

Craftsbury Mental Health Group  
Monthly meeting  
May 21, 2018, 5:30 pm  
Craftsbury Public Library

Present: Alden L., Lisa-Anne L., Michelle W., Sharon M., Laurie S., Emily B., Susie H., Emily K., Sally G.

Meeting Notes

1. We did introductions for the benefit of new members and also provided a synopsis of our last few months as well as the goals of our group so far.
2. Had a brief discussion about the differences between Lamoille County Mental Health and Northeast Kingdom Human Services re: catchment area, ease of access.
3. Susie read the mission statement in its current (draft) form. The group offered some suggestions, mostly around grammatical changes.
4. Michelle gave an update on activities that she's been part of over the last month. She attended a meeting on April 24 of the Mentally Healthy Collaborative Action Network, at which she spoke about our group, told them about our website and our mission. The MHCAN group was established in response to suicides in the St. J area. They have the goal of zero suicides.

Michelle had contact with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), which hosts the Out of the Darkness walk in both Newport and Burlington. Emily B. will be walking in Newport on September 8<sup>th</sup> and is asking for donations and sponsors. Mary Butler is our contact person for this organization. There was discussion around having a speaker from this group come and speak at Sterling or CA.

5. Michelle reported that Pablo had been in contact with Wellspring (Hardwick) about having one point person at the organization who responds to people in crisis and/or is the contact person for the public, mainly as a way of streamlining a potential client's experience.
6. Emily B. asked if there were ways for someone to access mental health counseling if they do not have insurance, or have a high deductible. Michelle said that the fund established in Wes's name can help with those costs.
7. There was a lengthy discussion about taking on suicide prevention and general mental health issues at Craftsbury Academy and/or Sterling College. We talked about the dangers of raising suicide as an issue as potentially planting ideas and decided that it is

far more likely to bring relief to someone considering suicide or even dealing with depression, than it is to plant an idea that didn't already exist.

**Action Step:** Michelle is going to reach out to Monique about ideas for speakers who could present to CA or Sterling.

8. We briefly summarized the Youth Mental Health First Aid training which happened on April 16<sup>th</sup>. The group agreed that it was well worth the time. We talked about suggesting to the fire department that their members attend this training and Sharon wondered if it might make more sense to target the first responders in town. She offered to connect with Karl Stein about this idea.

**Action Step:** Sharon will connect with Karl about this idea.

9. We talked about the four questions that Norm Hanson posed in an email to the group a couple of weeks ago, mainly focused around the guide that our group is working on to assist people in crisis as they try to navigate the mental health system. He also wondered about moving forward on the idea of having people in town respond as resources to people who might be struggling with mental health issues. We agreed to have a small task force take this on and work through the liability/training issues. Susie made a list of potential members.

**Action Step:** Michelle is going to contact Sherry Marcelino about the status of a guide to help people navigate the m.h. system.

Next Meeting: June 18<sup>th</sup> 5:30