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## mental notes ELECTRONICALLY



Please e-mail Julie Bogner to receive "Mental Notes" online instead of via the mail. One quick e-mail to [jbogner@whmhfb.org](mailto:jbogner@whmhfb.org) saves paper, time and money!

## The Healing Power of Friendship

### Helen and Karen: Two Peas in a Pod

*Editor's Note: The Wayne-Holmes Mental Health Coalition is looking into opening a Mental Health Recovery House. The WHMHC has been granted approval to use the First Presbyterian Church's Manse on College Avenue (MOCA House). Much work needs to be done to make this dream a reality. Helen Marton and Karen Badger are two mental health consumers who know firsthand about the benefits of a peer support program, having met at the now defunct Meeting Place over 15 years ago. Helen and Karen are both in recovery from schizophrenia and depression. Friendship, along with medication, has played an important role in their recovery. Here is their story as written by Helen Marton and Karen Badger.*



Helen Marton (left) and Karen Badger

I lived in a small two-room apartment in Millersburg. I had lost my job and was diagnosed with schizophrenia. In that small apartment, a feeling of isolation overwhelmed me. The only excitement in my life was TV and the laundromat. Every Monday I walked to see my counselor. He made sure I saw a psychiatrist and was prescribed the proper medication. I kept busy, but was still very lonely. The only friends I had were Jesus, my cat, my sister and the pizza parlor lady. The days seemed to drag on. I needed something to do.

My counselor told me about a program where you could go to talk about your problems, get support from friends and have a nice meal with others. The program helped me get through my divorce and custody problems, but I was still very lonely. I needed a friend. I really looked forward to the next day to be around others. I was afraid to try anything, but they encouraged me to make decisions, and they turned out fine. My evenings were still endless and very lonely. You can't talk to a TV. I couldn't keep up with my housework. Depression was setting in.

Then a real blow hit — my cat passed away. My caseworker suggested I move to Wooster where I might meet some new friends. She also suggested that I try a peer support program called the Meeting Place. One day I decided to try the Meeting Place, and there sitting all by herself was a woman. She looked like someone I'd like to get to know. She didn't talk much and kept to herself. But she got away before I could meet her, so I trudged home to my lonely apartment.

I went back the next day, and lo and behold, the friend I wanted to meet was there! God puts people together. I thought she looked like a very nice person. She just needed to get out of her shell. Her name was Karen. I asked her to my place for a big salad. Karen said she'd be glad to come. So the next night she showed up at my door. We fixed the salad together and chatted like old buddies. We went to the Meeting Place together. We hung out. Karen was still quiet and took herself too seriously. She would give others a chance to hurt her. So I kidded with her about us taking a big trip to New York. She started kidding back. We were in some of the Meeting Place groups together. I tried to help others, and I learned from them as well. I knew Karen was taking it all in. In the evenings, we went to her house or mine for supper, or we went out for a bite.

The Healing Power of Friendship, continued —

We went many places: the track, Weight Watchers and shopping. To my enjoyment, she spent every holiday with me.

My depression was helped. The isolated feeling melted away. We talked like magpies. If Karen had a problem, she talked to me, and if I had a problem I talked to her. We helped each other through everything. When I got very sick, she was Johnny on the Spot.

To my delight, after 10 years, she asked me to move into her loft apartment. I talked to my new caseworker. She thought it was a great idea. She said we were like two peas in a pod. So on Groundhog Day, I moved in lock, stock and barrel. I felt so at home.

Our health started to decline. I had a stroke and had to go to a nursing home for rehabilitation. There stood Karen waiting for me to arrive at the nursing home. She came everyday to visit me. She had meals with me. She cheered me up, helped me with therapy and brightened up every day! There was no feeling of isolation. When she had her knee surgeries, I took care of her. When I had my knee surgeries, she took good care of me. I now have COPD and have to stay inside. Karen has asthma and can't go out much, but we have each other. I have a beautiful room to stay in. We have a lovely little parakeet. We have lived together almost 15 years. Our friendship has helped our mental illnesses and our physical ailments. Thanks to God and the Meeting Place!

*MOCA House can and will be a place for severely mentally ill persons to get the education, support and advocacy they need to live long and full lives. You can help. Call the WHMHC at 330-264-1590.*

Support —  
**The Wayne-Holmes Mental Health & Recovery Board Levy**  
— November 3



See our web site at [www.whmhrb.org](http://www.whmhrb.org) for more information.

— UPCOMING EVENTS —

**MHRB Board Meeting:**

3rd Thursday, 7:00 p.m., at the MHRB office

**MHRB Program Committee:**

1st Thursday, 7:00 p.m., at the MHRB office

**MHRB Finance Committee:**

2nd Thursday, 6:00 p.m., at the MHRB office

**September is Recovery Month!**

**RSVP Recovery Conference:**

September 30

**MHRB Annual Meeting:**

September 29

**Mental Illness Awareness Week:**

October 5-9

**Please visit our web site at [www.whmhrb.org](http://www.whmhrb.org)**

*Wayne-Holmes Mental Health Coalition!*

**SUPPORT-FELLOWSHIP-EDUCATION**

**Wayne-Holmes Mental Health Coalition (WHMHC)** is a newly formed coalition that incorporates NAMI, Advocates for Mental Health of Wayne and Holmes Counties, and the Suicide Prevention Coalition. The coalition is a nonprofit organization that provides a place for persons with mental health concerns to help themselves and others along the road to recovery.

The groups and meetings all take place at the Stanley R. Slater Building, 1273 Lincoln Way West, Wooster, Ohio (beside the House of Iron gym). There is always limited **FREE** transportation to activities.

Everyone is welcome — whether they have mental health concerns themselves or for others, including family members.

The meetings and activities are as follows:

*New* **Education, Discussion and Support Group**

Every Thursday, 6:30-8:00 p.m., at the Slater Building

**Education, Discussion and Support Group**

Every Monday, 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
Group Facilitator: Shelley Schrier

**WRAP Support Group**

Second Saturday, 9:30-11:00 a.m.  
Open to anyone who has already completed a WRAP workshop.  
For information on how you can attend a workshop, please call 330-264-1590.

**Game and Fellowship Night**

Second Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

**Art for Wellness**

Third Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

**Wayne-Holmes Mental Health Coalition**

P.O. Box 1770, Wooster, Ohio 44691

Phone: 330-264-1590

[coalition@mhealthsupport.org](mailto:coalition@mhealthsupport.org)

<http://www.mhealthsupport.org>

**For RSVP Conference information and registration form, see the insert.**

# The New Addictions

Behavioral addictions — to shopping, video games, checking e-mail, cell phones — trigger the same rush of feel-good dopamine to the brain as drugs and alcohol. Since these “fixes” aren’t formally recognized by the medical establishment, insurance won’t pony up for treatment. But that doesn’t mean they can’t undo your life.

## Take Rachel for example —

I started shopping compulsively a few years ago. I was a new mom in an unhappy marriage. I worked as a sales executive, which was a very stressful job. Shopping empowered me — I somehow felt that if I bought the outfit from the happy window scene, then I might be happy myself. But things got out of hand pretty quickly. I was spending about \$1,200 a month on clothes. I had 150 pairs of shoes, 35 purses and 25 pairs of sunglasses. My two walk-in closets were filled with clothes with the tags still on. And yet I’d open my closet and say, “I have nothing to wear.”



Some days I’d go to different branches of the same store — it’s uncomfortable when the salespeople recognize you. It’s just like being a junkie. You want the fix, but you don’t want to get caught. I started labeling my friends as ones who would go shopping with me — my partners in crime — and ones who wouldn’t. One friend and I would spend 14 hours at the mall. We called it Girls’ Day Out. Even when I was on deadline at work, I’d be on eBay buying stuff. I started losing clients because I’d rush through appointments or skip them altogether to go shopping.

I didn’t want my husband to know how much I was spending, so I would hide things, letting bags pile up in the back of my SUV until he was at work and I could bring the stuff inside. If he was home, I’d shove things inside my coat or wear them from the car inside the house so they didn’t seem new. But of course he noticed. He’d tell me, “You have a spending problem.” My husband never tried to help me with the problem — just reprimanded me, which would lead to more fights.

I hit rock bottom when I lost my job and got a different job where I didn’t make anywhere near what I used to. It’s been a big reality check. I don’t ever want to be in a position where I have to say to my son, “Mommy can’t get you that toy you want because she has no control over what she wants.” When I do go to stores, I ask myself, “Do I really need this?” It’s a constant, daily struggle.

*(as told to Sarah Wexler)*

## Hey, Big Spenders

Nine million women in America suffer from a compulsive-shopping disorder.

### SIGNS YOU MAY BE A SHOPAHOLIC:

- Your spending is a constant source of fights between you and a loved one.
- You don’t use or wear many of your purchases.
- You buy things with credit cards that you’d skip if you had to pay with cash.
- You have several credit cards but are unsure what the balance is on any of them.

### WAYS TO DEAL:

- Destroy your credit cards. Pay for purchases with cash or debit.
- Don’t shop alone — you’re more likely to overspend.
- Talk to your doctor about possible depression.

## Steve: “I Check My E-mail 100 Times a Day”

I’m an actor. These days, most casting calls are posted online, so if you want to work, you have to be on the Web. Two years ago I got an e-mail about an audition that was happening that same day — but I didn’t see the message until it was too late. Since then I have lived in fear that I would miss an opportunity if I didn’t check my e-mail.



I began logging on to my account over and over again, sometimes 100 times a day. Now I spend maybe 75 percent of my day online checking e-mail, casting Websites, MySpace and Facebook. Then I will circle back and recheck all of them continuously. On many nights, I have stayed up until 4:00 a.m. doing this. I have even been late for auditions because I was online. Now I find it hard to communicate any other way — like when I got a message from a casting director who said to call back immediately, and I e-mailed him instead. Of course, he never got back to me.

It’s just easier for me to stay behind a computer screen than deal with small talk. A few months ago, I said I would attend a friend’s performance, but at the last minute I decided to stay home and surf the Web. I barely talk to some of my best friends, and if I do, it’s through Facebook. I am opening up to my therapist about my reliance on the Internet and its effect on my relationships, but I am not sure that cutting back is realistic. There are a lot of breaks during TV and film shoots, so I keep my phone close by so I can check my messages.

*(as told to Jihan Thompson)*

*Marty Laska, Director of EAP and Private Practice, Source One, Wooster will be speaking at the RSVP Recovery Conference on the topic “Numbing Our Lives With Addictions.” See registration information on the insert.*

## Save the Date

### Wayne Holmes Mental Health & Recovery Board Annual Meeting Tuesday, September 29

The speaker will be Paolo del Vecchio. Mr. del Vecchio is the Associate Director Consumer Affairs for the Federal Center for Mental Health Services at SAMSHA. He is a self-identified mental health consumer/survivor. Mr. del Vecchio has been identified in the consumer/survivor self-help movement for over a decade, and in his present capacity with SAMHSA, he manages the Center’s present-setting activities in addressing consumer participation and education, issues of discrimination and stigma, consumer rights and others. We welcome him as our Annual Meeting speaker and look forward to his message. More details about the evening’s schedule will follow.



## Recovery Board

OF WAYNE & HOLMES COUNTIES

2345 Gateway Drive, Suite C  
Wooster, Ohio 44691

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### Our Mission

The Mental Health & Recovery Board is the local governmental authority responsible for mental health and substance abuse treatment. Its role is to assess, plan, organize, fund and give oversight to community services for mental health treatment and alcohol and drug prevention and treatment.

#### Need to contact us?

330-264-2527

1-800-400-6518

330-674-5772

Fax: 330-264-7879

## Provider Network

### CATHOLIC CHARITIES SERVICES OF WAYNE COUNTY\*

521 Beall Avenue, Wooster, Ohio  
330-262-7836



### OUTREACH COMMUNITY LIVING SERVICES

337 West North Street, Wooster, Ohio  
330-263-0862



### CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME OF OHIO\*

2685 Armstrong Road, Wooster, Ohio  
330-345-7949  
Toll Free: 1-800-643-9073



### STEPS AT LIBERTY CENTER

Gault Liberty Center  
Wooster: 330-264-8498  
Toll Free: 1-877-275-9277  
Orrville: 330-683-2601



### THE COUNSELING CENTER OF WAYNE AND HOLMES COUNTIES

2285 Benden Drive, Wooster, Ohio  
Wooster: 330-264-9029  
Toll Free: 1-877-264-9029  
Millersburg: 330-674-6697  
Orrville: 330-683-5106  
Rittman: 330-925-5466



### THE VILLAGE NETWORK\*

P.O. Box 518, 2803 Akron Road, Smithville, Ohio  
Wooster: 330-264-3232  
Toll Free: 1-800-638-3232



### EVERY WOMAN'S HOUSE

Gault Liberty Center  
104 Spink Street, Wooster, Ohio  
Wooster: 330-263-6021  
Millersburg: 330-674-1020  
Hotline: 330-263-1020 or 1-800-686-1122



### YOUR HUMAN RESOURCE CENTER OF WAYNE AND HOLMES COUNTIES

2587 Back Orrville Road, Wooster, Ohio  
Wooster: 330-264-9597  
Toll Free: 1-800-721-YHRC  
Millersburg: 330-674-4608  
Rittman: 330-927-2244  
Orrville: 330-682-4800



These agencies are part of the Mental Health & Recovery Board's network and receive public funds. They provide designated services to residents of Wayne and Holmes counties, regardless of the client's ability to pay.

\*Some benefit restrictions may apply.

## FAIR TIME

Stop by and see the Mental Health and Recovery Booth at the Fairs: Holmes County Fair August 17-22 and the Wayne County Fair September 12-17. The Mental Health Coalition, Help Me Grow and various provider agencies will be sharing the booth, so there will be a wealth of information and friendly faces — along with a fun game and prizes!

