

Encourage recovery through the arts

As a person with mental health or substance use issues, acting in a play, writing, making music or doing art helps me to recover. As a person with a developmental disability, participating in the arts helps me build new skills.

As an artist, musician, or actor, I must focus my creativity on my painting, poem, song, or the new character I'm working on. The strength of my focus acts as a lifeline, helping me find a way out of my illness or disability.

Art, music and acting allow me to use my feelings to create something outside of myself. They help me see things more clearly.



Instead of looking inside myself all the time, art, writing, music, and acting help me figure out the outside world and how I fit into it.

Participating in the arts helps me take the steps that make my recovery possible.

- The arts create hope for me because, by being creative, I can make a different and better future.
- Acting, writing, music and art teach me how to make choices. When I paint, sing, play my instrument, or try to bring a character to life, I have to make choices each step of the way.
- The arts teach me how to be responsible, because I am the one who has to make those choices and do the work.
- Art, theater, dance, music, photography and writing make me a more powerful person, because they teach me how to make brand new things by using my talent.
- The arts connect me with the community, because I offer my work to you, my audience, as a gift.



The programs in the arts at the Community Mental Health centers throughout Michigan have been supported by grants from the Michigan Department of Community Health.

One such program is the photobiography project of Northern Lakes Community Mental Health, in which people write their recovery stories and illustrate them with photography. The creations are featured in the Virtual Recovery Center at www.northernlakescmbh.org.

Fight stigma through the arts

When you call me names and stigmatize me because of my mental illness, developmental disability or my substance use disorder, you hurt me and shrink me.

Stigma is like racism.

When you call me “loony,” “kook,” or “retard,” you are saying I am not an individual. Stigma takes all the different sides of me as a person and shoves them into one mean name based only on my illness or disability.



ROBERT MOREY, GRAND TRAVERSE

Being human means being an individual with many different sides. When you call me names and stigmatize me, you de-humanize me.

When you call me names, I don't want to take part in my community. When you make me ashamed of myself, I withdraw from everyday life.

People like me make our community a richer and more interesting place to live. When I stay inside and hide, our community is damaged.

Stigma makes it harder for me to recover. If I come to believe that I'm to blame for my illness or that my illness is permanent, I won't seek treatment. Participating in the arts allows me to show you some of my different sides. Offering my art to you as a gift links us in a healthy relationship based on creativity and respect.



MACMHB

A nonprofit organization committed to legislative and educational support for community mental health organizations in Michigan.

www.macmhb.org

517.374.6848

CREATIVE MINDS



CHANGING MINDS

A two-year traveling art show featuring work by artists who happen to use Community Mental Health services in the state of Michigan.

The arts help people break through the stigmas surrounding mental health issues. Acting, doing art and making music help people recover from mental illness and substance use disorders. The arts help people with developmental disabilities build new life skills.

