

ALTERNATIVES AND RECOVERY BEYOND PSYCHIATRY

INSTITUTIONS

1. *European Network of Users-Exusers and Survivors of Psychiatry (ENUSP), Berlin, Germany*

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Context: A positive connotation of hope is common to all users of the term “Recovery”, by those critical of psychiatry and by psychiatrists. But the term has different implications. For some, recovery means recovering from mental illness, reduction of symptoms or cure. Others use it to signify an abatement of unwanted effects of psychiatric drugs after their discontinuation, the regaining of freedom after leaving the mental health system, or “being rescued from the swamp of psychiatry.” Psychiatrists like to keep their eyes locked up about this last unpleasant fact.

Objectives: This lecture will raise awareness about the problem, that disability can be produced by psychiatric treatment, for example by neuroleptics in form of tardive dyskinesia or tardive psychoses. But world-wide there are proven drug-free support systems and approaches which enhance self-help abilities and provide support to enable people to care for themselves.

Key Message: There are people with emotional distress with positive

experiences who recover in alternatives beyond psychiatry, by coming off psychiatric drugs and leaving the psychiatric field. Fading out these experiences, by ideological reasons or omission of continuing training, is a medical malpractice.

Conclusion: For further training, psychosocial professionals should engage users and survivors of psychiatry who recovered from their emotional problems and from psychiatric treatment. And - fitting to a society with claims to be democratic - freedom of choice and alternatives beyond psychiatry should be available.

1. Lehmann P (ed). *Coming off Psychiatric Drugs. Successful Withdrawal from Neuroleptics, Antidepressants, Lithium, Carbamazepine and Tranquilizers.* Berlin, Eugene, Shrewsbury: Peter Lehmann Publishing, 2004.

2. Stastny P, Lehmann, P (eds). *Alternatives Beyond Psychiatry.* Berlin, Eugene, Shrewsbury: Peter Lehmann Publishing, 2007.