

## The Consumer Movement

### Some mental health client views on limitations of the “medical model” of mental health care

- The concept of “mental illness” is a form of social control for people who are “different”
- The medical model defines the problem in the individual instead of an oppressive society
- Some emotional crises are a reaction to difficult, oppressive circumstances and are not permanent “chemical imbalances” of the brain that will require medication for life
- Over-reliance on medication and ECT which sometimes has serious, irreversible side effects
- Use of forced treatment for mental health problems is counterproductive
- DSM diagnosis based on symptoms is supposed to be unique, but in practice, different diagnoses are often given for the same symptoms in the same person
- Significant differences between Europe and US in how schizophrenia and bipolar disorder are diagnosed suggesting subjectivity of "mental illness" definition and treatment

### Consumer Movement Stresses:

- Mental health client rights (see Personal Bill of Rights below)
- Self Determination and Self Advocacy
- Self Help and Peer Support, Peer-run Drop in Centers
- Networking with other mental health clients
- Lobbying and advocacy for rights of mental health clients
- Some mental health clients reject some or all medical intervention for mental disorders:
  - Psychiatric Medication
    - Against forced medication: Contentious issue between families and mental health clients
  - Psychiatric Hospitalization
  - Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)

## **Personal Bill of Rights**

### **I HAVE THE RIGHT TO ...**

1. ASK FOR WHAT I WANT.
2. SAY NO TO REQUEST OR DEMANDS I CAN'T MEET.
3. CHANGE MY MIND.
4. MAKE MISTAKES AND NOT HAVE TO BE PERFECT.
5. FOLLOW MY OWN VALUES AND STANDARDS.
6. EXPRESS ALL MY FEELINGS, BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE.
7. SAY NO TO ANYTHING WHEN I AM NOT READY, IT IS UNSAFE, OR IT VIOLATES MY VALUES.
8. DETERMINE MY OWN PRIORITIES.
9. BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OTHERS' BEHAVIOR, ACTIONS, FEELINGS, OR PROBLEMS.
10. EXPECT HONESTY FROM OTHERS.
11. BE ANGRY AT SOMEONE I LOVE.
12. BE UNIQUELY MYSELF.
13. FEEL SCARED AND SAY, "I'M AFRAID."
14. SAY, "I DON'T KNOW."
15. TO NOT GIVE EXCUSES OR REASONS FOR MY BEHAVIOR.
16. MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON MY OWN FEELINGS.
17. MY OWN NEEDS FOR PERSONAL SPACE AND TIME.
18. BE PLAYFUL AND FRIVOLOUS.
19. BE HEALTHIER THAN THOSE AROUND ME.
20. BE IN A NON-ABUSIVE ENVIRONMENT.
21. MAKE FRIENDS AND BE COMFORTABLE AROUND PEOPLE.
22. CHANGE AND GROW.
23. HAVE MY NEEDS AND WANTS RESPECTED BY OTHERS.
24. BE TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT.
25. BE HAPPY.