Peer Voices
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Hello Peers and Lovers of Literature!

Welcome to our first quarterly edition of Peer Voices, a production of Bay Cove’s Peer Support Network and Peer Education Resource Center. We are proud partners with the Metro-Boston Recovery Learning Center (MBRLC). Much of this work has been inspired by peers who have shared their lived experiences in several of our local recovery learning communities.

In this Fall Edition, our talented peer artists have contributed poetry, essays, and short stories. Our production staff has offered their combined expertise in copy editing, photo editing, design layout, circulation, archival creation, promotion, and digital and print publication.

We hope you can curl up in a big chair and enjoy our heartfelt writings. Let us know what you think and consider someday sharing your own art and writings too.

Congratulations to our staff, supporters, and contributors. We look forward to the Winter Edition!

Best regards,

Karen Kugel, Ed.M., CPS, CSCS
Director, Recovery Learning Communities
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The universe is hurting right now.
It is in disarray,
Only amplified by decaying society.

There is an epic imbalance.
Even the heavens hear my cry,
And are not always able to help me.

Worlds colliding with other worlds.
Stars smashing into other stars.

It’s like the universe is tilted sideways,
With an obscene new direction of gravity,
Leading us into a crazy new recession of darkness.

A world in which,
We must stitch,
And close the wounds,
Of our lowest pitch.
A place of love,
A place of light.
Let’s take us out of blinding night.

A cosmic,
And endless…
Infinite…
Planet.

When the stars represent,
Every opportunity,
And every event…
Including those,
Living to the utmost extent!

And the planets symbolize,
A new found revelation…
And a new found prize.

Let’s not be lost,
In the paralyzing night…
Because endless joy,
Will be found in the light!
Love is

By: Ziona Rivera

Love was blind but now she sees
With love all over me
It will conquer any steeple
Tread through any mountain
Love is my countess
Like a sister in roam
Never to fear alone
Love to amplify through a microphone
This is it at its greatest
Some people say this
Love is evil backwards
But evil backwards is to live
Making love to evolve
Around any problem it solves
For every mockingbird
It may wound
But only it can break a heart in two

When love is everlasting
What not, would it do
To jump a broom
To start a new
I love you like spring in bloom a jones a few to open a heart just for you
Love is unpredictable
But always worth a risk
Pumping through the veins receive its bliss
Over and over to grieve a kiss
The stars above it grants a wish
A wish to fulfill
Live its thrill
It can be trill
But first and foremost it’s real
Opening a World

By: Ziona Rivera

Love unfurl
In the heart of a sweet little boy and girl
You bind me in love
I’ve have overdosed a passion
Love never old but love old fashioned
The PSN Hen

By: Jon Gottlieb

I think I'd never see again a sight as lovely as the PSN (Peer Support Network) hen. It was sick and tired for many years. In fact, it cried too many tears. It tried to go to so many places for relief. But all it got was constant grief.

With a cackle here and a baa baa there it got nothing but despair. But one grand and glorious summer day, it found its sure cure and belief. It waddled in and never out because it found what it was talking about.

The fine feathered friends who knew most about mental health. Gave him a sense of mindfulness that was like a new type of wealth. So as he stayed he felt so much better. The PSN knew it then how to please and make better one happier hen.
I saw this girl at the subway. She wasn’t beautiful. Only until she smiled. I glanced at her. She looked back with a blank gaze. She knew I looked. She laughed but not to make fun of my ignorance. Just because she knew. She was blind. I wonder how blind people perceive things.

In the larger picture, could our senses be limiting our scope of the world? Bats have very poor eyesight. However, they have great hearing. Evolution has helped them develop it so much that they can sense things with sound in a process called echolocation.

Snakes can see things in infrared, another process of evolution. Birds have a built-in magnetic compass that allows them to sense direction. Sharks can sense movement in the water with a sixth sense attuned to sensing electrical current.

As people, we have five senses. There may be hundreds if not thousands of different senses that exist in different animals in our world. The universe may operate in an infinite amount of senses beyond human comprehension. It is possible for us to truly understand its beauty then?

In Christianity, God created the world in six days. The world will end in the day of judgement. In Buddhism, there is rebirth, death and rebirth in a process called reincarnation.

What if the prophets who saw the truths saw so in a limited way? They only saw it through their five senses. Sight, sound, smell, taste, touch. Therefore there may be more to the stories that we cannot comprehend thus making them true. Remember, the universe operates in an infinite amount of senses.
I saw this girl at the subway. She wasn't beautiful. Only until she smiled. In a way we're all blind. Blind to our senses, our ideologies. our view of the world. There are things about our world that are known and things that are unknown. In between this spectrum is our perception.
Don’t Fret  By: Jon Gottlieb

Fear not, fellow warm weather lovers. Just because summer is ending on the calendar as Labor Day fast approaches doesn’t mean it’s time to put the bathing suits away and take the snow shovels out. You can keep an all-year smile on your faces by being consistently active in our communities of always sociable affiliates no matter what the conditions Mother Nature dishes out, whether you are inside or out.

For instance, Clubhouses, RLC’s, ODA festivities, certification earnings combined can always fill your mindful and recovery plate if you plan it carefully enough for almost every day of the year, both morning, noon, or night.

After completing the business and social aspects of your workshop activities in one or more of the numerous locations from NAMI GREATER BOSTON, the PEER SUPPORT NETWORK, PERC, the MBRLC, and/or clubhouses like Horizon House in Wakefield and Center Club along with others around the Bay State, preparing career goals with your friends; reward yourselves afterwards by spending the rest of your leisure time enjoying the stimulating events that OPENING DOORS TO THE ARTS have to offer by pursuing everything from music shows to theatrical events. Whether you are a novice or an expert goer, rich or poor, employed or volunteer, just be a somewhat conscious advocate in a NAMI-backed mental health facility or groups to apply.

You may have to put your shorts away and carry an umbrella but no matter what the conditions, the good feelings will always be there with you as you traverse our vast network of things to do, see, visit, and enjoy. No matter what time of year it happens to be; you will always be participating in something that makes you a better and more involved empowered person with others just like you. You will be developing close-knit bonds in all types of interesting and cultural environs to your liking! Enjoy your all-year pseudo summer vacation!
Once upon a time, there was a ten year old boy who looked up at the night sky. He raised an arm up and saw that a star was the same size as his fist. He thought, “Wouldn’t it be nice if I could grab a star and bring it back to earth to show my friends?”

The boy had an idea. He got a trampoline. The first day, he could jump only 10 feet high. After a month he could jump seven times higher than the height of his house. After a year, he could jump so high that he could reach the height of the moon.

He thought, he was ready. The boy said, “I will try to jump so high, that I could grab a star and bring it back to earth to show my friends.” He jumped on the trampoline. Up, up he went past his house. Up, up he went passing flying birds. High, high he went above the clouds. High, high he went passed the moon. Finally, he went so high, he was a few feet away from a star. It was the size of his fist as he thought.

The boy reached out his hand and tried to grab the star. He missed. The boy lost his balance and fell back down. He started accelerating faster and faster. He hit the ground hard. “Ow, it hurts. It hurts. Why does it hurt?” cried the boy. He tried jumping on the trampoline again hundreds of times. Each time he tried to grab the star, but was always a few inches off and fell back down. “Ow, it hurts. It hurts. Why does it hurt?” cried the boy.

It has been 70 years. The 10 year old boy became an 80 year old man. He was too old and weak to jump very well on the trampoline. He was never able to grab a star and bring it back to earth.

His best friend John came over one day and asked him, “Why do you keep on trying to jump on the trampoline? Don’t you know the stars are too high? You will never be able to grab a star and bring it back to earth.” The old man reflected on this.
Over the years, as the boy had grown into adulthood, he eventually gained great success and became an international sensation. Reporters asked him, “What is the biggest regret in your life?”

The boy, now an old man, said “In life, there will be moments of happiness and triumph. Also, there will be moments of despair and pain. My biggest regret is that I did not try jumping on the trampoline sooner. Maybe then, I would have been able to jump high enough to grab a star and bring it back to earth. Maybe then, I could have inspired even more young people to reach for the stars.”
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