

PEPP library interviews and reviews

Krista's Interview with student: Erica



WELCOME TO PEPP LIBRARY'S NEWSLETTER!!!

Hello there! My name is Krista and I am PEPP's Librarian, in the city of London, Ontario, London Health Sciences Centre, and have been since it opened in September of 2003. That is me in the picture above. I am happy that you have found your way to my newsletter!

In this newsletter, I plan to look forward to exploring ideas and information regarding the topic of psychosis. Through the forum of a short newsletter, I want to interview people, write commentaries, and offer book reviews, one at a time, three times per year, with the ultimate goal of reducing the stigma around mental illness.

I am happy to share below this written interview with a great Toronto University student who I have had the privilege of getting to know. She is in her mid-twenties, lives in London, Ontario, and is in her final year of Social Work. She has been on placement with PEPP since September and will be finished in April 2014. As you will see, she has gained a lot of insight into the nature of psychosis.

Here follows the interview. Enjoy!!!

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What interested you in the area of mental health?

I enjoy working in mental health care because I am fascinated by the diverse experiences of my clients. Mental illness is an issue that directly or indirectly affects everyone. However, each individual's experience with mental illness is so different and is complicated by a multitude of factors. I enjoy having the opportunity to see people thrive as they engage in treatment and I feel privileged to be able to support people during such a challenging time.

Have you always had an interest in mental health?

Yes, I have always been very curious about the mind and how it impacts the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals.

How did you hear about PEPP?

I knew very little about PEPP before I started my internship here. I had submitted my application for a placement position at LHSC and had specified that I enjoyed working with youth and young adults struggling with mental health challenges. I was offered an interview at PEPP and began to learn more about it at that time.

What were your first impressions of PEPP?

When I first became involved in PEPP, I was impressed by the diverse programs and services available to clients. PEPP clients have the opportunity to work with a teacher, career

counsellor, recreational therapist, psychologist, social workers, nurses and psychiatrists. Many of the resources that clients need to access are available in one place. I was also excited by the various recreational groups that are tailored to meet the needs and interests of clients. In these groups, PEPP clients have many opportunities to connect with peers who share similar experiences and interests, in a safe and open environment.

What in particular have you learned about the nature of psychotic disorders?

Anyone can be affected by a psychotic disorder. PEPP clients are artists, teachers, musicians, construction workers, students, athletes, chefs, brothers, sisters, parents, and friends. You can never determine if someone has psychosis just by looking at them. Although people with psychosis face barriers, they also have enormous strength and potential and many clients continue to live happy and successful lives despite the challenges they face.

How has this experience at PEPP changed you (your thoughts, impressions, and attitudes)?

One thing that PEPP has taught me is to never assume. Never assume that you know someone's story; never assume that you can identify someone with a mental illness just by looking at them; and never assume that you or your loved ones are exempt from experiencing your own mental health challenge.

What do you think that the public and your classmates need to know about mental illness?

The stereotypes about psychosis and mental health are wrong. When you begin talking about mental health with co-workers, friends, and family members, you not only help to reduce the stigma of mental illness but you

provide others with an opportunity to share their own experiences with mental illness. You become aware of the numerous people in your own life that experience serious mental health concerns and you become amazed and inspired by the strength and resiliency of others.

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YOU CAN HELP REDUCE STIGMA RIGHT HERE!!!

We all have the power to reduce stigma. It is in what we share. Contribute to the cause of reducing stigma today! Anonymous contributions are welcome, or just a first name.

Review these ideas and see what you have to say, on the topic of psychosis:

- **Tell a personal story**
- **Comment on the nature of recovery**
- **Address a common issue**
- **Staff perspective**
- **Comment on a book that helps**
- **Reflect on the importance of groups**

Five hundred to six hundred words would fill the space here.

I can be contacted by email:

REMEMBER THIS:

*“If we are kind,
We will have joy”*