

The Never Ending Journey Written by: Pat Hofsepien

Usually when you embark on a journey there is a known time span, a defined beginning, and an expected end.

This journey is like no other; I'm still not sure when it began. I know that my son probably heard voices for the first time at the age of 17 while driving his yellow truck. When stopped at a traffic light he suddenly declared that the driver next to him didn't like his truck and was laughing at him. I observed and heard nothing. I brushed it off and told him not to be silly. What did I know! At the age of 19 came the earth shattering diagnosis of schizophrenia. He received medication but no real "treatment". The next two years saw him hospitalized a couple of times; once because I had formed him and once by his own doing. He was working during this time for a short time and at the age of 21 became a father. In 2003 he had a complete psychotic break and was hospitalized at Lakeridge Health Oshawa. In my naivety I thought he would be stabilized by the doctors and released. He was very sick at this time, having command hallucinations which made him strike out at staff and patients. His paranoia was very bad. The doctors were having difficulty stabilizing him. One day when I called to make an appointment to see him I was told he wasn't there. Staff had called the police to have him charged with assault and removed to jail. How could this be possible! At this point my anger kicked in, I was ready to fight. There was no time to cry and grieve. After approximately three months of being in jail with no medications my son was found NCR (not criminally



responsible). We started what seemed to be a more complicated, terrifying journey with the justice system in control.

In 2004, my son was sent to Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences. I think this is when the recovery journey started. Over the next seven years as inpatient my son received treatment, not just medications. There were ups and downs and setbacks, but eventually he was able to move into the community with assistance from the ACT team and live independently for several years. He achieved optimal wellness but like many others, when he felt so well he decided to stop taking his medications and ended up trying to hurt himself and was readmitted to hospital for several months. He has been hospitalized three times in the last two years. Today he lives in a group home where staff ensures he takes his medication, but he comes and goes as he pleases and hopefully

will maintain the highest level of wellness possible for him. Over the years I have had to advocate for him and learn as much as possible about his illness and the mental health system. I have learned how important it is to be vocal and visible even though he may not have wanted my input. The optimal goal of everyone involved with his care is to keep him well, and as a caregiver I have a big part to play in that. My son may not be where I would want him to be but he is where he needs to be for his own wellbeing. When I'm no longer here there will be others watching out for him. There are many things in life we cannot change and I have learned over the years that there are many others in a worse situation. There will be ups and downs but there is always HOPE. Everybody has a different journey to follow and recovery is an individual thing. The question I ask is "are we in a better place than we were in 2003?" The answer is "yes". Who knows what tomorrow will bring.

Message from the Chair

Hi Everyone!

I hope you and your family had a good summer with some time for fun and relaxation.

Family Council has been busy over the Summer, planning the education programs and workshops for the Fall.

Some of you will have already registered.

Starting in October is the Family education series. You will notice some new topics as requested. We are also recruiting new Council members if any of you are interested.

Please remember to take care of yourself.

Pat Hofsepien

Chair of Family Council

**Have a coffee,
connect and chat!**

Also open Thursday Evenings from

6:30pm to 8:30pm

Family Resource Centre

Building 7 Level 2

Upcoming Fall 2018 Family Programs

- ◆ Powerful Tools for Caregivers runs from Wednesday September 26 to Wednesday October 31.
- ◆ Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) for Families runs from Monday October 1 to Monday November 26.
- ◆ Open Family Discussion Group continues on Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:00 pm.
- ◆ Family Education Series (presented in collaboration with Social Work Council and Family Council) begins Tuesday October 16 and runs for 6 weeks from 6:30-8:30 pm. Flyer to be distributed shortly.
- ◆ Family Education Sessions hosted with Durham Mental Health Services (DMHS) and Canadian Mental Health Association Durham (CMHA Durham) run Thursday evenings 6:30-8:30 pm at DMHS at the Whiteby Mall location (Thickson Road and Highway 2).
- ◆ Caregiver Event "Understanding Voices" on Saturday November 24 from 9:30-11:30 am with guest speaker Kevin Healey.

For more information as events are scheduled please check our [Events Calendar](#)

More detailed information, including registration details, will be sent out via email to the Family Resource Centre email distribution list. If you are not on our email distribution list and would like to receive information about events, education and/or support groups for family members/caregivers, please contact the Family Resource Centre at (905) 430-4055 ext. 6970 or email familyresourcecentre@ontarioshores.ca

How to Create a Healthy Grocery List

Written by: Emilie Trotter, Registered Dietitian at Ontario Shores

In order to eat healthy, we need to prepare healthy food. Before we get there, we need to ensure we have healthy items in our house. Planning a meal that meets your needs (while also being tasty) takes some prep. Here is a sample of staple items I recommend you consider when filling up your grocery cart.

Fruit and Vegetables

Choose a variety of colourful fruit and vegetables. Frozen, canned (with no added salt), and fresh are all good choices. Examples:

- Dark leafy greens such as spinach, swiss chard, and kale
- Orange or red vegetables such as carrots, red peppers, squash, or sweet potato
- A variety of colourful fruit and vegetables (purple cabbage, cherry tomatoes, mandarin orange, blueberries)
- Canned tomatoes and tomato paste (look for a low sodium variety)
- Mixed frozen vegetables
- Avocado

Meat & Alternatives

Incorporate meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and chick peas weekly and have fish at least twice a week. Examples:

- Chicken (remove the skin and visible fat), extra lean ground beef or pork, turkey, etc
- Mixed beans, black beans, chick peas, kidney beans, white beans, etc
- Nuts and seeds (dry roasted, unsalted)
- Nut butters (peanut butter, almond or cashew butter)
- Eggs and egg whites
- Fish (fresh or frozen)
- Canned tuna, salmon, sardines, or other variety
- Tofu

Grains

Check the ingredient list to ensure that the first ingredient says “whole grain”. Examples:

- 100% whole grain bread
- Whole grains such as quinoa, barley, bulgur
- Rice (preferably brown)
- Unsweetened oatmeal
- High fibre breakfast cereal (> 4 grams of fibre per serving)
- Whole grain pasta or noodles

Dairy & Alternatives

Choose lower fat dairy products when possible – 2%, 1%, or 0% M.F. (milk fat). Avoid dairy products with added sugars. Examples:

- Milk (dairy and soy are comparable, lower protein options include almond, cashew, oat, and rice milk)
- Yogurt plain or reduced sugar
- Low fat cheese, 20% of less M.F.

Other

- Vegetable oils (olive, canola, grapeseed, avocado)
- Vinegars (balsamic, apple cider)
- Seasoning such as basil, oregano, poultry, cumin, salt, pepper, cinnamon
- Mustard, Hot sauce (with no added sugar and less than 15% sodium per serving)
- Garlic powder, onion powder
- Tea, coffee
- Aluminum foil (for easy cleanup of baking dishes)

Acorn Squash Soup

Ingredients

- 0.5 **tablespoon** butter, unsalted
- 1.0 **clove** garlic, chopped
- 0.5 **medium** onion, chopped
- 3.5 **cups** acorn squash, peeled and diced
- 2.5 **cups** low sodium vegetable broth
- 2.0 **teaspoons** tomato paste
- 1.0 **teaspoon** fresh basil, chopped
- 2 **slices** bononcini or Havarti cheese, cubed

TOTAL SERVINGS 4

Directions

In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat, then brown garlic and onion. Add squash and cook for 2 minutes. Pour in broth and season with salt and pepper.

Bring to a boil, lower heat to medium, cover and cook 20 minutes or until squash is tender. In a blender, purée potage with tomato paste until smooth. Return potage to saucepan, add basil and adjust seasoning. Top with cheese and serve.

This recipe is equally delicious using pumpkin instead of acorn squash. Squash is a good source of vitamin C which helps increase iron absorption and promotes a healthy immune system.

Tai Chi is Coming to Recovery College this Fall!

Written by: Elaine Miller, Patient Experience Advisor at Ontario Shores

This September and November, the Ontario Shores' Recovery College will be hosting 2 one-hour sessions for patient participants who want to try out Taoist Tai Chi. Taoist Tai Chi® is a set of 108 continuous movements that were brought to Canada from China in 1970 by Master Moy Lin Shin (a Taoist monk) to benefit the health of those who were taught the practice.

Participants will repeat a series of slow physical movements that gently exercise the muscular, skeletal, and circulatory systems, as well as tendons, joints, connective tissue and organs. They will benefit from relaxation: these gentle internal movements are balanced throughout the body and have a calming effect on the mind. Taoist Tai Chi® arts are truly a moving meditation. In the hour, participants will learn the first 6 moves of the Taoist Tai Chi® set.

In future, maybe family caregivers will also be able to try Tai Chi as we explore expanding Recovery College for families.

How can I access the Family Resource Centre?

Online:

http://www.ontarioshores.ca/patients__families/family_resource_centre

In Person:

Building 7 Level 2
700 Gordon Street
Whitby, ON L1N 5S9

Hours:

Monday to Friday
9:00AM-4:30PM
Thursday Evenings
6:30PM-8:30PM
(Closed 12:00PM-1:00PM)

By Phone:

905.430.4055 ext. 6970
1.800.341.6323 ext. 6970

By Email:

familyresourcecentre@ontarioshores.ca

Links Corner

Sharing Your Feedback

Do you have feedback to share about your experience at Ontario Shores? Please contact Patient Experience at 905-430-4055 ext. 6703 or visit Building 3 Level 1. Our email address is PatientExperience@ontarioshores.ca.

Community Current

The Community Current is an email newsletter sharing news and upcoming events with community members. If you are interested in receiving updates from Ontario Shores we invite you to subscribe.

Ontario Shores Website

Learn about events taking place at Ontario Shores this summer, listen to positive stories about the recovery journey from patients, families, staff members and volunteers, discover other facts and information about mental illness, and much more!