

KEEPING UP WITH TEMPO

MARCH 2012

The Loss of Hope That Broke Me

Being a teenager is tough. Growing up is difficult enough without the added stresses the world throws at you. Teenagers are emotional and unpredictable, and that's what makes them so remarkable. They are often the ones who need the most love and are given the least. This is how I knew an internship at CLINKS was perfect for me. Their active outreach to young people and willingness to help sets them apart in more ways than one. The young adults who walk through their doors are simply in need of guidance and the resources they need to succeed. Most importantly, they need somebody to tell them that they can.

I know all too well how difficult the teenage years can be. It's those years that tested my strength and pushed me to the edge, and they made me the young woman that I am today. Through my personal struggles I saw how horrible life can be if you let it, and how beautiful it can be if you change it.

I was fourteen when my dad passed away. It was sudden and unexpected, and my life crumbled around me. My mother was left with me and my three brothers, the youngest only eight. I took it upon myself to be strong for my family, and believed if I hid my emotions it would be easier on everyone. I threw on a smile and pretended it was okay. If I was alright, that was one less burden on us all. The following year was tough, but life moved along, and so did I. High school brought with it a thousand added stresses, and I began taking out my frustration on myself. My self-esteem had always been low and was dwindling every day. I cut myself for the first time when I was fifteen. To this day I have no idea why. All I know is that it brought a relief unlike anything else, and my life was never the same. The habit continued for over a year without a single person knowing. My junior year of high school a friend noticed my arm and told a teacher. My mother was called and I was sent to counseling. Over the next year I was diagnosed with depression, prescribed a slew of antidepressants, sent to hospitals, counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, attended group therapy, and spent a week in outpatient treatment. By my senior year I was severely depressed, a heavy self-mutilator, and suicidal. I used to pray every night that something would just kill me so I wouldn't have to do it myself.

When I think of where I was then, I'm surprised I'm still here now. It wasn't the depression or self-loathing that sent me into the dark. It was the loss of hope that broke me. When you no longer have hope,

you don't have much at all. I remember begging God to fix me or send me someone who could. I pleaded for happiness day after day. All I wanted to be light again.

I remember the day my life changed. I was sitting on the floor with a blade in my hand. I was staring into emptiness and felt nothing at all. And as I looked down at the cuts and burns, something inside me said "you don't deserve this." I don't know where it came from, or why it came at all, but I listened, and I believed it. In no way am I implying that I miraculously healed that day. I rose and fell hard many times again. But that was the day I stopped hating myself. I began to accept that I wasn't perfect, but my flaws were alright. I found a respect for myself, and eventually a love. What I hadn't realized before was that nobody else could fix me. I had to do that on my own. Once I learned to accept who I was, my mistakes didn't seem so bad. I found a strength in myself I never knew I had. Nobody knew how far I had fallen. Only I could know how high I could rise.

The struggle I went through taught me more about life than I could have even been taught. I believe that one has to face death in order to see life. Some of the happiest people are those who have been through the worst. And nobody can help you if you aren't willing to help yourself. All of my suffering would serve no use if I didn't share what I learned. If I can show others how to find their strength, it was all worth it.

I understand that as a Peer Mentor, I will meet young adults in situations beyond my worst days. I can't comprehend what some must go through in their lives. Situations like addiction, homelessness, and abuse are inconceivable, and I could never compare my circumstances to theirs. I do however believe that once you have seen darkness, in some way, you understand. I'm empathetic to anyone struggling in life, and if nothing else, can offer support. I believe that regardless of our differences, we are all alike. We all want to be happy, and we all want to be heard. And everybody has a story if you take the time to listen.

-Jessiqua



WELCOME

Welcome Caroline!

Tempo recently received a grant from the Metro West Health Foundation allowing us to hire a part-time nurse at Tempo. Thank you Metro West Health Foundation & welcome Caroline!!

Caroline joined Wayside's main Campus as a Registered Nurse in May 2011. Before that, she worked over 10 years with children, young adults and their families in many aspects of nursing. One of Caroline's greatest passions is helping young people through all phases of their lives! Caroline will help young adults from Tempo navigate the healthcare system, provide behavioral health education, answer questions regarding physical health and help young adults find a primary care doctor. Caroline loves spending time with her family & friends, traveling, and loves fashion and makeup. She is also a huge sports fan! Welcome to Tempo Caroline, we are excited to have you join our team!



Welcome Ryan!

Tempo would like to welcome Ryan! He is currently a student at Mass Bay College pursuing a degree in Human Services and will be interning at Tempo until May. Ryan has a lot of experience working with children and families and is excited to learn more about Wayside and other social service agencies in the community. He is a former football athlete and a devoted Boston sports fan!! Yolanda recently said "Ryan brings a lot of great energy to the program. He has quickly become part of the Tempo team, and is excited to learn more about Tempo and the young adults that help shape it." Welcome to Tempo Ryan!



Women's History Month

March is National Women's History Month. It was first established on March 8th, 1911 when Europe celebrated the first Women's Day; however here in the United States, women were still fighting for equality, and no such day was being celebrated. In the 1970's women started to take offense to the fact that women were unrecognized in the history of America with no mention of their names or their accomplishments. So in the mid 1970s many American universities began to include Women's history in their curriculum. In 1978 California established a Women's history week in March which coincided with international women's day, which was March 8th. In 1987 The U.S. Congress officially designated March National Women's History month and since that year every President has issued a proclamation of this. The purpose of Women's History Month is to increase the consciousness and knowledge of women's history: to take one month of the year to remember the contributions of both ordinary and notable women. The hope is that the day will soon come when it's impossible to teach or learn about our history without remembering some of the contributions made by incredible women.



Being a Peer Mentor

A peer mentor is an important position here at Community Links. With this job there are certain requirements that one must follow and certain expectations that one must meet. A peer mentor must be a young adult and a good role model for their fellow young adults. You need to set a good example for anyone you meet at TEMPO and CLINKS. You also can offer support to young adults that come to Tempo needing assistance, whether it's needing a ride somewhere or just wanting to talk.

At Tempo I have gotten to know many young adults. Every Wednesday one of our young adults comes into the office. I always make sure to sit down with him to see how he is doing and listen while he shares his stories. Another aspect of my work here is street outreach. It gives us the opportunity to reach out to young adults in the surrounding area and offer them support and resources. One experience that really affected me was my work with a young adult from Northbridge, MA. I met him during a trip to DTA, and got to know more about him. I found that we had a lot in common, and when DTA told him to come back another time, I was happy to take him. The following day I picked him up and brought him to Worcester. We were able to get him a new appointment and eventually food stamps. It was cool to work closely with a young adult and be able to make a small difference in this young man's life. -Nick



SHOUTOUTS!

Jarrid is moving into his own apartment this Friday! He has been looking for an a apartment for 2 months and is thrilled to finally be living on his own!

Mathew got a new job last month!

Tim and Alyssa moved into their new apartment last weekend !

Intern Catherin got accepted to Becker College!



St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick's Day is the cultural and religious holiday celebrated on March 17th. Until the 1970s, it was only acknowledged as a minor holiday in Ireland. It's said that the holiday was popularized in America by Irish-Americans, and is now celebrated in Great Britain, Canada, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland, making it the most widely celebrated Saints day in the world. St. Patrick's Day began as a feast day in the early 17th century as is now a celebration of Irish culture in general. The official color of the holiday was originally blue. The wearing of green ribbons and shamrocks began in the early 17th century. In the 1798 rebellion, soldiers wore all green uniforms in the hopes of drawing attention, and made a huge political statement. The recognized symbol of the holiday, the three-leaved shamrock, was used by Saint Patrick to represent the Holy trinity to the pagan Irish. St. Patrick's Day is celebrated differently all over the world. Argentina has all-night street parties, while Canada boasts the longest running St. Patrick's Day parade in North America. Festivities in the U.S. include the traditional dinner of corn beef and cabbage, and wearing green .



TEMPO's Hours

Monday and Wednesday 9am-8pm

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am-5pm