

Redefined: Owning Recreation

(0:25) My name is Latosha Gibson. I am an aunt a friend a creator and I am just who I am.

(0:37) Ok I am, my name is Carolyn Gaines.

(0:40) My name is Paula Demore.

(0:42) My name is Dennis Lentz, I was born and raised in Loudon County, I'll be 58 years old in March, and I have a nice family.

(0:58) My name is Terence Batson, I have been receiving mental health services all of my adult life. I was first diagnosed with schizophrenia at the age of 18.

(1:13) Latosha Gibson: My mental health started I think I believe as a young child, I was depressed because of my environment. If things weren't the way they should have, or if I'd see things that weren't really how they were supposed to be, that depressed me as a child because when I went to Suzie's, or Marks, or Laquesha's house I could tell that there was a difference between when I was at my house it was total dysfunction and chaos.

(1:43) Carolyn Gaines: I had a nervous breakdown, I was going to Temple, I was working at Children's Hospital, and working at LaSalle College. And I had a nervous breakdown and I wanted to walk in front of a bus. And that was very terrifying, I was doing too much all at one time and it was too much for me, and my daughter got me over to a friend's hospital on the boulevard and she turned around and got me help there. But I really didn't get the help that I needed until I came here.

(2:25) Terence Batson: I had multiple hospitalizations, I went to college but I wasn't able to complete college because of my mental illness. I went into the United States Airforce and I had a nervous breakdown there.

(2:43) Latosha Gibson: In college it started getting to me the most, I had behaviors and side effects that I was doing, symptoms that classified me to have a mental health disorder. It started with not eating, staying in the bed, being very compulsive just cleaning and cleaning, compulsively. Like if I saw dirt I would pick the rug with my bare hands, I swept at least seven times a day.

(3:21) Paula Demore: I have racing thoughts, I couldn't get my thoughts together, and I didn't want to be seen with anybody because I feared they would find out that I had a mental illness.

(3:33) Dennis Lentz: I was an alcoholic and drug addict at a young age, I was only living for myself and it wasn't very nice.

(3:42) Carolyn Gaines: I started hearing voices, and the voices were telling me to hurt myself, and the people around me I thought were making fun of me, and talking about me and different things. And that led up to my breakdown, I wasn't getting any sleep.

(4:03) Latosha Gibson: I knew that if I didn't seek help that with my suicidal thoughts, I would have been a goner.

(4:09) Paula Demore: What brought me here was my being reclusive in my house, I couldn't go out I couldn't enjoy going out and being with other people. It made me a shut in, people would come to the house and I would say "no I don't want to see anybody". So I went to the program so I could get some help and I could be out of the house, and from being here I've ran into friends and I started talking to them and going places with them, and with Natasha and them , and it really got me going. It got my mind going I wasn't thinking in weird ways and my thoughts were connecting and I really felt good about myself.

(5:02) Dennis Lentz: Natasha and I got along real well, we work well with each other. She taught me a lot and I'm sure she learned from me, she taught me how to get out in the community and do things on my own, and to observe everything around me and what I like and what I don't like I don't have to accept.

(5:24) Paula Demore: Ok me and Natasha would go out every week to the library and look up places to go like the park and stuff. We went to one of the parks, Dilworth Park one day and there was a concert going on and we got something to eat and a soda and we watched the concert and then went home.

(5:54) Latosha Gibson: My godmother she came into my life she was an angel sent to me, and she introduced me to the community. How I was to give back and keep my mind busy and use my mind in a positive way.

(6:00) Terence Batson: Another thing I like to do, well one thing I used to like to do when I was younger was, I felt very creative and I used to write song lyrics and poems

(6:12) Latosha Gibson: Singing played a big part in my life. Singing saved part of me. Lyrics of songs really spoke life to dead areas in my life.

(6:28) Paula Demore: I draw portraits and I paint watercolors.

(6:34) Peter: And when do you do this art?

(6:36) Paula Demore: Whenever I can find opportunity to do it at home or someplace else. I used to draw rock stars faces in pencil.

(6:46) Carolyn Gaines: Our community, getting out into the community, going to church, different places, going out with my peers, and different people so I can turn around and try to be as active as I can normally be

(7:03) Paula Demore: I met this one girl who has the same problem that I do at church, and it was Palm Sunday and we talked to her and she said, "Yeah I come to church even by myself and I meet people who want to be my friend."

(7:20) Terence Batson: And another thing that I do is I'm very involved with a church. Back when I was having some difficulty, back around 2003, you know, I had a battle with addiction again, and I went back into treatment myself. In the process of doing that I was at a facility where the owner of the facility was a member of a church and he made it mandatory for people who lived in the house to go to the church. I went to this church and I fell in love with it, you know I loved it, and I just continued to go.

(8:02) Carolyn Gaines: I learn something every day when I come and present things to the class and at the community meeting. Because you learn something, you know? You're never too big to learn

(8:20) Linda Williams: Now since I come here one day a week, I've been getting my freedom back to help me get out and going to the Y, got me out going to swimming, got me doing groups at the Y. I'm getting ready to start it this weekend.

(8:39) Paula Demore: Now I have friends here who come over to my house and they said that I looked better and I act better and I'm more focused.

(8:52) Carolyn Gaines: I've learned not to look down at a person, and thinking you're better than them, because you're not

(9:02) Linda Williams: Right now I'm at a point, I have a title each year that I have to change. They got to change each year, that's a title. Now I got to think about another title for January that I can have.

(9:17) Peter Zook: So what's this year's title?

(9:19) Linda Williams: This year's got to change

(9:21) Paula Demore: I've come a long way since then. I've been reaching out and branching out. I learned through me and others to reach out and hold conversations and friendships and even have a boyfriend

(9:36) Peter Zook: So what's it like to have these new relationships?

(9:41) Paula Demore: They're like gold to me. You never know how much you will profit by coming here.

(9:55) Latosha Gibson: I believe that when you have things to do positive in the community, you have a positive outcome in recovering with your mental health. Every day is a challenge with your mental health but if you challenge yourself to find what you can do to make it better, I believe you have a better chance at life and you can make it through.