's rights and to keep these important



Sarah Smith, MFI Development Director, with her daughter, Hannah, shown here during happier times.

issues on the national front burner. Please keep in mind, that if your membership is lapsed this is also a good time to renew!

Today, MindFreedom is celebrating twenty-five years as one of the leading organizations in this movement. With your support MFI can continue the following important work:

Challenge the globalization of this broken system!

Your gift will increase our capacity to mobilize consumers, survivors, and allies in other countries.

Lay down the groundwork for nationwide action!

Your gift helps MFI reach activists and membership organizations, giving them how-to info on organizing in their communities.

Choice Campaign

Your gift promotes alternatives in our communities, including MFI's alternatives directory.

Electroshock Human Rights Initiative

Your gift allows MFI to speak out for members like Elizabeth Ellis who are involuntarily hospitalized and have received forced electroshock.

Mad Pride

Your gift helps MFI get the word out about mad pride events that lift the spirit, educate, and heal individuals and communities from stigmas.

Thank you,

Sarah Smith

Sarah Smith, MindFreedom Development Director

P.S. We need your help to succeed! Your gift of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$500 or any amount will help us consumers, survivors, loved ones, and allies move forward in a dynamic, unified, international movement to create a new paradigm of mental health care throughout the entire world! You may donate at www.mindfreedom.org.

MindFreedom Choice Committee...

... asks you to check out the MindFreedom web site. Look for the searchable "Directory of Alternatives" of mental health providers who have signed off on tough principles. Ask your mental health provider to sign up! And while you are on the MFI web site, look for a free MF Choice Committee webinar you can watch about taking charge of your life.

Stopping Forced Outpatient Electroconvulsive Therapy: A Partial Win For Elizabeth Ellis

MFI member Elizabeth Ellis, a 67-year-old resident of Minnesota, was court-ordered to receive electroshock (also known as ECT or electroconvulsive therapy). She received more than a dozen involuntary electroshocks by the end of 2010.

In January, MindFreedom International launched a public campaign to support Elizabeth's right to say "no" to forced electroshock. She stayed in her home instead of reporting for an involuntary electroshock, and was locked up.

The State of Minnesota asked a court to allow more forced electroshocks.

But on April 25, 2011, a judge issued a ruling saying that there would be no further forced electroshock over Elizabeth's expressed wishes unless she is diagnosed "catatonic."

Being able to say "no" to electroshock was Elizabeth's main goal, and she has won that. However, the judge did rule for a variety of other involuntary psychiatric interventions such as forced psychiatric drugging.

On May 24, 2011, Elizabeth was finally discharged and returned home.

Elizabeth told MindFreedom: "I'm doing real fine. I am so appreciative of such good support from MindFreedom supporters. If it hadn't been for MindFreedom I would be getting forced shock. Thank you, thank you, thank you so much for the support!"



Elizabeth K. Ellis, 67, of Moorhead, Minnesota, standing with her husband, Robert, is a forced electroshock survivor.

Thank you to all who supported and advocated for Elizabeth. This victory is proof that there is strength in numbers!

The ruling is also a sign that the judge paid attention to the USA Food & Drug Administration hearing in January which recommended that electroshock finally be investigated for safety and efficacy, after 70 years of essentially no regulation or oversight. The panel also made an exception for "catatonia."

Said David Oaks, director of MFI, "The USA government should listen to the judge's logic here. Since the FDA panel said electroshock had problems with safety and efficacy, then 'no should mean no' to electroshock. The US should immediately halt all taxpayer payments to any electroshock over the expressed wishes of the subject."

For more information, including a summary of the judge's ruling, visit www.mindfreedom.org/elizabeth.

MindFreedom International Shield: Mutual Support Protects Human Rights

BY KRISTA ERICKSON

Many MindFreedom members have experienced involuntary mental health treatment which makes us passionate about making absolutely sure that never happens to ourselves or anyone else again. One easy and effective way to do that is to become involved with the MindFreedom Shield campaign. The concept behind the Shield is simple: one for all, all for one. The MFI Shield is a short, written document stating that the registrant doesn't want to be threatened with nor subjected to any forced psychiatry. No forced psych drugging! No forced electroshock!

If the MFI office is notified that a MindFreedom member who has a Shield on file with the MFI office is being threatened with or subjected to forced psychiatry, steps will be taken to verify the details of the situation and, if appropriate, issue an alert asking all other Shield registrants to take action on that person's behalf. Actions

are always nonviolent and usually something along the lines of a request to call or write an administrator or public official to end the threat of or use of forced psychiatry. MFI can't guarantee the results of the Shield, but it works more often than not. Recently, for example, the alerts MFI issued helped Shield registrant Geetha Rathnamala win her release from a Pennsylvania psychiatric institution.

MindFreedom is the only organization to offer a service such as the Shield. Registration is simple; current MindFreedom members can fill out a simple online form and register their Shield. For more information about the MindFreedom Shield, including registration instructions and examples of past successes, please visit www.mindfreedom.org/shield.

If you are a MFI member without Internet access who wants to register a Shield, please mail your request and a self-addressed stamped envelope to MFI, POB 11284, Eugene, OR 97440-3484, USA.

Tips for Family Members

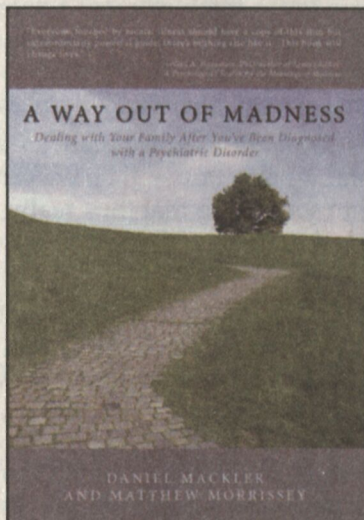
Supporting a Loved One Who Has Been in a Psychiatric Institution

BY MATTHEW MORRISSEY

Your sister or father, brother or daughter, niece or cousin has just been released from the psychiatric hospital. You wonder what you can do to be supportive. After all, you can see he or she may be in a fragile state and you don't want to cause any more stress. There is a strong temptation to pretend like nothing happened and to quickly leave behind what was likely a high-anxiety episode for all involved. All these factors are confusing and can paralyze you into inaction.

This is not what your loved one needs from you.

To begin with, it is helpful to keep in mind two facts about the emotional state of your loved one. First, he or she may be terrified at the daunting task of resuming life in our everyday world. An underlying worry may be: "can my familiar coping mechanisms be relied upon or will they again



Family conflict can wreak havoc on people diagnosed with psychiatric disorders. A Way Out of Madness offers guidance in resolving family conflict and taking control of your life. The book also includes personal accounts of family healing by people who were themselves psychiatrically diagnosed. This book is available through MFI's Mad Market at www.MadMarket.org.

eventually lead to a breakdown?" Second, she or he might be deeply ashamed of having had a breakdown. The message here is: "I was unable to control my own life, I must be really broken inside." Your loved one may be filled with insecurities, worry, and lots of what cognitive psychologists call "negative self-talk." His or her self-esteem and confidence may have been eroded.

These considerations provide clues for what you can do to be helpful.

The most positive action you can take is to casually invite your loved one to take part in fun, low-key activities with you. Activities that are engaging on a physical, bodily level, and especially those that accomplish something tangible are preferable to activities that are passive and cerebral. The idea here is that you want to encourage your loved one get out of her or his head (a place filled with unpleasant thoughts) and to put the focus of the interaction on something neutral. Good examples are: hiking or walking in a beautiful setting, cooking something nourishing together, repairing something around the house, and sculpting with clay. Be sure to choose activities that you yourself will also enjoy doing so you can genuinely smile and laugh. If your loved one shares some of the difficult feelings with you, listen quietly without giving advice, try your best to empathize, and then tactfully resume the activity.

Just spending time with your loved one serves as an antidote to the shame she or he may feel, since shame, left to run amok, will cause him or her to withdraw from contact with others (thus reinforcing the notion that they are "broken inside"). Also, engaging him or her in activities that achieve something real builds confidence and self-esteem.

You also will need to protect your loved one from open verbal conflict, strong displays of emotions, or



Matthew Morrissey is a counselor, and serves on the board of MindFreedom International.

criticism (what is known as "high expressed emotion" in psychological jargon). Research shows that in families where high expressed emotion occurs, the rate of recovery is significantly lower. While this might seem obvious – after all, no one performs well under criticism it is harder to practice day in and day out. You can easily fall into the trap of wanting to 'rescue' the loved one and get resentful if he or she does not 'get well' soon enough. This builds up over time and leads to flare-ups within the family.

Try and remember that your loved one is on a personal healing journey and will proceed at her or his own pace. You can't and shouldn't try living your loved one's life for her or him. The safest and most direct way to help is to offer your presence, attention, and ongoing concern. These simple but powerful gestures in and of themselves will sow seeds of healing.

Matthew Morrissey, MA, MFT, San Francisco, California. Matthew volunteers on the Choice Committee, and helped launch the Directory of Alternatives on the MFI website.

Mad Hatters of Bath, England, Celebrate Mad Culture and Identity

BY CLARE CRESTANI

The Mad Hatters of Bath have celebrated Mad Pride Day for the last four years. It all began in 2007 with a mini festival in the centre of Bath, and a bed push with Rufus May and the rest of the crew. In 2008, rather than try to better the festival, which was an awful lot of work for us, we went with the classic Normality Testing event, which you can see on Youtube. By 2009 we decided we would celebrate our mad culture with a campout in Oxfordshire. It seemed like a good idea at the time, and it was fantastic.

There is nothing quite like a dozen crazies all together on a campsite for a long weekend. It's hard to describe what it is about a gang of nutters chilling around a campfire that is different from doing it with 'Normals.' I suppose it is never having to hide who or what you are that makes it so much better, a feeling of relief. Here, the socialization and inclusion policy is one where we honor our right to be ourselves. We accept each other and our strange behavior because we are all multi-dimensional time and space travelers. Once that is accepted as perfectly normal, then let the wild rumpus commence.

This year, we decided to share our culture with the good people of Bath, except in Bath most of the people you encounter are foreign tourists. But that's OK. We get to practice our language skills and they get to experience the freedom of insanity celebrated. I know many people find the idea of Mad Pride offensive, asking what is there to celebrate in mental distress. The answer is that we are all different because of what we have been through, and to deny that is to deny our identity and our culture. The Mad Hatters are a creative political group. We honor our experiences, our understanding of the world, our compassion and tolerance, our comedy, and most of all, our culture. We do not do 'anti-stigma' events. We are not asking the 'Normals' to accept us as 'like them really.' We are proclaiming our differences, our right to a cultural identity.

Psychiatry and society combine to belittle our identity, to turn us back into Normals. Rather than allow us to find common ground in our ways of understanding the world, we are isolated from our peers, so that often our only access to them is through the drop-ins, etc. This means that if we want to spend time with people like



'Mad Hatters' having a Mad Tea Party at a Mad Pride event.

us, we have to conform to the establishment's definition of us as 'mentally ill.' So, we learn, and remember, how to behave with our psychiatric label firmly pinned to us as a sign of deficiency.

Anyway, if we are scaring the establishment so much that they try to pretend we don't exist, then we can be pretty sure we are onto something that they really don't like. For the anarchists amongst us, that will always bring a smile to our faces.

So this year we brought Madness to the people. We invited them to embrace their hidden insanity and join the Mad Hatters Tea Party. We emailed everyone we knew, resulting in emails of support and positive vibes, even from those who couldn't make it. A lot of people can't get to Bath on a rainy Wednesday, even if they just live up the road, what with paranoia, panic attacks and anxiety, and who wants to sit in the rain and eat soggy cake anyway? BBC radio Somerset and BBC radio Bristol called in the morning for a live interview about Mad Pride. How sweet are they, trusting a slightly manic, multidimensional anarchist to talk about Mad Pride. We made and printed 150 little booklets about Mad Pride. We acquired some baroque minuet music on a CD. We borrowed some tables from a local church and gathered all the chairs we could find that would fit in

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25th Anniversary of MindFreedom International

BY DAVID W. OAKS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Personally, this is my 35th year as a community organizer for deep change in the mental health industry. I find it incredible that a decade into that activism – 25 years ago – I had the privilege to begin working with so many of you to launch and build our global community.

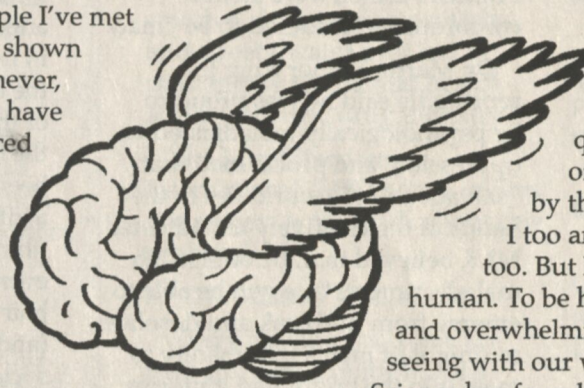
MindFreedom started with different names, but the spirit has stayed the same: To combine mutual support and activism, so we can work for a nonviolent revolution in the mental health system.

I can't count the number of people I've met through MindFreedom who have shown me glimpses of the human spirit never, ever giving up. Those of you who have been traumatized, like me, by forced psychiatric drug injections and solitary confinement. Those of you who have been pressured, tricked and coerced to have electricity run through your brains in electroshock. The many of you who have experienced discrimination because of your psychiatric label... or who have been made homeless by that trauma... or who were desperate for some kind of help that you could not find... You have persevered, and are contributing to society by helping to change it.

One of the reasons MindFreedom is still here after 25 years, is that we've seen allies as equals. Advocates, attorneys, family members, psychiatrists, psychologists and just everyday people have all been welcomed into MindFreedom, because we realize that our issue is about

democracy getting "hands on" with mental well being, and that impacts everyone.

While it would be difficult to thank everyone who has helped MindFreedom, I can think of one way you can thank these supporters: Make MindFreedom stronger than ever. Help build this community. Multiply the number of members. Take leadership in MindFreedom. By taking action, you will be thanking every one of the thousands of people who have volunteered with, donated to, or cheered on MindFreedom International.



When I meet with young people who are interested in our movement, and who are its future, I frequently get the question, "Why? Why is there such off-the-charts extreme oppression by the psychiatric industry?" In a way, I too am still searching for that answer, too. But I think it has to do with being human. To be human is to wrestle with immense and overwhelming challenges, as we are now seeing with our world's environmental problems. Science has found that no one has a grip on reality.

Our movement is about reclaiming what it is to be truly human.

Our movement is united with many other movements for social and environmental change envisioning truly enormous change, a global nonviolent revolution, of the "beloved community" that Martin Luther King asked for. Some may call such a vision crazy. However, we are not worrying about what *can* happen. We are calling for what *must* happen. Lead on, everyone!

Mad Pride Bath continued from page 6

the vehicle. We raided charity shops for tea pots, cups, saucers and plates. Then we descended onto the Abbey Churchyard, Bath. About a dozen of the Mad Hatters who turned up dressed for the occasion, and brought teabags and cakes. We turned on the gas cooker, put the kettle on to boil, and laid the table.

Soon, we were offering tea and cakes to passers-by; many sat down and joined us at the table. All the booklets about Mad Pride went to interested locals and tourists alike. "Happy Mad Pride Day" was said hundreds of times as we wandered the churchyard sharing cakes and inviting people to sit down. A brief rainfall did nothing to dampen the spirits, as we had all brought umbrellas. The scene looked even more surreal as we sat in the rain around a fully laden table with baroque music playing in the fabulous eighteenth century setting of Bath.

Altogether, it was a fantastic day. We spread the word about Mad Pride and we gathered together, but not as service users or the "mentally ill." In this space, we were people who experienced mental extremes and we were sharing our culture with the 'Normals,' who appeared to enjoy it. This is what Mad Pride is about in Bath. The whole event cost us virtually nothing, with the biggest expense being batteries for the CD player, a fiver on flyers and another fiver on some fabric for the magical mirror.

We offered people the opportunity to walk through the magical mirror into their own magical wonderland. Then we tested them for normality, with the use of two fans, some bells, and three hula hoops. An important part of any Mad Pride event is props. Never underestimate the usefulness of a completely unexpected prop. When a man with white hair and wearing a suit will do the hula hoop in the city centre and laugh, you know your culture is one worth sharing and celebrating.

MAD PRIDE CELEBRATES THE UNIVERSAL CRAZINESS OF BEING A HUMAN BEING

BY MINDFREEDOM INTERNS

Mad Pride celebrates unique, eccentric, creatively maladjusted individuals. Mad Pride applauds the diversity, strength, and resilience of the human spirit.

There is no wrong way to hold a Mad Pride event; it can take many forms. Have a party, parade, celebration, picnic, or a concert. Create art, theatre, music, or poetry. Hold peaceful protests or vigils. It is only limited to your imagination.

About Mad Pride

Mad Pride emerged at the end of the 20th Century as a mass movement of psychiatric survivors and their allies. Today, Mad Pride is an international movement that celebrates the human rights and spectacular culture of people considered different by society. The movement is about taking ownership of our "madness," and having pride in who we are.

Some groups focus on 'normalizing' being different and eliminating the stigma of mental illness, highlighting that madness is something all humans share. Others prefer to rejoice in the ways in which

our minds are unique, emphasizing the diversity.

Mad Pride reminds us of the great cultural contributions that those deemed mad have made in our world. When you think of madness, remember that Vincent van Gogh, Ernest Hemingway, Emily Dickinson, Frances Farmer, were all non-conformists considered to be "mad."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. repeatedly said he was proud to be psychologically maladjusted to oppression, and proclaimed that "salvation of the world lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted." MLK believed that, through such maladjustment, "we will be able to emerge from the bleak and desolate midnight of man's inhumanity to man, into the bright and glittering daybreak of freedom and justice."

Why Organize a Mad Pride Event?

We need vibrant Mad Pride events to increase awareness, address the fear and misinformation surrounding psychiatric survivors, and bring human rights into the media and the forefront of the public's mind.

Discussing human rights violations in the mental health system can be

weighty and challenging. Through Mad Pride, people are invited to learn about these issues in entertaining ways, such as theatre, literature, poetry, film, music, parades and public rallies. Mad Pride events combine compassion and hope with some comic relief.

In the words of John McCarthy, poet and organizer of Mad Pride Festivals in Ireland, "There is not enough fun in the debate around madness, yet some of the best fun I have had and some of the funniest people I have met have been in psychiatric units." Madness is a gift that allows us to be creative and 'think outside the box.' Mad Pride events allow the public to 'let their hair down' and to discover the liberty (and fun!) that comes with dropping social norms and busting out of the ruts of conformity.

Examples of Worldwide Mad Pride Events in the Past Decade

Bonkers Fest was in England. They held a free one-day summer arts and music festival in a park, illuminating and celebrating madness, creativity, individuality and eccentricity. They started with a staged cannon launch of little plastic bananas!

The Great Escape Bed Push has been held in England, Canada, Germany, and the USA. In this guerrilla theatre, a group in costume pushes a bed with a mannequin tied down in four-point restraint through the streets, escaping from the psychiatric system to a place of safety and celebration, raising awareness about the over-use of forced treatments in mental health services and the need for holistic choice based services.

Mad Pride Ireland holds festivals, where they host a fun family day in the park with clowns, music, food, theatre, face painting and puppets.

continued on next page

Craziness continued from page 8



Mad Pride Ireland plans annual "Family Fun Days" in the city of Cork. Their events focus on everyone in the community, young and old, enjoying themselves.

The festival associates madness with fun and families, breaking the stigma of danger and hospitals.

Mad Pride parades and marches have been held in Belgium, Ghana, Canada, USA, Brazil, Ireland and more.

Toronto, Canada has focused on the theme of celebrating "Psychiatric Survivor" resiliency and pride. They have regularly held a week of arts, workshops, film, and parades.

Gallery Gauchet in Vancouver, Canada has held Mad Pride events using their art gallery to hold art exhibits, poetry, speakers, and parties.

Independent Living Resources Center in San Francisco has had a Mad Pride Mad Hatter competition. Contestants make a hat, the madder the better. Using whatever is at their disposal: found objects, recycled objects, buttons, cloth, paper...the limits only exist in your imagination. The only rule is: HAVE FUN.

Mad Pride Vigils have been held around the globe. Vigils honor and bring awareness to those who have suffered and/or died due to the failure of the current state of mental health services.

It's Crazy Easy To Get Involved!

1. Register your Mad Pride event for free via MindFreedom at news@mindfreedom.org. Ask about MindFreedom's Mad Pride e-mail list for planners.

2. Write press releases and letters to the editor of your local newspapers, radio and TV stations about Mad Pride and your event. Email everyone you know, and promote it on Facebook.

3. Take photos or make short videos and upload them to YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. Let the madness 'go viral!' In the twenty-first century, you are the media.

For more information about MFI's campaign to support Mad Pride see: www.mindfreedom.org/campaign/madpride.

www.MindFreedom.org

MindFreedom 2012 Vision

MindFreedom International is calling on everyone to "Boycott Normality" with peaceful "creative maladjustment" protests from now until 5 May 2012, when the American Psychiatric Association is scheduled to give their blessing to their new label bible, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 5*.

What role do peaceful, creative, direct action protests and street theater play in challenging the mental health and psychiatric drug industry?

The MindFreedom International (MFI) board invites your input & feedback about this proposal:

5-5-12: Million Mad March!

Every day is a good day for peaceful activism for human rights and alternatives in the mental health system. But let us chose one day to coordinate united, international, peaceful, simultaneous creative actions.

What if we applied lessons from our "mad movement's" four decades?

- How about we truly unite in cities and towns all over the world for creative activism?

- We need to allow time and find ways to involve your grassroots leadership.

- And we need to use 21st century web technology so that we are our "own media."

MindFreedom International proposes that Saturday, 5 May 2012 is the day we do all these things and more. We invite your feedback!

Our movement does not have billions of dollars. But we have principles, people and dramatic stories.

To be a success, this needs your leadership.

Inspired? Concerned? Curious? We welcome your ideas, suggestions, involvement, brainstorm!

Please contact us with suggestions and input at www.MindFreedom.org.

Organizing principles

Our diverse actions can include art and drama that show the world effective alternatives to corporate mental health care. We can use 'mad pride' theater and stories and protests. We can use web technology like YouTube for our own 'live' media coverage.

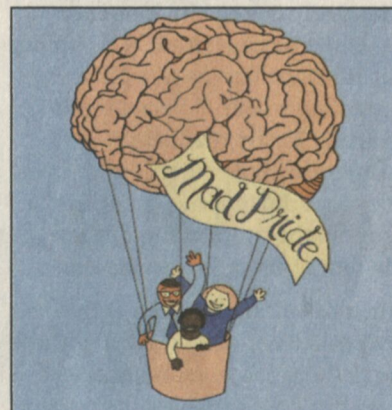
25th Anniversary Mad Pride "Brain Balloon" T-shirt

Introducing the limited edition MFI 25th anniversary T-shirt.

Backside proudly displays "Mental Health Nonviolent Revolutionary."

Finally, a label that means something! The price is \$25, of course! Full color on high quality blue cotton. Order yours today!

www.MadMarket.org



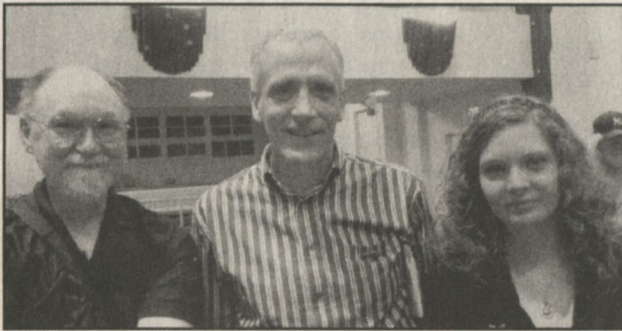
Ask for a FREE one when you donate \$75 or more to MFI's work!

MindFreedom Youth are Amazing

The youth at MindFreedom are amazing as always.

The MFI Youth Initiative helped MindFreedom put on its parade entrance for the Eugene Celebration. It was themed "Mad Hatter," from the story Alice and Wonderland, and we wore the craziest of hats. We also had many of the other Wonderland creatures there too.

We stayed busy throughout the



Chrissy Peirsol, (right) young adult activist and leader, serves on the board of Mental Health America in Oregon, a MindFreedom sponsor group. She is posing with Tom Wittick (founder of 1969 group Insane Liberation Front) and Ron Unger (Chair, MindFreedom Lane County) at a Rethink Psychiatry fair in Portland, Oregon.

winter and spring. Christy Peirsol and Brandon Chambers volunteered with the Eagan Warming Center, where people seek shelter on nights when temperatures drop below freezing, and Project Homeless Connect, offering information and support to people having mental health challenges.

We also worked at the Hosea shelter for homeless transition-aged youth. This was the most fun. Chrissy Peirsol said, "It really helped my seasonal depression to still have a reason to get out of my house and help youth during the hardest part of the year for me. I guess the youth at the shelter and I have that in common." Chrissy & Brandon have also started up a youth and young adult support group.

Earlier this year, Brandon Chambers



Brandon Chambers is an 18-year-old advocate and psychiatric survivor who lives in Springfield, Oregon. He began volunteering with MindFreedom Lane County when he was 15 years old. Brandon says, "I am happy to be a part of MFI to be able to meet new people who want to help create a positive change in the mental health system."

flew to Washington DC to accept the Prudential Spirit of Community Award. The youth of MindFreedom are quite the amazing bunch!

Youth and young adults are encouraged to get involved in the MindFreedom Youth Initiative.

Global Mental Health Empowerment Handbook

As western-style mental health care is increasingly exported into poor and developing countries, something is often missing from this globalization: advocacy by and for mental health consumers and psychiatric survivors. Organizing in a way that is unifying and strategic, is essential in order to effectively engage in advocacy. With the passage of the UN disability treaty, it is more important than ever that training material be available specifically for mental health consumers and psychiatric survivors in poor and developing countries to support the monitoring of the implementation of its principles.

Our movement has been active in many poorer nations. In each of these nations, there is some organizing activity but a lack of even the most basic training material, even for

people who can read English. Basic illustrated material is necessary to help show that there is indeed a social change movement, to explain the basic principles of self-determination, empowerment, and voice, and to give a glimmer of hope to the local communities, which are often very disempowered.

There are new leaders who are mental health consumers and psychiatric survivors in poor and developing nations, but they have little tangible information about the history of change in this field and their role in that history. These leaders need to see and hold photographs and stories by their peers, especially those in poorer nations. These leaders need a guidebook they can keep and share with others. These potential leaders in poorer countries have a need – a

right – to the training and technical assistance that helped to create an active social change movement in richer countries.

MindFreedom is in a unique position to coordinate an effort to fill this critical knowledge gap. The international foundation CBM gave MFI a grant to create such materials. The idea is to create a handbook to encourage the emerging voice of people diagnosed with psychiatric and other mental disabilities in poor and developing countries so they may be heard more effectively by their communities, care providers and policy makers. This voice is a very first step toward empowered development. The idea is not just to be heard but to be our own voice and develop our own programs and activities.

There are so many people and organizations for MFI to appreciate in this 25th anniversary year. Here is a chance to thank two groups of professional allies who have officially lent their credibility as academics and providers to MFI's mission.

MindFreedom Academic Alliance

Piers Gooding, a young graduate student in Melbourne, Australia (see photo), interned with MFI, and helped launch a network of professors and others in academia who support MFI's work. He said, "I believe it's vital for academics who are working to end human rights abuses in the psychiatric system to not only be aware of each others work, but also to be engaged directly with community-based activists like MFI." The current Alliance:

Bill Anthony, Ph.D. Professor, Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Boston University.

Pamela J. Birrell, Ph.D. Senior Instructor, Psychology Department, University of Oregon.

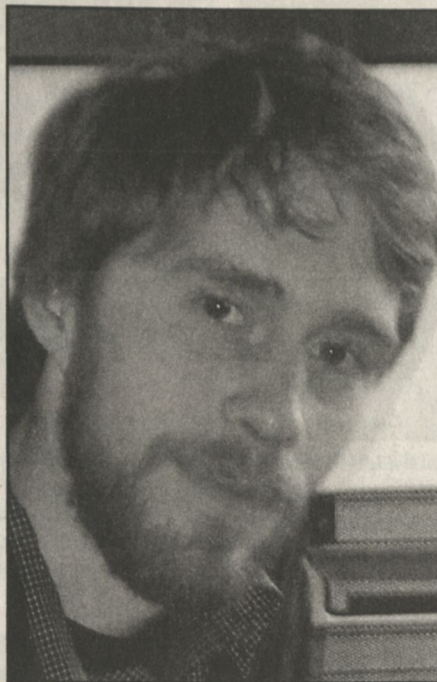
Bonnie Burstow, PhD. Faculty member in the Department of Adult Education and Community Development at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at University of Toronto.

Paula Caplan, Ph.D. Research Associate, DuBois Institute, Harvard University.

Pat Deegan, Ph.D. Doctor of Clinical Psychology, Duquesne University.

Sue Estroff, Ph.D. Professor in the Department of Social Medicine, School of Medicine, and research professor in the departments of Anthropology and Psychiatry, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Tom Greening, B.A., Ph.D. faculty member at the Saybrook Graduate School, Clinical Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles, and Distinguished Adjunct Professor at Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education and Psychology.



Piers Gooding

Jennifer M. Henke, PhD, Adjunct Professor at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

Gail Hornstein, Ph.D. Professor of Psychology and Education, Mt. Holyoke University, Mass.

Alicia Lucksted, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Psychiatry, University of Maryland School of Medicine.

Robert Menzies, Ph.D. Professor of Sociology, University of Toronto.

Linda Morrison, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, U.S.A.

Michael O'Loughlin, Ph.D. Professor at Derner Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies at Adelphi, Long Island, New York.

Laurie E. Powers, Ph.D. Associate Dean for Research, Director, Regional Research, Institute for Human Services, Professor of Social Work, Portland State University.

Affiliations listed for identification only.

Thanks Scientific Advisory Board

Originally launched during MFI's successful hunger strike in 2003, the Scientific Advisory Board is a network of psychologists, clinicians and doctors who support MFI's work. Al Galves, MFI board member, coordinates it:

David Antonuccio, Ph.D. Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Nevada School of Medicine.

Fred Baughman, MD.

Mary Boyle, Ph.D.

David Cohen PhD. Professor of Social Work at Florida International University in Miami and a practicing psychotherapist and consultant.

Sarah Edmonds, Ph.D.

Albert Galves, Ph.D. Licensed psychologist in Colorado, now retired and living in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Jay Joseph, PsyD. Practicing psychotherapist in Oakland and Hayward, California.

Bruce Levine, Ph.D. Clinical psychologist in private practice in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Craig Newnes, Ph.D.

Lloyd Ross, Ph.D. New Jersey psychologist.

Stuart Shipko, MD. Diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. He practices general psychiatry in Pasadena, California.

Jacqueline Sparks, Ph.D.

Chapter on Coercion in the Mental Health System Available for Free

The World Psychiatric Association held an international meeting on psychiatric coercion in Germany in 2007. Leaders edited a book on coercion published this year. The book is expensive but a chapter by MFI director, is offered as a free sample, at www.mindfreedom.org/coercion

MindFreedom International Delagates Visit MindFreedom Ghana

A MindFreedom International delegation led by MFI Board President Cecia Brown was able to visit and train with MindFreedom Ghana in April, 2011, thanks to a grant from Open Society Institute's Disability Rights Initiative.



A shot after meeting with Ghana's Deputy Minister of Health, Hon. Rojo Mettle-Nunoo, in his office to discuss peer support for persons with mental disabilities and the Mental Health Bill. Left to right: Dan Taylor, Celia Brown, the Dep. Minister, Amanorbea Dodoo, David Oaks, and Nii Lartey Addico.



Cultural dancing at one of MindFreedom Ghana's public outreach activities. Thank you MindFreedom Ghana for sharing this wonderful picture!



MindFreedom Ghana street theatre: while a group of mental health doctors enjoy their dinner, a psychiatric patient sits on the ground, in shackles.



Doris (middle) is an electroshock survivor. She had her electroshock at Accra Psychiatric Hospital. She said, "I was told there would be no problem, but by the fifth electroshock I knew it was harmful, and had it stopped." Behind her are key leaders from Mental Health Society of Ghana.

Some of the participants in the MindFreedom International "Amplify" workshop about how the general cross-disability movement can support allies in the mental health consumer/user and psychiatric survivor movement.



Poetic Justice • The Resilience in Madness

by Bonnie Schell, MFI Poetry Editor
Submissions to poetry@mindfreedom.org

People who struggle with threatening environments, thoughts, and psychiatric labels frequently find inner strength. The two poets on this page speak to that "mad" resiliency.

Corinna West, a spoken-word poet, the first certified Peer Specialist in Missouri, and founder of Compassionate Ear, a warm-line, describes being able to handle whatever comes her way:

The courage to pull this all together, to face the fright,
wander through a night of purple stars,
Pull panic like a brick to build a place
right inside the mind of pain, ...
I can take my unreality because I'm stronger
through all the misdirections.

Corinna calls advocates and activists to:

Spit those can't's, shouldn't, "forget about it's" out with
the bones

...learn new ways to persevere,
to build consensus to concur,
That to demur might be to prefer,
that it's not weak to keep the peace,
It's a waste to be a martyr so the try harder,
try harder has to become work smarter, go farther....

In "Taking Back the Dreams" she writes:

I found a tiny hope of a baby dream that I could recover,
And worked at it like a prisoner digging a mile through
stone....

I marched my psychotic paranoid perplexed
poignant self right back into my future.



Three members of the board of directors of MindFreedom Ghana

www.MindFreedom.org

Marijo Moore is an essayist, poet, novelist, collage artist, and Native American business woman in the mountains of western North Carolina, specializing in Indigenous enterprises and mediation.

In "Confessions of Madwoman," she makes a distinction between acting crazy and being a resilient madwoman:

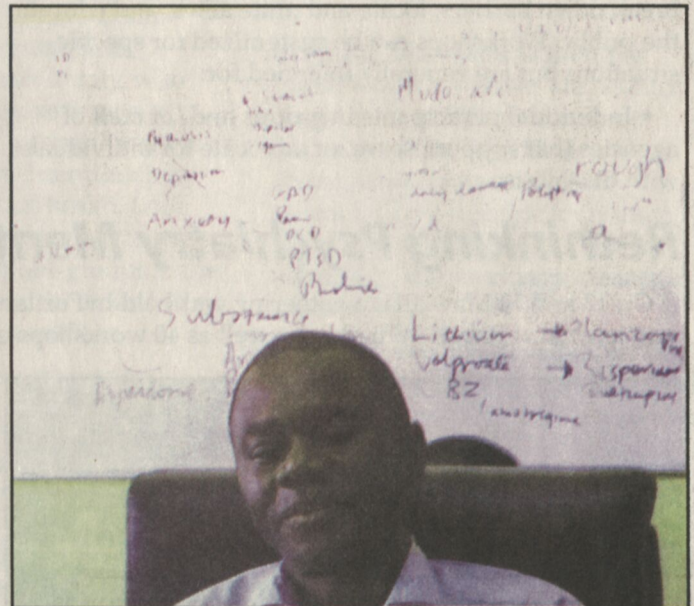
I come from a long line of madwomen
and of this, I am proud.

There is a difference in madness and craziness:
Craziness causes one to twirl and twirl
until a great breath sucks her spirit
home leaving her mind and body to laugh on their own.
Madness allows the mind and body to function
while the spirit dances to the
heartbeat of the stars.

I come from a long line of madwomen
and of this, I am proud.

Women who folded their shame
into the gathers of their pride
wrapped them both around their ankles
and continued to dance, letting everyone
know they were not afraid to dance
backward if it meant survival.

I come from a long line of madwomen
and of this, I am proud.



The MFI delegation met with one of the psychiatrists at Accra Psychiatric Hospital. While he was very friendly and said he was very open to change, they noticed his dry erase board had the names of about a dozen psychiatric drugs! While MFI is for choice, the MFI delegation was told throughout the tour that almost all inmates, with only a few exceptions, were administered psychiatric drugs, sometimes unwillingly.

Amplifying the Voice of Mental Health Clients

BY KRISTA ERICKSON

MFI's Amplify Workshop helps disability and mental health consumer/psychiatric survivor communities create change together.

Statistically, mental health consumers and psychiatric survivors make up the largest portion of people with disabilities. The disability rights movement, however, has often struggled to include people labeled with psychiatric disabilities. We share many issues in common -- access to housing, employment opportunities, transportation, among others. In addition, we have some issues more unique to people who use or have survived the mental health system, such as freedom from forced treatment. Working more closely together would benefit both movements.

Based on successes organizing in Oregon and inspired by the work of leaders in the disability rights movement such as Judi Chamberlin, Justin Dart and Rae Unzicker (all of whom bridged this distance) MindFreedom began to offer a workshop called *Amplifying the Voice of Mental Health Clients: How Disability and Mental Health Consumer/ Psychiatric Survivor Communities Can Create Change Together*.

The workshop is based on MindFreedom's work using a model in Lane County, Oregon proving how the cross-disability and mental health consumer psychiatric survivor communities can successfully unite together to break down barriers, locate and unite allies, and educate the public. Workshops can be customized for specific situations but are generally intended for:

- Individual participants in groups and/or staff of agencies that support, serve, or advocate for individuals with disabilities.

- Leaders and emerging leaders in the cross-disability movement.

- Individuals who self-identify as mental health consumers or psychiatric survivors.

The workshop covers topics such as:

- History of the disability and mental health consumer/ psychiatric survivor communities organizing together.

- Community Organizing 101, including the basics of coalition building.

- Conflict resolution and mediating differences between beliefs.

- Building independence through fundraising for your coalition work.

- Uniting to educate the public using town forums and educational events.

Outcomes of the workshop include:

- Train key staff and participants of cross-disability groups, such as centers for independent living, about cultural competency for inclusion of people with mental disabilities.

- Identify, empower, and support new and emerging leaders in both communities, especially youth.

- Broaden mental health consumer voice, inclusion, leadership, and participation among allied groups and agencies in the mental health and disability fields.

Handouts needed to replicate this workshop elsewhere will be provided upon completion.

For more information or to schedule a workshop, please contact the MindFreedom office.

Rethinking Psychiatry Mental Health Justice Fair

On 13 and 14 May 2011, a gathering was held in Portland, Oregon called "Rethinking Psychiatry" featuring author and journalist Robert Whitaker, as well as 40 workshops calling for deep change in the mental health system.



Kicking off Rethink Psychiatry were, Left to right: Robert Whitaker (author of *Anatomy of an Epidemic*), Terry Danielson (mom of psychiatric survivors, and an event organizers), Satyanarayana Chandragiri, M.D. (psychiatrist at Oregon State Hospital, President of Oregon Psychiatric Association).



Here are the other three panelists at opening night, Friday, 13 May 2011: Laura Van Tosh and Brandon Chambers (psychiatric survivors), and Gina Nikkel (on board of directors of Foundation for Excellence in Mental Health Care).

We Need Affiliates for the 'Revolution!'

BY FRANCK BLANKENSHIP

Perhaps you've been wondering what more you, as an individual, can do to support the cause of MindFreedom International. If you believe in the mission and the goals of MindFreedom International, as drawn up by its board of directors and as laid out on its website, one of the best and easiest ways to show support is to start a MindFreedom affiliate in whatever area of the world you reside. MindFreedom affiliates allow us to bring the revolution in mental health home. As a local affiliate, your group can be at the forefront of the call for change in the mental health system in your own locality and community.

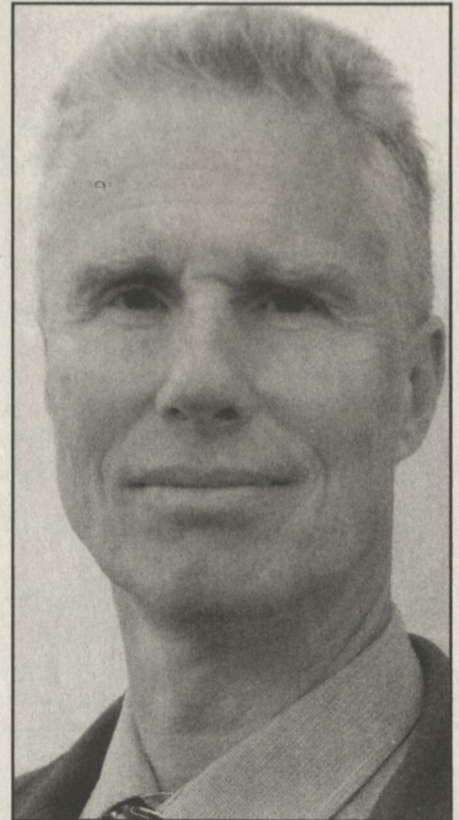
We strive to make the process of starting an affiliate as easy as possible. There's nothing to it, really. About the only requirement we have is for you to notify the MindFreedom office of your desire to start an affiliate. The person doing so would then become the contact person for his or her local affiliate. We usually name our affiliates after localities, and so naming is no problem. For example, if you start an affiliate and live in Toledo, Ohio, you could then call your affiliate MindFreedom Toledo. The contact person can request a MindFreedom "alias" email address, and will be listed on the Sponsor & Affiliate lists on the MindFreedom International website.

The power and influence of MindFreedom International increases

with the formation of these grassroots MindFreedom affiliates. When local and regional affiliates grow, MindFreedom International grows and gains in strength with them. We have had affiliates start up recently in such diverse places as Minnesota, Texas, England and Japan. One of them, MindFreedom Twin Cities, recently had nine people attend its first meeting. I call that a very good beginning. If you can't find eight other local MindFreedom members readily, no problem. Every little bit helps, and so—way to go, folks! You are helping to extend MindFreedom's presence to places previously unfamiliar with our revolution in mental health, and that is very important.

Should you have any doubts as to the potential for the development of these affiliates, just look to the recent accomplishments we have seen from some of the more established MindFreedom affiliates. For an example, look at MindFreedom Ireland's 2009 Annual Report, as published on the MindFreedom website. Another example is MindFreedom Lane County, who got the City of Eugene to pass a resolution stating a commitment to human rights, self-determination, and choice in mental health. Look also to the participation of various MindFreedom affiliate groups in the many Mad Pride celebrations taking place around the world.

Our revolution is advancing, and those of you who are involved



Frank Blankenship is Chair of MindFreedom Affiliate Support Committee.

in the formation and building of MindFreedom affiliates are helping. Keep up the good work, and we are bound to see MindFreedom International score even more successes in its struggle for human rights and social justice for people affected by the psychiatric system in times ahead.

MindFreedom is developing new resources for affiliates, such as exhibit materials, teleconferences, email lists, and Facebook pages. Stay tuned!

MindFreedom Radio Talk Show

Join us for our FREE radio talk show! Calls, questions, comments, all are welcome! Listen, call in live, or check out the archive later.

A wide variety of guests are interviewed, with plenty of opportunities for your live comments and questions. Some of the guests have included authors Bruce Levine, Paula Caplan, Linda Andre. Electroshock survivor Ray Sandford is a frequent visitor.

It's free for anyone around the world! During the talk show you can call, email, Skype, or participate in a live online chat.

For more information, visit MFI's website: www.mindfreedom.org/radio

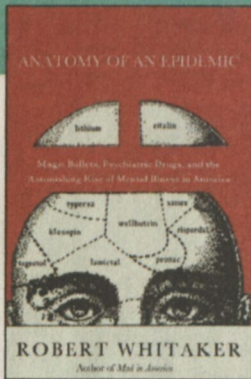
MFI is looking for stories, photos, poetry, and artwork from persons affected by the mental health system. We welcome submissions from psychiatric survivors, consumers, and loved ones. To get involved contact global@mindfreedom.org or call 541-345-9106.

"I am a member of MFI because the organization fights for my rights more effectively than groups with funding from big pharma. My family and I stopped supporting those groups, and have been MFI fans ever since."

- Levi Chambers,

a sociology student, organizer, and psychiatric survivor working toward mental health justice in Olympia, Washington

Books, DVD's and many more products, are available from www.MadMarket.org if you are not on the web, phone to order: 1-877-MAD-PRIDE or 1-541-345-9106

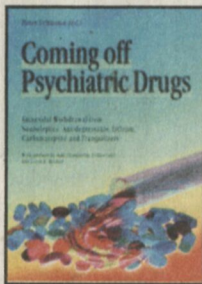
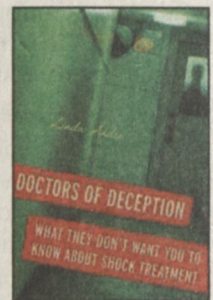


Anatomy of an Epidemic
By Robert Whitaker

In this astonishing book, award-winning science and history writer Robert Whitaker investigates a medical mystery: Why has the number of people considered disabled with mental health problems in the USA tripled over the past two decades? Every day, 1,100 persons are added to government disability rolls because they have become newly disabled by mental illness, with this epidemic spreading most rapidly among our nation's children. The book concludes by recommending MFI's approach to activism.

Doctors of Deception
By Linda Andre

An investigation into the true story behind electroshock, *Doctors of Deception* exposes a long history of industry propaganda and the obstruction of studies into the safety of this controversial treatment.



Coming off Psychiatric Drugs
By Peter Lehman (Ed.)

This helpful book is all about successfully quitting psychiatric drugs. It is mainly for people on psychiatric drugs but also addresses their relatives. Learn what works from 28 people who have direct experience with the challenge of "coming off" psychiatric drugs. Additionally, eight professionals, working in psychotherapy, medicine, psychiatry, social work, natural healing and even in a Runaway House, report on how they have helped in the withdrawal process.

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Your support funds MindFreedom campaigns for human rights and humane alternatives in mental health care. You may join, donate and renew on the MindFreedom website www.MindFreedom.org, or mail in the below info.

___ Donation (circle one): \$1,000 \$500 \$100 \$75 \$50 \$35 (regular level)
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Your Donation is Tax Deductible

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You may donate with check or money order made out to MFI. Or use your credit card.

I want to charge my gift. Circle one: Visa MasterCard

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You may also donate on-line at any time using the secure form at www.MindFreedom.org.