

Women Moving Forward© Graduates Newsletter

August 2006

NOT GUILTY BY REASON OF INSANITY.....

For John and I, and all social service people we know, this was quite a victory.

It means even “your average jury in Texas” can understand the subtle nuances of what a mental illness is.

For those of you who don't know, Andrea Yates, who killed her children in a bathtub several years ago, who was sentenced to life imprisonment, had a second trial and was just was found guilty by reason of insanity. Her history was the definition of insanity. Andrea had a severe mental illness for which she was hospitalized several times. Her mental illness was excasperated by a very severe form of Postpartum Depression called Postpartum Psychosis. She heard voices, visually hallucinated and generally was not emotionally available for over 5 years before the incident.

She continued to have children after her first Postpartum Psychosis, even though the psychiatrist at the mental hospital told she and her husband not to have anymore children (they had three at the time) and to keep her on medication at all costs. She went to another “doctor” who took her off her medication – the only thing keeping her somewhat sane – so she could get pregnant again – something her husband wanted.

And the day of the incident, her husband left her alone with the children for 2 hours so he could be on time for work – even though his mother was not there to watch Andrea and the children. This was an arrangement her husband made for her since even he noticed she wasn't capable anymore.

So what does this verdict mean and why are all of us in the mental health field happy?

First it means maybe just maybe, there will be more understanding for mental illness. Maybe other people will submit to quality treatment without being afraid of being “locked up.”

Second it means women with Postpartum Depression will be seen as having a real mental illness not just some made up fake one. It also means people get it that there are gradations of mental illness and Andrea Yates had one of the most severe.

Third we hope people get it – You can't ignore someone this mentally ill. It won't go away with love and rest. It's a condition as real as cancer that needs to be treated as seriously as cancer. By the way, it isn't confined to just the community you live in, it shows up at work too!

Fourth As Andrea's lawyer so eloquently put it, “ kids deserve to have parents as free from mental illness as possible.” I've been waiting a long time to hear someone say that out in public. Kids deserve to have parents who are as sane as possible or we doom the next generation to mental illness as well.

All of you graduates of WMF know how important sane parenting was or would have been to you – you all went through the completion exercise! Some of you know what having mentally ill parents do to you and how it follows you into adulthood and to work.

Fifth and lastly We hope it makes you all demand the quality of mental health care you all deserve and your families deserve, regardless of what country or city you live in or what company you work for.

Start forcing your governments and companies to allocate the money for quality mental health care.

Remember, children deserve the most mentally healthy parents they can have – make sure you remember that and maybe just maybe we can prevent another tragedy.

2007 Courses

Women Moving Forward®

January 17-19 and June 5-7, 2007

We have only two community based workshops scheduled for 2007. Only 20 spaces are left for the entire year. If you have anyone to refer to Women Moving Forward ® let us know so we can reserve one of the 20 remaining spaces for them.

If you plan to observe or review the WMF® workshop in January or June, contact us to make sure we have space available.

NOTE to P & G WMF® Graduates: We will return to Caracas Venezuela to do two additional WMF workshops February 27 – March 1 and March 6-8, 2007.

If you plan to be in the area and would like to observe there, contact us so we can reserve a space for you. There are now over 60 graduates in the region, so space will be limited.

Women's Leadership Retreat

May 8-10, 2007

This very special retreat is designed to have women continue an important life affirming conversation each year.

Many of our past attendees return each year. Because of that, there are only 5 of 12 spaces still available. To attend you must be a WMF® graduate and have made use of that course in your life and further you must have a conversation with Susan to make sure you are capable of joining the conversation.

Advanced Women Moving Forward®

October 4-6, 2006

This is a faster and deeper version of the WMF® course. It gives graduates of WMF® the opportunity to continue the learning process in a less formal setting.

There are only 10 spaces available. To reserve one of those spaces, give us a call.

Managing Corporate Change

August 22-24, 2006

If you have ever had to manage through a change this course is for you. It teaches you the people skills needed for effective change management. We have rescheduled this class to August so that three of our clients could attend. There are 9 spaces left so if you want to be included let us know.

Productive Relationships

September 12-14, 2006 and January 23-25, 2007

Managers today are asked to handle a diverse range of communication challenges. This course trains you in techniques that will help you do your job successfully no matter what the communication challenge. You will leave the course with the skills to confront and handle confrontation, to listen and determine what someone is really saying. To register contact our office.

SPECIAL NOTE

Women Moving Forward® Graduates Dinners

Monday, September 18th in Cincinnati, Ohio

Sunday, November 5th in Scottsdale, Arizona

Please call if you are interested in attending.

A Special Request From Susan

Hello All

Some of you know that we have been working very hard to get an appointment at Children's Hospital in Cincinnati for Andres, the 8 month old son of Iris Ocando, one of our newest Women Moving Forward® Graduates from P & G Venezuela. Andres was born with multiple birth defects and Iris decided she needed to bring him to the US to be seen at Children's.

With help and the intentions from so many of you, Susan Rust's sister-in-law (Susan is a WMF® grad), Lori, a Pediatrician who trained at Children's in Cincy, was able to get through the red tape and get Andres an appointment to be seen this month at Children's.

I think Iris now knows first hand the power of the Women Moving Forward® network and the power of women!

As of now the medical coverage Iris has with P & G Venezuela will not pay the hospital until after there is a diagnosis, or, if it not an acceptable diagnosis, not at all. So we have asked Cincinnati Children's Hospital to establish a fund in Andres' name that any of you can donate to. If we raise more money then is needed, we plan to keep that money in the fund in case Andres need further treatment or if another child from our WMF® Network needs our support at Children's.

If you would like to donate you can send checks or money orders (no cash please) to:

Cincinnati Children's Hospital
660 Lincoln Ave, 2nd floor
Cincinnati OH 45206
Attn: Bob Pfriem, Manager

Make checks or money orders payable to:

Cincinnati Children's Hospital and put Andres Lobo Ocando on the memo line or it will not be applied to his fund.

Any donation of any kind would be welcome. There is no donation too small. We even have a Girl Scout Troop in Pa. Using this as their fundraising project.

If you are unable to make a donation, we need you to please keep Andres in your prayers. That is just as important as any donation.

Thank you for all of the WMF® support for this beautiful child.
Please feel free to pass this on to whoever you think may be interested.

We are the most powerful when we use our network to support each other!