

## It is OK to get help for what ails you

by Marsha in Kansas

When I started my downward spiral after hospitalization, I was asked to quit my trade school classes and take a break from the stress of it all. It was a nice way of saying we don't want you to come back. I couldn't handle the stress of marriage so I divorced my second husband. He got main custody of my daughter but I got half custody of her during her last year of school. She came to live with me full-time.

I got a job working three hours a week. I did this job for three years then I started my own Consumer Run Organization called the Open Door, Inc., where I'm Executive Director. It's OK to have a Mental Illness there. It is OK to get help for what ails you. I encourage people to go out to do other things that they want to do. I was hospitalized five times over a period of three years from 1985 to 1990. It took me 10 years of treatment to get a doctor to find the best medication for me. After that, I wrote 11 grants and was successful with 10 of them. I married again in 2003. I'm battling a little stress with depression but I cannot afford the extra therapy for myself because my husband can't work. He has depression and I have to pay for his medication and doctor visits because he doesn't have health insurance or a paying job. He does try to work but he has A.D.H.D. and he can't remember instructions if they are long. He tried to get on disability but was denied.

I am an artist at heart. I draw with pencil and ink, and oil paint, watercolor, and acrylic. I draw and paint people, animals, plants, cars, towns, and landscapes. I like to put my own idea of what color to use in a picture.

My life is good because for the most part. I would like to have some extra therapy for a while. I take care of my mother she has demetia and I have to lift her a lot. I don't trust just anyone with her because I love her too much.

My friends at the Open Door Inc. are good to me and mom and they try to help as much as they can. I consider myself well with medication--I just need a little therapy for support.