

# Peer Perspective

Learning when to say “Yes” or when to say “No” seemed to me to be a no brainer but that is exactly what I was doing, “No Braining” it. When I was diagnosed with a mental illness I just simply did not care and I wanted to have fun. Then came the consequences. The consequences of not giving my brain time to heal.

I noticed people with the same diagnosis not only getting better but having fun healing safely. I wanted a part of this “New” concept of giving myself a chance. The first thing I did was move into Adult Foster Care because I needed to have a safe environment. At first the concept of Adult Foster Care was all negative stigmas in my eyes; I thought I would stay to myself and just use it as a stepping stone to move on when I had my own two feet on the ground. Oh was I wrong. There were people just like me that moved in with the same hopes and the same dilemmas. I was taking myself through a healing process getting stable on medications, having healthy fun with my room mates, and most importantly giving my brain a rest from trauma, drugs, and alcohol.

I made it a point that if I had to make a decision yes or no I would ask myself 1. Is it good for my healing process meaning is it going to set me back? 2. Being on some financial assistance is this choice even fair to where I am at in my life at this point. Is it appropriate?

I struggled that first year but I had made up my mind I was going to be a participant with the activities and outings put on by the Adult Foster Care and also the Mental Health Center. I had to tell myself even if I don’t need it I can go say “hello” to those that did need it and that got me out of my shell and really corrected the stigmas I had about not only others with a mental illness but also myself.

I now live on my own, I work for the mental health center, and I am happier than I have ever been. Those friends I made in Adult Foster Care are still some of my best friends.

Thank you,

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