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## Resilience Inc. Newsletter: July 13, 2018 (Volume 34)

**This month's newsletter includes:**

**A Message from Lori Ashcraft, Ask Emily and  
Resilience Inc. Update.**

### **A Message from Lori Ashcraft.**

Hi Friends,

I hope you all had a meaningful celebration of our country's independence. I spent a little time during the holiday thinking of all the ways we take away our own freedom, limiting our options when we don't feel good enough to think big; when we hold on to guilt and shame that saps our power to move ahead into new frontiers; and when we deny our personal power to move the needle in the important work we do. Let's stop doing that. Let us let go of the things that limit our freedom and move with enthusiasm into the future.





Gene and I spent the last two weeks in Brazil visiting a healing center that we have been to twice before. We always come away with so much love

and expanded hearts. The healing is on many levels, spiritual, emotional and physical for starters. I always realize how much bigger God is than I have made Him/Her up to be. Seeing people of very different faiths and denominations sitting together in meditation focused on healing for all others is so powerful. It causes me to realize that the world has a chance to be OK after all if enough of us can come from a place of love instead of fear. It starts with each one of us, so let's give it a go!

Lori

### **Ask Emily.**

Hello Folks,

We have a very interesting human/canine team to introduce you to this month – Howie and Anna. Howie is the guardian of Anna-Magdalena Christianson. Anna knows about animals, all kinds including humans. Her undergraduate degree is in zoology and her graduate degree is in entomology (they tell me this means bugs and such). This is all very interesting to me since I have always been interested in bugs. I have been known to sniff behind them as they travel (terrified) along a seemingly important path. They don't return my affection but I still find them fascinating.



More fascinating is Anna's lived experience of surviving and thriving the challenges of mental illness. Here's what she says about it:

*"Half my life has been lived while medicated for mental health issues. After 30-plus years and 44 different psychoactive drugs, I finally decided enough was enough. Withdrawal has been difficult, but those difficulties are diminishing. I look forward to thinking, feeling, and caring again, all things medication took from me.*

*Ten years ago I emerged from my room, motivated by the fear that I was on track to becoming a complete invalid, to apply for a job that had an interesting qualifier - one had to have a "serious mental illness." And I got the job and worked as a certified peer support specialist for 6 years. Then I retired, only to accept a position a year later as executive director of a faltering drop-in center. Three years later the place is unrecognizable - in a very good way."*

So as you can see, Howie has important work to do. Let's see what his question is.

Dear Emily,

I met your Person recently. I think you made a good pick. I liked her.

I have a Person, too. I am her Partner, so we go everywhere together (which is how I was able to meet your Person in the Grand Hyatt Denver). You know how we canines are usually pretty predictable creatures. Well, my Person wishes humans were that way, too, or at least that they had forehead screens that spelled out their thoughts. But they don't. And that leaves my Person pretty confused sometimes.

So this is the problem (and I may as well tell you, because that may clarify things a bit, my Person has autism). She is experiencing a very difficult post-acute withdrawal from psychiatric medication and is trying to work through this with a therapist. But that is not going well. She tells me she is really confused because she doesn't know the rules of "the game," as she calls it, doesn't know how to play, or what is expected of her. She thinks maybe one of the

prerequisites is to be able to connect with people, something that's difficult for her. So she's just really confused.

My question to you, Emily, is how should I handle this situation? My job is to help her, but this wasn't covered in my training. I want to be a support and help her through this, but I'm rather at a loss.

I would love your advice. Let me know what you think. Thanks!

Howie



Dear Howie,

Good to hear from you. You do indeed have a challenging assignment. Sometimes the hardest things really give us the opportunity to stretch beyond what we think we are capable of. In your case, addressing this challenge will give you a chance to go deep into new territory that will leave you even wiser and more loving.

So that being barked, here's what comes to mind for me. Your human has a connection with you. She just needs to learn how to replicate that connection with other humans. You are going to be her best teacher in learning the things you have listed. Show her how to initiate contact by kissing her when she least expects it. Poke her when you see opportunities for her to connect with others. When you are not in "working mode" you can do a lot of role modeling for her by initiating contact with other animals, including humans. When she is able to reach out, reward her with lots of wags and licks. Also, another thing you can do is to be really friendly with other humans. They will then approach your human with comments like, "What a cute dog. How old is he? What's his name?" and so on. This way you can be a bridge that create chances for your human to make connections.

Good luck, Howie. I know you can do this.

Emily

### **Resilience Inc. Update.**

Resilience continues to support the growth and development of the peer workforce in Singapore. Chris Martin, Director of Learning and Facilitation, is currently in Singapore where he is training new peers using the curriculum - Peer Support Learning for the 21st Century (developed by Resilience), as well as supporting several peers through the Train the Trainer program to help sustain the continued growth and development of their peer workforce.



We are excited to share with you that during this month, Resilience kicks off a series of five major Peer Workforce Summits throughout the state of California supporting several counties and community-based organizations. This is all possible as part of a grant through OSHPD (California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development). The grant is called "Local Organizational Support and Development Networks for Public Mental Health System Workforce with Lived Experience." Each Peer Workforce Summit is a one-day high energy event to inspire a new or renewed vision for peer employment and peer services. The Summit day begins with a keynote address delivered by a nationally known and respected peer support leader and expert. Following the keynote address, the Peer Workforce Summit will continue with a series of plenary sessions. After each Peer Workforce Summit, Resilience will continue to support the counties/community-based organizations for a period of seven months providing additional training and technical support.

Lastly, Resilience is wrapping up our first Peer Personnel Training and Placement Program grant through OSHPD, while we actively continue to provide this meaningful support under the second Peer Personnel Training and Placement Program grant Resilience received through OSHPD. And, we

are looking forward to supporting even more counties and community-based organizations under the third Peer Personnel Training and Placement grant we have recently received through OSHPD!!

### **A Request From Emily.**

If you have a question that you would like to send me – I would love the opportunity to respond!! Send your question to [mail@resilience4u.us](mailto:mail@resilience4u.us) and I will respond in an upcoming Newsletter. And – feel free to send me picture of your cuddly self!!

### **Don't forget to check out Lori Ashcraft's Blog!!**

To read and contribute to Lori's blog, click on the link below:

[www.resilience4u.us](http://www.resilience4u.us)





For more information on our Consulting and Training Services or information on our Peer Support Learning for the 21st Century - Building Resilience on a Foundation of Recovery and Whole Health Workbook and Training Program,

call 530-362-7070.

Visit our website at [www.resilience4u.us](http://www.resilience4u.us)

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