



CONSUMER CORNER

We recently sat down to interview one of our favorite consumers, James Mills. Here is what he had to say:

Describe life before you joined On Our Own?

I was having anxiety attacks, interference with my intuition. This made it difficult to focus and to get back to college to play sports.

How did you feel then and now?

Before I had a lot of anxiety. It was difficult to sleep. Now I think better and I have an outlet to do things to better myself.

How do you cope with life events?

Use my intuition, clairvoy-

ance. I use all my mental senses.

How does On Our Own help you?

It has been a great outlet and opportunity to showcase my talents. I performed music with instruments of healing. There have been constructive avenues for me to follow. For example, helping me go back to college.

What do you want others to learn from your story?

If you put your mind to it, you can achieve anything.

What is your favorite color? RED



What is your favorite sound?

Washington D.C. where the Verizon center is at. The sound of the city.

What keeps you strong?

Good family support base, listening to music and watching sports.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- *Achieving Wellness Together Workshop Fridays starting April 25th (must make 6 week commitment)*
- *On Our Own of Maryland's 22nd annual statewide conference June 5th and 6th*
- *WRAP presentation May 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th*
- *Mental Health Education workshop April 16th 7pm-8:30pm*

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WRAP IS COMING TO OOOFG

This May every Saturday, OOOFG will be presenting WRAP.

This session of WRAP will be presented by Fran Kemper, Kathy Najera, and George McElfatrick.

They will cover the entire program including:

The Wellness toolbox

Daily maintenance plan

Triggers and action plan

Early warning signs and action plan

When things are breaking down and action plan

Crisis plan

Post crisis plan

Participants will gain the full understanding of the program and develop their own WRAP.



NEW MEMBER BIO— GEORGE



This month we are very happy to welcome George McElfatrick.

Born in D.C. and raised in Montgomery County Maryland, George has always had a passion for helping those in need. He graduated from Salisbury University with a Bachelors in Communications but was unsatisfied with the business world. After years of struggling with mental illness, he attended graduate school at the University of South

Carolina for social work.

Although George did not finish his degree, he found a taste for his calling in helping others. After a few setbacks, he finally came across a DBSA support group. Here George found friends that helped to support him and encouraged him to try out the WRAP program. There he met Daphne Klein and began to volunteer for On Our Own PG County. George has conducted workshops on social

skills, poetry, and computer literacy. He is currently on his path to become a certified peer recovery specialist.

He is a DBSA and WRAP facilitator and is also CCAR trained. George finally feels at home working as a peer with the population he is a part of. He knows now that all his difficulties can be used to relate with and help others.

RECIPE SMOOTHIES



Banana Smoothie

- Blend 2 bananas
- 1/2 cup vanilla yogurt
- 1/2 milk
- 2 teaspoons honey
- A pinch of cinnamon
- 1 cup ice

Kiwi Strawberry

- 1 cup strawberries
- 2 peeled kiwis
- 2 tablespoons of sugar
- 2 cups of ice

Mango peach banana

- Blend 1 cup of each
- Frozen peaches, frozen mango
- 1/2 a banana
- 1 cup of yogurt
- 1 cup of ice
- Sugar to taste

ACHIEVING WELLNESS TOGETHER

Starting Friday April 25th from 1-3pm and continuing every Friday for six weeks, OOOPG is hosting a program entitled Achieving Wellness Together.

This program will enable consumers to become more aware of their current habits so they can make healthier choices. In addition, they will

learn to make simple switches in diet and exercise to promote health and reduce risk of chronic disease. The program will also assist consumers in learning how to increase physical activity and reduce time spent in sedentary behaviors.

They will learn simple ways to prepare meals at home.

Lastly, participants will share barriers and develop common solutions.

There is no cost for participation but participants must make a six week commitment.

“THE PROGRAM WILL ALSO ASSIST CONSUMERS IN LEARNING HOW TO INCREASE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY”

POETRY BY VALERIE HUNTER

We are like peacocks
 Majestic and grand
 Though we are like butterflies
 Delicate in hand
 Who could ask for a group
 So grand
 We love each other
 In a profound way
 And we make more progress
 Each and every day



INTERVIEW WITH A FAMILY MEMBER

What was it like when your child was first diagnosed?

It was scary and painful. To know your child is diagnosed with mental illness is extremely difficult to accept at first. As a parent, Your main goal is to keep your child happy and healthy. With a physical ailment it is much easier to remedy but with mental illness it is a long road of peaks and valleys.

What would you have done differently?

I would have equipped myself with more knowledge of the illness and found a support group for myself to deal with these issues. I would have encouraged my child to work more closely with the doctor in regard to medication management.

What did you do that was helpful for your child?

Made sure medication was taken at scheduled times with conformation from my child. I also encouraged plenty of rest and eating properly.

How did you maintain a positive attitude?

I prayed a lot, reflected on the good times and drew strength from our support system.

What changes did your child make to get where they are today?

They joined a support group and began volunteering. They also changed their medicine, became more social and began working out.

How do you feel today after years of dealing with this illness?

I am extremely proud and grateful to see how hard my child has worked. My child became an inspiration to members of his support group for the way in which they have embraced their illness. To any parent that has a child with mental illness remember they are your loving and wonderful child and as a doctor quoted to me: "They have a mental illness they are not the mental illness."

"YOUR MAIN
 GOAL IS TO KEEP
 YOUR CHILD
 HAPPY AND
 HEALTHY"



MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION WORKSHOP



On Wednesday April 16th from 7 to 8:30pm at the New Carrollton municipal center, On Our Own of Prince George's County is presenting a workshop. The topic will be on programs and support services for individuals with mental illnesses.

The Presenters will be Daphne Klein, Executive Director, and Myrel



Dyson, President of Board of Directors. They will discuss the services provided by OOOPG the cost, the process for participation, and how to join. Other topics of discussion will be the location of the center, transportation, the benefits

of peer support, WRAP, and the other services that OOOPG provides. Hope to see you there.

DIABETES AND ME

“REMEMBER THERE’S STRENGTH IN NUMBERS– WE ARE NOT ALONE WITH THIS DISEASE”

I have been a diabetic since 1998 - and know first hand the toll it can take on both our health and mental status. There is so much "information" out there - and sometimes it takes time to sort it all out. With these sessions "DIABETES & ME" - I hope to help other diabetic (and myself) sort out all this information.

Each session will deal with a different topic - from making changes in our kitchens - to

learning about the different spices out here. Some of the topics -

KITCHEN MAKE-OVERS

LEARNING ABOUT SEASONING FROM AROUND THE WORLD

HOW DIABETES EFFECTS OUR HEALTH and WHAT SMALL CHANGES WE CAN MAKE

FOODS - HOW TO READ LABELS - WHAT WE SHOULD STAY AWAY FROM AND WHAT WE CAN HAVE TO OUR HEARTS CONTENT.

I do hope you will join us at these sessions. Remember - there is strength in numbers - we are not alone with this disease and most importantly- as peers - we can support each other.

-Fran Kemper

COMING SOON DBSA GROUP



Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

On Our Own will be hosting a DBSA (depression bipolar support alliance) group . This will be a peer run support group held on Friday nights. We are people living with depression and bipolar who come together to learn from each other and encourage one another as we work towards wellness.

The focus of the group is on recovery. Patricia Deegan, PH.D., consumer advocate states that recovery is a process, a way of life, an attitude, and a way of approaching the day's challenges.

The support group aims to give consumers a sense of community, encouragement, education, and forum in

which they can come together to share what they have in common. Every member is a valuable resource and their ideas, hope and love are all encouraged. Remember your participation adds to the experience. Hope that you join us.

CAPRICORN

You can gain a lot of pleasure from simple expressions of creativity. Try some different artistic mediums as a way to relax, without being goal-oriented. Visits to museums, the theater or live music performances can be a great way to share time with loved ones. Sometimes, Capricorns can feel that their artistic talents are impractical. You'll have the chance now to see that your creativity is not only vital to your well-being, it could also be a legitimate source of income.

SAGITTARIUS

If you've been in denial about unhealthy habits, now is the time to address them and make adjustments. This can include a job that has been draining your energy, the need to be more physically active, a lack of nutritious foods in your diet or disorganization that is hindering your success. Try setting aside some time for peaceful contemplation. Without criticizing yourself, look at the practical ways you can make improvements to your overall wellness. Then, set some realistic long-term goals that you can break down into small daily action steps.

SCORPIO

You may be exploring themes of spirituality and developing faith in powers beyond your control. You may be experiencing a conflict between the need to sort through information from your past and the impulse to charge forward with your ambitions. It's a good time to research spiritual practices and think about how you might be able to connect with loved ones on a deeper level. Orient yourself towards activities that open your mind. You could be working through issues of self worth and it's a good time to practice showing and receiving respect.

LIBRA

Another person in your life may act as a mirror and any emotions directed towards them may actually represent how you feel about yourself. It's an illuminating time to see yourself and others objectively. Your buried potential can be brought to the surface now. Trust your instincts when it comes to your close relationship. Libras often have "people pleasing" tendencies that compromise their own needs. This time period can help you to define your boundaries as you will be feeling the pressure to make a change from many directions.

VIRGO

It might feel as if you are no longer able to keep hidden feelings "under the rug" as you seek to address and heal some issues from your past. Be sure to present your ideas thoughtfully. The next few weeks can be a good time to think about planning a trip or considering a new course of study. It's quite possible that you'll need to relinquish some control in order to successfully collaborate. Your most lucrative endeavors will likely involve teaming up with someone else. You may find yourself thinking about how to live in a more meaningful way.

LEO

It can feel like you have a lot on your plate and you might be less patient than usual. Stop and breathe to avoid any impulsive communications you may regret. Use any misunderstandings as an opportunity to learn more about each other and find some common ground. The next month will be a prime time to advance your career goals. There will be a lot of motivating energy available to embark on an educational journey of some sort. You could find that you have the opportunity to be a teacher or mentor.

CANCER

You're likely to be in line for more life changes than some of your peers. The next month can be a good time to nurture your current friendships and develop new long-term alliances. You could receive some good financial advice from a friend during this time. Try channeling any restless or moody energy into a home decorating or repair project. It's possible you'll end some alliances and attract some more like-minded individuals into your circle. New friendships cultivated during this time are likely to be long-lasting.

GEMINI

Relationships with loved ones can get a fresh infusion of joy and it can be easier to see what you need from one another. This can put the spotlight on some of your hidden gifts and you may feel called to share them in order to help others. It's likely you'll be craving some spiritual healing for yourself as well. A retreat to a beautiful natural setting that allows you time for artistic pursuits is strongly encouraged. You could have a strong desire to align yourself with people who "get" you on all levels.

TAURUS

It will be helpful to call upon your natural abilities to remain calm and grounded as it could feel like things around you are rapidly shifting. It's a great time to detect any potential health problems and make positive steps to improve your overall wellness. You have the ability to share your gifts with others and use your calm wisdom to help those around you. Try developing some daily activities that can help you to feel connected to yourself and/or a higher power.

ARIES

Emotions are likely to run high, so be gentle with yourself and others. This is a great time to draw upon your positive attitude and innovation. Consider these questions, even if you are not currently involved in a partnership. In what ways have you strayed from your path in order to accommodate someone close to you? What do you need for yourself in order to be a whole and supportive partner? Any work you put in towards your personal growth now can pay off in a big way.

PICESES

You may feel that your life is in flux. Social and financial circumstances could be morphing into something new and unknown. You can discover how empowering it is to turn your fears into a life-changing gift. It's more important than ever now to keep your boundaries intact and resist the urge to take on responsibility for other people's choices. There can be a conflict between your sense of obligation to others and what you feel that you owe to yourself. Your words can be quite powerful during this time period.

AQUARIUS

Aquarians are known for their intellectual capacity, but this can be a time where you may experience "information overload." There's a lot going on with your internal thought processes and it can feel that you're being constantly zapped with thought-provoking communications. It's a great time to find a mentor or teacher and explore new ideas. Travel could be in the cards. You may or may not attend traditional classes, but lessons and learning are certainly a theme. Look for a "study buddy" to help you maximize the available knowledge.



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of Prince George's County*

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WE ARE ON THE WEB!

WWW.ONOUROWNPG.ORG

On Our Own of Prince George's County is a friendly place. Our center provides support from peers who understand you and have common goals. We offer hope, information, resources, and opportunity to those who have mental health concerns. We promote self-advocacy within the community by being active and keeping each other informed about issues that concern individuals with mental illness and also the community as a whole. We offer workshops and activities on [Wellness Recovery Action Planning](#), recovery, arts & crafts, self-esteem, [anti-stigma](#), daily living, fun field trips, and giving back to the community.

Feel the power of peer support

ON OUR OWN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

This year's conference will be held in Ocean City, Maryland on June 5th and 6th. The theme of the conference is Riding the Waves: the Art and Science of Creating Happiness. The featured speakers at the conference will be Dr. Brian Hepburn, Director of Mental Hygiene Administration, and Rick Rock, President of the Maryland Association of Core Service Agencies.

In addition to these featured speakers, the keynote speaker will be Deborah Trueheart. Deborah

is a consultant, educator, counselor, artist, motivational speaker, and change agent. She has also written extensively on mental health issues and recovery.

Application deadline is May 14th. There is limited space so register early. The conference will be located at the Princess Royale Hotel and Conference Center.

There will be informative workshops on the following topics: vocational happiness, art and recovery, peer support, co-

occurring issues, GLBT issues, the art of Feng Shui, Laugh-a-yoga, food and mood, and others. Do not miss out on this conference - it will be one to remember!