

ROADS TO RECOVERY NEWSLETTER

Created by Dual Recovery at Ascend Mental Wellness
to support individuals in recovery

*A newsletter for you
and about you*



SPOTLIGHT TOPIC

Inspiration From Sovereignty

BY GINGER MILLER

Sovereignty probably isn't a common word for most of us. What does it mean, and how can it inspire us? Oxford Dictionary gives this definition: supreme power or authority, the authority of a state to govern itself or another state, a self-governing state. In other words, self-ownership. Self-ownership includes not only the individuals' physical body (and right to life), but also their labor, talents, and moral/ethical choices; the claim to be allowed to control oneself as they see fit.

Let me share a few historical examples that perhaps you are familiar with. First, Joan of Arc, a 17-year-old illiterate, uneducated peasant girl holding no class level in her community rekindled the deadened spirit of downtrodden and unruly French army men in the *Hundred Years War*, turning them into victorious conquerors. She became known as a courageous heroine.

Let us also consider Claudette Colvin. It was 1955 and racial segregation was the law. Claudette, a 15-year-old gifted black high school student with aspirations of becoming a civil rights attorney, sat in the front seat of a bus and refused to give up her seat to a white person. Two white police officers dragged her from the bus, handcuffed her, and placed her in jail charging her with violating segregation laws, disturbing the peace, and assaulting a police officer. She was convicted despite pleading not guilty. Young Claudette's act of bravery started a domino effect of events regarding civil rights that is in history books today.

One more example we could look at is that of David Oaks. David was born in 1955. In the 1970's, while studying at Harvard University, David was diagnosed with schizophrenia and manic depression, institutionalized, forcibly medicated, and placed in solitary confinement. While in the psychiatric solitary confinement cell is when David decided he wanted to take action to improve the mental health system once he was freed. In time David co-founded the organization Mind Freedom International which includes psychiatric survivors and psychiatrists alike.

Can you see the common thread here? Each of these individuals, despite the difficult situation they were in, found a way to bravely stand up for themselves. Because of their determination to take control of their lives they have even had a positive impact on others' lives.

How about you? I can almost hear some of you thinking, 'I'm no hero!' I doubt any of the three example above were thinking, "I'm going to be a hero!" The first example, Joan, I doubt was thinking about the impact her actions would have in supporting

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Make your Mental Health a Priority.

Inspiration From Sovereignty (Con't)

others. I'm guessing she just trying to get through their personal struggle and live. Claudette, wanting to become an attorney, may have had in mind setting a precedent, but most likely she was also just trying to get through her life struggles with some dignity. David too may have been thinking of how to try to make change for the future but I'm willing to guess, again, he wanted to have more control over his own life.

These are everyday people, just like you and me, facing life's struggles and trying to make the best of it. They had feelings just like you and I do. They lived through difficult situations just like you and I face. Our age, level of education, status in life, ethnicity, race, economic status, etcetera; none of those demographics matter in this regard because we ALL face struggles. We can all be heroes - our own hero. In that process maybe, most likely, we will have an impact on someone else's life. Maybe our heroism won't impact large numbers of people or make history but I'm sure others in our life will see what we work on and accomplish and that might add to their motivation and inspiration to work on theirs as well.

The shy person, or person with social anxiety, that gradually works on being able to invite a friend out to lunch, in public, has in effect become their own hero because they are learning how to be in public and enjoy time out with a friend. The person with severe depression that pushes themselves to keep their therapy appointments and learns new coping skills that gradually is able to hold a full-time job again, spend time with friends, and laugh more than they used to - they've become their own hero as well. The person who identifies as part of the LGBTQIA+ community that overcame going to innumerable doctor appointments to find doctors that would be supportive and understanding of their needs that is now getting the quality health care they deserve - they are their own hero. The people in these situations may just need to stop and look at their accomplishment and the impact those steps have made in the big picture of their lives before the recognize that heroism.

How are you, your own hero? What things have you struggled through and accomplished, or perhaps you are still struggling through? Do you take time to recognize that the things you've gotten through were because YOU did it? Can you see in what ways you are already your own hero? Sure, we all need help whether that be some validation, reassurance, inspiration, guidance or help seeing things from a different perspective, but ultimately, we do the work and make the decisions for ourselves. You are worth it! You can do it! Keep trying! You can have sovereignty of yourself and your life, even if it is done in small steps, one day at a time. So, I challenge you to ask yourself, "What small step or decision can I make today that will contribute to my sovereignty; how can I be my own hero today?"

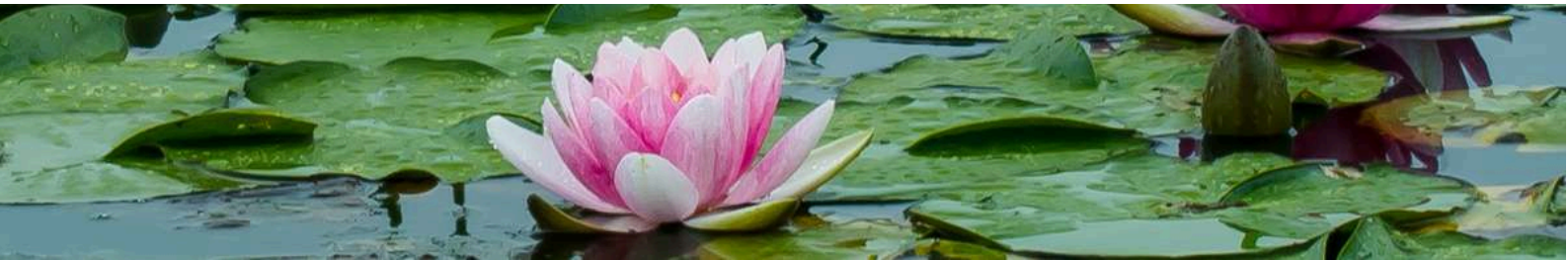
UNDERSTANDING THE DIAGNOSIS

Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder (DMDD)

The New York State *Office of Mental Health (OMH) Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder* is a condition in which children or adolescents experience ongoing irritability, anger, and frequent, intense temper outbursts. The symptoms of DMDD go beyond a 'bad mood'; they are severe. Youth who have DMDD experience significant problems at home, at school, and often with their peers. They also tend to have high rates of health care service use, hospitalization, and school suspension, and they are more likely to develop other mood disorders. DMDD can be treated.

OMH goes on to clarify the difference between typical irritability and severe irritability. All children can become irritable sometimes. It's a normal reaction to frustration. Children experiencing severe irritability (as observed in DMDD) have difficulty tolerating frustration and have outbursts that are out of proportion for the situation at hand. These outbursts occur more often and are more severe than what you would typically expect for children of this age.

- Signs and Symptoms:
- Severe temper outbursts (verbal or behavioral), on average, three or more times per week
 - Outbursts and tantrums that have been ongoing for at least 12 months
 - Chronically irritable or angry mood most of the day, nearly every day
 - Trouble functioning due to irritability in more than one place (at home, at school, and with their peers)



Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder (Con't)

Children with DMDD may have trouble in school and experience difficulty maintaining healthy relationships with family or their peers. They also may have a hard time in social settings or participating in activities such as team sports. Over time, as children grow and develop, the symptoms of DMDD may change. For example, they may experience fewer tantrums but begin to exhibit symptoms of depression or anxiety. As they change the treatment may change as well.

OMH states that treatment for DMDD generally includes certain types of psychotherapy (“talk therapy”) and sometimes medications. In many cases, psychotherapy is considered first, with medication added later. However, at times, providers recommend that children receive both psychotherapy and medication at the start of their treatment. The two most common types of psychotherapy used are *Cognitive Behavior Therapy* (CBT) and *Dialectical Behavior Therapy for Children* (DBT-C).

CBT is used to help children and adolescents learn how to cope with thoughts and feelings that contribute to their feeling depressed or anxious. This therapy also teaches coping skills for controlling anger and ways to identify and relabel the distorted perceptions that contribute to outbursts. DBT-C may help children learn to regulate their moods and emotions to help them avoid extreme or prolonged outbursts.

It can also be effective to combine therapy for the child or adolescent with parent training. Parent training teaches parents or caregivers more effective ways to respond to irritable behavior, such as anticipating events that might lead a child to have a temper outburst and working ahead to avert it. Training also focuses on the importance of predictability, being consistent with children, and rewarding positive behavior.

If you think your child may be experiencing DMDD talk to their pediatrician or primary care doctor for more information. There is also a Mental Health Treatment Program Locator on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) website. This tool can help you locate mental health treatment facilities, providers, and programs closest to you. <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Implicit Bias: Causes, Examples, & How To Overcome It

Article taken from [Therapist.com](https://www.therapist.com)



Biases are assumptions you make about a *person, group, situation, or thing*. Your background, cultural environment, and personal experiences may influence the types of biases you have. They can be positive or negative, but often they're not fair or accurate. An implicit bias (also called an unconscious bias) is any bias a person holds on a level that they are not consciously aware of. Implicit biases can affect the way you behave and the decisions you make without your realizing it.

Biases affect how our brains use data and make decisions. They often result from our brains trying to simplify information. Sometimes our implicit biases involve stereotypes based on race, gender, or sexuality. They develop as we unconsciously search for patterns to navigate the world more easily. Implicit biases are influenced by our upbringing, life experiences, the media, and our culture.

Everyone is susceptible to unconscious bias. And it's often easier to notice bias in others than it is to recognize it in ourselves. While we may notice flaws in other people's thinking, our own biases may appear as “gut instincts.” They can be difficult to detect in the moment because we are often unaware of our own harmful assumptions.

What causes unconscious bias? The human brain is hardwired to subconsciously recognize potential patterns and try applying them. Relying on patterns is an easier way of understanding a complex world, but it's not always accurate. Our unconscious biases come from a variety of sources, including:



Implicit Bias (Con't)

A predetermined worldview: We tend to interpret new information in a way that confirms our existing beliefs. This is the case even when the evidence contradicts our worldview.

Cultural pressure: Every society promotes certain beliefs about what's acceptable or desirable and what isn't. These beliefs can affect our decision-making.

Childhood lessons: We often learn certain biases in childhood, both explicitly and implicitly. As children, we absorb information about the world and tend to accept the attitudes and actions of our parents and other influential adults.

Heightened emotions or trauma: Often, we develop unconscious biases after enduring highly stressful or traumatic situations. Intense memories can deeply ingrain beliefs about safety and trust into our minds. A therapist may be needed to help process intense emotions or trauma.

Examples of implicit bias can exist in virtually all areas and aspects of life. Some common examples of unconscious bias include:



Implicit bias in the workplace: Managers may unconsciously favor employees who share their own interests and background. This is called affinity bias.

Implicit bias in hiring processes: Many people have names associated with a particular race or ethnicity. Research shows that African American and Latino people are less likely to receive callbacks for interviews from hiring managers. This is known as name bias.

Implicit bias in healthcare: A 2015 study *Am J Public Health* did in September 2015, *Health Care Providers' Implicit and Explicit Attitudes Toward Lesbian Women and Gay Men* found that heterosexual health care professionals had implicit preferences for heterosexual people over gay and lesbian people. These biases affected their interactions with LGBTQIA+ patients without the providers even being aware of it.



Implicit bias in schools: Teachers and other faculty carry implicit gender biases that can lead to students receiving different test scores, or having different odds of being accepted to universities, based on gender.

The halo effect is when your general impression of someone influences your opinion of their actual traits and actions. Basically, if you view a person positively in one way, you tend to assume their other attributes are also positive. For example, if you find out someone graduated from an elite university, you may assume they are highly intelligent and accomplished. The opposite of the halo effect is the horn effect. This is when you make a snap judgment about someone on the basis of one negative trait. A single negative trait can lead to an unfairly negative overall impression of a person.

Unconscious biases are often tied up in how we feel. They can also be difficult to catch because they happen automatically. To prevent unconscious bias, you have to work on developing an awareness of your thoughts and behaviors and learn to question your own motivations. Here are some ways an individual can work on changing their implicit bias:

Take an implicit bias test. Implicit Association Tests (IATs) are online tests designed to measure unconscious associations between certain characteristics and groups of people. These tests can help reveal hidden biases related to race, gender, age, and other factors. Several of these tests are offered online through [Harvard University](#).

Practice self-reflection. Spend time honestly reflecting on your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in different situations. Consider whether you have made assumptions or judgments about others based on stereotypes or limited information. Analyze your decisions and actions. Examine your past decisions and actions to identify any patterns of bias. For example, reflect on whether you have favored or disadvantaged certain groups in hiring, promotions, or task assignments. Consider what conscious steps you can take to avoid this in the future.



Implicit Bias (Con't)

Seek feedback from others. Ask trusted colleagues, friends, or family members to provide constructive feedback on your interactions and decision-making processes. They may notice biases that you are unaware of.

Be open to uncomfortable realizations. Recognizing your biases may challenge your self-perception. Approach this process with curiosity, humility, and a willingness to grow.

Invest in unconscious bias training to learn strategies for recognizing and overcoming biases. Many employers offer this training. Professional associations, educational institutions, online learning platforms, and nonprofits also offer it.

Stay mindful and question your assumptions. Slow down and consider whether your judgments or decisions may be influenced by unconscious biases.

Seek diverse perspectives Surround yourself with people from diverse backgrounds and actively listen to their experiences and viewpoints.

Use objective criteria. Follow structured interview formats, with standardized questions and objective evaluation criteria, to minimize the impact of biases in hiring and performance evaluations.

Hold yourself and others accountable. Set goals and hold yourself and your associations accountable for creating a more inclusive environment. Businesses can put policies in place that allow people to call out cases of bias.

IS THIS MEETING FOR YOU?

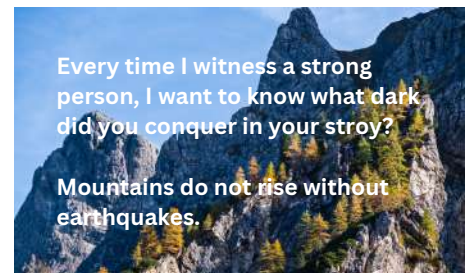
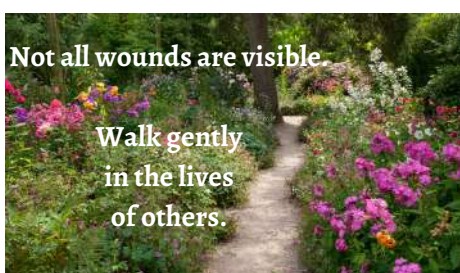
Transgender & LGBTQ+ Support

True North at 499 Glen St. in Glens Falls holds a **Transgender Support Group**. Anyone at any stage of this journey is welcome. There is no cost but they do ask that you bring your health insurance information. This group meets bi-monthly in the group room at True North and via Zoom for those who cannot attend in person. They meet on alternating Tuesdays and Wednesday from 5:00-6:30pm. To see a calendar with the specific dates the groups are being held, go to <http://www.truenorthat499glen.com/Calendar.html>

True North also has a **Support Group For Families of Transgender/Non-Binary Individuals**. This group provides education on gender diverse issues and open discussion. This group meets on the second Wednesday of each month from 5:00-6:30pm. For more information on how to join this group contact the True North office at 518-798-9187.

Rainbow Resilience is a peer support meeting for LGBTQ+ individuals. This meeting is held on Fridays at 5pm at the *Hope & Healing Recovery Community and Outreach Center* at 2 Maple St in Hudson Falls. You can also join the meeting via Zoom, meeting # 89776887197 For more information please call or text 518-480-5499

INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION





CREATIVE WRITING CORNER



Dawn came early just to make a beautiful morning. I'm missing my life in the south; fishing off the deck, the BBQ's, spending time with fun memories in a box of seashells, on my feet waves crash under me.

If I could be an animal in a zoo, I would be a lion. A lion, because they're so courageous. I would protect the other animals. My roar would be fierce and everyone would fear it. People would admire me with my golden fleece.

~ Cookie

~ Cassie B.

I am a 'movie-goer'. I enjoy going to the movie theater, especially when it's in 3-D. My favorite movies are *Hoodwinked* for a cartoon and *What Dreams May Come* with the late Robin Williams. I also loved the show *Catdog*. Drive-ins are also fun! My favorite actress is Melissa McCarthy. She stars in *Spy*, *The Heat*, and *Identity Theft*. They all three are a hoot!!!

~ Vera M.

s h

A miniture horse.



~ Annonymous

A seahorse.



~ Catherine J.



I would prefer it be a cat or small dog, they are easiest to care for.



~ Vera M.

A racoon because they are cute and fluffy.



~ Beth W.

A Puggle because they are the cutest puppies I've ever seen in my life.



~ Michael B



We would love to hear from you too! If you'd like to share a poem you've written, some creative writing you've done or a piece of your recovery story we would love to add it to our newsletter to help support or inspire our readers. Not sure what to write about? We'll provide prompts each month as an option.

To submit your writing please email it to gmler@ascendmw.org, mail it to ASCEND, Dual Recovery Department, 230 Maple St., Glens Falls, NY 12801, or drop it off in the Peer Pod at the East Side Center at the address above.

May/June Prompts

1. Write about a time you made a splash, literal or figuratively.
2. Write about a time you saw the sun rise, describe it and how it made you feel.
3. Write about a time you couldn't believe your eyes.

Riddle of the Month:

1. Why is the first letter of the alphabet like a spring flower?
2. You see this once in June, twice in November but never in May. What is it?



Riddle Answer

1. Because they are both followed by bees (B's)
2. The letter E

RECOVERY

Resources

PHONE NUMBERS

Life Line Mental Health Crisis & Suicide Prevention: 24/7 support for people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis. **Call or Text 988** When calling Press 1 for Veterans, Press 2 for Spanish, Press 3 for LGBTQIA+, or visit 988lifeline.org

Mobile Crisis: Meet a clinician in an agreed-upon location. 518-741-6099

Crisis Text Line: 24/7 for any crisis. A live, trained Crisis Counselor receives the text and responds, all from our secure online platform. Text 'HOME' to 741741

United Way: 24/7 Connects you to a community resource specialist who can put you in touch with local organizations that provide critical services. English and **Spanish** Dial 211

Never Use Alone Crisis Prevention Center: A toll-free nationwide overdose prevention, detection, crisis response and reversal lifeline services for people who use drugs while alone. The all volunteer peer-run call center operators are available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. No stigma. No judgment. Just love! 800-484-3731

Rose House Warm Line: 24/7 A safe place to stay or someone to talk to. 518-502-1172

National Domestic Violence Hotline: confidential support 24/7/365 **English, Spanish and 200+ languages through interpretation service** 800-799-7233 or Text 'START' to 88788

National Sexual Assault Hotline RAINN (Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network): 24/7 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or visit online.rainn.org.

The Trevor Project: 24/7 crisis support services for LGBTQ young people. Text, chat, or call anytime to reach a trained counselor: thetrevorproject.org/hotline; 866-488-7386 or Text 'START' to 678678

National Center for PTSD Helpline: 1-800-273-8255

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): Hotline staff are prepared to answer any mental health questions you may have. (800) 950-NAMI (6264)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): Available 24/7, 365 days a year: (800) 662-HELP (4357). The professionals on the phone can provide treatment information and referrals in English and **Spanish**.

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): Available 8:30am to 5pm EST: (866) 615-6464 or (866) 415-8051 (TTY). Professionals can answer any mental health related questions in English or **Spanish**.

Boys Town: Specially trained counselors are available 24/7, 365 days a year to provide crisis support specifically for children and their families: (800) 448-3000

National Eating Disorders Association: 24/7 crisis support Text 'NEDA' to 741741

National Human Trafficking Hotline: Serving victims and survivors. Toll-free hotline is available from anywhere in the country, 24/7, 365 days a year at 1-888-373-7888

WEBSITES

Al-Anon and Ala-teen Groups: Hope and help for families and friends of alcoholics: al-anon.org

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA): Local group schedule and information: district3.aahmbny.org To speak to someone local call 518-463-0906

Debtors Anonymous: Offers hope for people whose use of unsecured debt causes problems and suffering in their lives and the lives of others: debtorsanonymous.org

Digital Recovery Support: Online recovery support groups are available daily. They are open to anyone who is dealing with substance use, mental health conditions, and any other quality of life concerns. Meetings are led by peer recovery support specialists who have firsthand experience and understand what you're going through: www.recoveryanswers.org

Gamblers Anonymous (GA): Online services for anyone struggling with a gambling addiction: gasteps.org

Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP): For those who have lost someone to substance use or addiction: grasphehelp.org

In The Rooms: A free online recovery tool that offers 130 weekly online meetings. We embrace multiple pathways including all 12 Step, Non-12 Step, Wellness and Mental Health modalities. Other resources available also such as news, blogs, guides, and more <https://www.intherooms.com/home/>

Narcotics Anonymous (NA): local group schedule and information: narcotics.com

Overeaters Anonymous (OA): Online support groups for anyone who wants to stop eating compulsively: oarecovery.com

PODCASTS

Mental Illness Happy Hour: Weekly interviews with comedians, artists, friends, and the occasional doctor.; exploring mental illness, trauma, addiction and negative thinking.

This Naked Mind: Some of the episodes discuss alcohol withdrawals, the link between drinking and binge eating, how to deal with loneliness, and more.

Recovery Rocks: Our varied paths show listeners that there are a myriad paths to recovery and countless songs to rock out to along the way.

Mental Health - Hope and Recovery: They share inspirational true stories and a host of recovery skills. You'll learn about treatment options, coping skills, goal setting, relationships, and mindfulness.

APPS

Addiction Apps: Twenty-Four Hours A Day (Free), Quit That! Habit Tracker (Free), NoMo (Free)

Anxiety Apps: MindShift (Free), Self-Help Anxiety Management – SAM (Free)

Bipolar Disorder Apps: IMoodJournal (\$), EMoods (Free)

Counseling Apps: TalkSpace (\$\$) BetterHelp (\$\$) Larkr (\$\$) ReGain (\$\$) TeenCounseling (\$\$)

Depression Apps: Talk Space Online Therapy (\$\$), Happify (Free), MoodTools (CBT; Free)

Eating Disorder Apps: Recovery Record (Free), Rise Up & Recovery (Free), LifeSum (Free)

General Mental Health Apps: What's Up (CBT; Free) Mood Kit (CBT; \$)

Mindfulness & Meditation Apps: Calm (\$), Serenity: Guided Meditation & Mindfulness (Free)

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Apps: nOCD (Free), Worry Watch (\$), GG OCD (Free)

PTSD Apps: PTSD Coach (Free), Breathe2Relax (Free)

Schizophrenia Apps: UCSF Prime (Free), Schizophrenia Health Story Lines (Free)

Suicide Prevention Apps: MY3 (Free) notOK (Free)

Wellness: Wellness Recovery Action Plan (Goal Setting; Free)

Weekly Podcast: "Peer Perspective"
On Spotify, iHeart Radio, Apple,
Amazon, or at ASCENDMW.org

ASCEND DUAL RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUPS

EVERY TUESDAY
4:00-5:00 PM OPEN DISCUSSION/RECOVERY TOPICS
HOPE & HEALING RECOVERY CENTER:
2 MAPLE STREET, HUDSON FALLS
IN PERSON OR
VIRTUALLY - ZOOM MEETING ID: 844-2214-0148

EVERY THURSDAY
4:30-5:30 PM OPEN DISCUSSION/RECOVERY TOPICS
CONIFER PARK
55 ELM STREET, GLENS FALLS

PLEASE VISIT [WWW.ASCENDMW.ORG](https://www.ascendmw.org) FOR MORE
INFORMATION & COPIES OF OUR NEWSLETTERS

THANKS FOR READING! :)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR
NEWSLETTERS, PLEASE EMAIL US AT
GMILLER@ASCENDMW.ORG OR CALL 518-401-5991



CAR WASH

Bi-weekly all summer long



230 Maple St
Thursdays 10am-12pm



ASCEND
MENTAL WELLNESS

**JUNE 13TH -
SEPT 5TH**

EXTERIOR WASH

\$5

**CASH
ONLY**

*Note: For specific dates please check our social media