

Written by Deena Berg

From rock bottom to happiness and recovery

Years ago I was very lonely, sad and alone. I suffered from a serious psychiatric disorder and was not on the right medication to control it. I also had no friends and no outlet to express any of my creative abilities. To sum up my life, it was empty.

I don't think many people caught onto how depressed I was or realized that I was definitely suicidal. Then about 8 years ago, I switched hospitals, was given a new psychiatrist and became a member of the Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors. All these changes bettered my life 100%.

For the first time in my life my illness did not define me. I was stable and solid. I was offered a support system at the Cummings Center. I established relationships with staff and members and started writing for the Brainstorm newsletter, a bi-annual publication of the Mental Health Program. I had changed. I wanted to help people like myself through this newsletter and had the opportunity to voice my opinions and experiences. I enrolled in art therapy and drama therapy and enjoyed it very much.

I never knew a place like Cummings existed but I have this center to thank for my recovery. When no one else believed in me, my network at Cummings stood by me and had faith in me. I managed to move from a group home into my own apartment and. Today I can say that I am independent and happy.