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NEWS BY YOU

Journey to substance-abuse recovery takes twists and turns

Submitted by Dr. Shareh Ghani, who practices psychiatric medicine with Magellan Health Services of Arizona.

Treatment works, but the road to recovery doesn't necessarily travel in a straight line. Mental-health experts know recovery is possible for people challenged by substance abuse and addiction or mental illness. We see it every day, and our job is to provide the tools and support necessary to maintain this important accomplishment.

When a person's recovery takes twists and turns, it is important that we provide support. How we help varies by individual.

When we hear about someone falling off course, or relapsing, our first inclination may be to blame the illness or assume it was only a matter of time. Yet experience shows more individuals successfully manage their mental illness or addiction, not unlike such other chronic conditions as heart disease, diabetes or asthma. The keys, often, are access to a support system and the willingness of individuals to accept their illness and work hard to maintain their recovery.

In behavioral health care, for which Magellan serves in Maricopa County, recovery is a word with two meanings.

"Clinical recovery" is an idea that emerged from the expertise of mental-health professionals, and involves alleviating symptoms, restoring social functioning and experiencing normal day-to-day productivity in personal and professional endeavors.

"Personal recovery" has emerged from the journeys of people who have lived with mental illness and means something different from clinical recovery.

The most widely used definition of personal recovery is from William A. Anthony, professor emeritus at the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation at Boston University. He is considered one of the founders of the modern movement in psychiatric rehabilitation and a pioneer in recovery-oriented rehabilitation.

Anthony defines recovery as "a deeply personal and unique process of changing one's attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills and/or roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful and contribut-

MENTAL-HEALTH FIRST-AID TRAINING

Mental Health First Aid is a free education program that helps the public identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance-use disorders.

This two-day training will present an overview of mental illness and substance-use disorders and introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental-health problems, builds understanding of their impact and provides an overview of common treatments.

When: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Aug. 29 and 30.

Where: Magellan Health Services of Arizona, 4801 E. Washington St., Phoenix.

Registration:
magellan.learn.com/az.

ing life even within the limitations caused by illness. Recovery involves the development of new meaning and purpose in one's life as one grows beyond the catastrophic effects of mental illness."

Supporting personal recovery involves moving away from a focus on treating just the illness and toward promoting the well-being of the person.

At Magellan, our recovery and resiliency efforts are guided by the belief that every individual and family has the ability to learn and grow. We support a philosophy of wellness that focuses on personal strengths, building hope and offering choices. Our focus on recovery and resiliency means that we help individuals and families achieve:

- » A sense of belonging.
- » A safe place to live.
- » Days filled with purpose.
- » Skills to achieve wellness.
- » A strong voice in their own lives.
- » Hope and confidence in themselves and their future.

Learn more:
www.magellanofaz.com/about-magellanofaz/recovery-resiliency.aspx.

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