

December 10 2014: “Dealing with Adversity,” Donald Loring Brown



At 36 years old, without a high-school education and unable to walk due to injury, Donald Brown took advantage of a free course offered by Mount Wachusett Community College. He went on to receive a full scholarship to Amherst College, where he studied African American History and Literature and History, then graduated from Harvard Law School.

Prior to attending college and law school, Mr. Brown served briefly in the military and pursued a career in semi-professional sports. He has owned and managed several businesses.

In 2007, Brown authored *The Morphine Dream*, a chronicle of his overcoming adversity. Donald Brown will be signing/selling his book after his talk.

January 14 2015: “From Bipolar to Schizophrenia: Understanding the Biological Basis,”

Joanne Wojcik, PhD, APRN, and Corin Pilo-Comtois, LMHC



The Commonwealth Research Center at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center has been conducting mental-health research for over 25 years. In this presentation the speakers will share their findings on the biological basis of mental illness, discuss the development of research with next steps in the field, and highlight the importance of participating in studies.

Joanne Wojcik, PhD, APRN, is a psychiatric nurse, clinical nurse specialist, and an Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. She received her MS and PhD from the Connell School of Nursing at Boston College. She has worked in research for over 30 years with a current focus on the first episode of psychosis and understanding the biological basis of psychosis. She is Associate Director of the Commonwealth Research Center of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and is based at the new Massachusetts Mental Health Center. She conducts clinical assessments, provides training and supervision, and is the Study Director for several studies. She has co-authored a number of scientific articles and book chapters.

Corin Pilo-Comtois, LMHC, is the Director of Patient Recruitment for the Commonwealth Research Center at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. She provides outreach to the community on recognizing early risk for psychosis and current research project highlights. She supervises recruitment activity for all Commonwealth Research Center and Psychosis Research Program studies. She is the primary contact for all research participation questions, concerns, and eligibility screenings. Corin is also an outpatient therapist in private practice.

January 28 2015: “Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Psychiatry,” David Mischoulon, MD, PhD



Dr. Mischoulon will review various popular complementary and alternative therapies that have applications in psychiatry. He will cover natural products such as St John’s Wort, Omega-3 Fatty Acids, SAME, kava, valerian, melatonin, and ginkgo. He will also discuss other modalities such as acupuncture and yoga for treating depression and other psychiatric conditions.

The lecture will cover the pros and cons of these therapies, and will give general guidelines as to who may or may not benefit from such therapies, as well as give general safety guidelines that should be followed when using these treatments

Dr. David Mischoulon graduated in 1994 from the combined MD-PhD program at Boston University School of Medicine. He completed his residency in Psychiatry at MGH in 1998 and is currently Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, and Director of Research and Alternative Remedy Studies at the Depression Clinical and Research Program of MGH.

He has received research funding from the National Alliance for Research in Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD), the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Dr. Mischoulon is also an accredited acupuncturist and has carried out research on acupuncture for depression. He has more than 180 publications, including a textbook on natural medications for psychiatric disorders. He has spoken nationally and internationally to professional and lay audiences.

February 11 2015: “Breaking Down Stigma,” Katie Mathews, BS



Katie Mathews is a native of Portland, Maine who graduated from Bowdoin College in 2012 with a degree in Chemistry. She moved to Boston and started work under a national grant that provides funds for research on burn injuries. Katie currently does research with burn patients at three major Boston hospitals: Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, Shriners Hospital for Children, and Massachusetts General Hospital.

Katie is also an avid rugby player, and has been ever since a young age when her parents, both ruggers in their days, introduced her to the sport.

After having suffered from severe depression for five years and finding no relief in traditional treatments, Katie sought the treatment of ECT, electroconvulsive therapy. Katie will describe her initial battle with depression, and her positive experience undergoing ECT.

February 25 2015: “Better Days,” Craig Lewis, CPS



Craig Lewis is a Certified Peer Specialist in Massachusetts working as part of an outreach team in Boston. He also tours the country speaking about his lived experience. He has struggled with mental health issues throughout his life; however, he has transformed this into a life of wellness.

Craig has authored and published Better Days -A Mental Health Recovery Workbook, based on his personal life and recovery. Craig has also edited and published “You’re Crazy” – Volume One, first-hand accounts of people from the punk-rock scene who live with mental illness, addiction and trauma.

Craig will share his experiences with mental health issues, recovery, becoming a Certified Peer Specialist, and radically improving his life. WWW.BETTERDAYSRECOVERY.COM

Craig’s books, Better days-A Mental Health Recovery Workbook, and “You’re Crazy”- Volume One, will be available for sale.