

Addressing Trauma, Shame, and Healing

For many of us, trauma and shame is often at the source of our voices, our held beliefs about ourselves, our visions, and our extreme experiences. Unaddressed, these traumatic memories can continue to haunt us. For many of us our voices often sound like an abuser, represent unmet emotions, and try to protect or warn us. 70 to 80% of us have a voice or voices that reflect traumatic memories and emotions.

Trauma often comes up as problematic related beliefs, with statements like: *I should have known better, I did something wrong, or I cannot be trusted.* They come up around safety: *I cannot trust myself, I cannot trust anyone, I am in danger, I am not safe, and I cannot show my emotions.*

Trauma also comes up around choice, saying things like: *I am not in control, I have to be perfect/please everyone, I am weak, I am trapped, I have no options*

They can also come up around issues and feelings of power: *I cannot get what I want, I cannot succeed, I cannot stand up for myself, I am powerless/helpless.*

Our hearing voices groups are safe places to explore these often painful traumatic related emotions and beliefs. In a safe place with others who have also often experienced trauma we can address our feelings of shame and guilt. In this safe place we can be seen, heard, and validated. By expressing our feelings we can play a role in our own healing and rescue. These groups are also safe places to connect with others and reduce our isolation. Through learning and sharing with each other, we can learn new ways of equipping ourselves with new information that is empowering and healing.

(From Wildflower Alliance)

Save the Date: World Hearing Voices Congress October 26th & 27th in Paris

Yann DeRobert and his team at REV France are now accepting workshop proposals from all over the world. The theme of the 14th World Congress is "Breaking the Spell of Consensus Reality: Welcoming Every Human Experience". For more info go to: paris2023@rev

Berkeley Launches Specialized Care Unit (SCU)

People in Berkeley suffering a mental health or substance use crisis – or those seeking to help them – now have another option to get in-person professional support besides calling 911 and directly involving law enforcement. With one phone call, trained staff will conduct an initial intake, assess whether there are immediate medical or safety concerns, and evaluate the crisis.

The SCU is Berkeley's first independent crisis response team that does not include the police. This care-based team will use trained expertise to help community members experiencing a crisis. In response to the killing of George Floyd in 2020 a conversation emerged about how public safety can be done differently. The city developed a vision for a 24/7 crisis response without police involvement to support people experiencing a non-violent crisis.

Community members who are experiencing or witnessing a crisis can call (510) 948-0075 to request SCU services. Community members will be asked general questions about themselves and the crisis. Staffed by the mental health-focused nonprofit Bonita House, this unit will operate seven days a week, from 6:00 am to 4:00 pm. The goal is to eventually build up this service to be available at any time, day or night. It will serve all ages and respond to public and private locations. If you or someone you want to help needs in-person support, call during those hours or leave a voicemail:

Specialized Care Unit
6:00 am - 4:00 pm, 7 days a week
(510) 948-0075



Why We Sued To End CARE Court

By Helen Tran of the Western Center on Law and Poverty

An unprecedented number of Californians live on the streets and face severe mental illness. It is gut wrenching to see. The CARE Act accurately describes this humanitarian crisis but prescribes a wrong, inhumane solution. Not only is creating this new court system to round up individuals unconstitutional, it is bad policy subject to pervasive societal biases and disproven methods of treating mental illness. That is why on January 26, Disability Rights California, Western Center on Law & Poverty, and the Public Interest Law Project sued Governor Newsom to put an end to CARE Court.

Contrary to some strong opinions that CARE Court is “California’s only real plan for helping our most vulnerable and seriously mentally ill,” Governor Newsom never planned to truly provide behavioral health treatment and housing through this bill. The CARE Act does not mandate counties to provide behavioral health treatment or housing; it creates no new rights or benefits for people with schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders who are summoned to court to join the CARE process.

So, if not guaranteeing behavioral health or housing services, what does the CARE Act provide? The law paves the way to eventually institutionalize people who are unhoused and have schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, out of sight from the very people who support CARE Court.

Biggest lie

The biggest lie about CARE Court is that it is not involuntary treatment. CARE Court is an involuntary, coercive system. There are consequences for not following through with a CARE plan. When a person does not comply with the exact terms of a CARE plan, the court must refer the person for conservatorship with “a presumption . . . the [person] needs additional intervention beyond the supports and services provided by the CARE plan” (Welf. & Inst. Code § 5979(a)(3)). A person who, for any reason, does not follow through their court order, would more easily be conserved and lose their rights to control their own medical care, finances, and housing preferences. No matter how Governor

Newsom and his proponents want to spin CARE Court, the law speaks for itself.

Existing laws already provide for involuntary treatment of persons found dangerous to themselves or others. But the CARE Act takes this a giant step further by permitting a judge to impose restrictions on persons deemed “likely” to become dangerous. Little guidance is offered for judges to make that speculative determination.

No evidence it would be effective

The CARE Act was enacted despite any evidence that it would be effective. As Disability Rights California wrote in May 2022 on behalf of our coalition opposing the CARE Act, voluntary treatment works and involuntary treatment does not:

[N]o studies exist to prove that a court order for outpatient treatment in and of itself has any independent effect on client outcomes. Studies show that any positive effects that result from outpatient commitment are due to the provision of intensive services, and whether court orders have any effect at all in the absence of intensive treatment is an unanswered question.

In determining how we provide medical care and housing for Californians, our civil rights and social policies can co-exist. The state should house people first, then let people decide their course of treatment. The Legislature has not explained why it cannot appropriate resources to fund all medically necessary care and permanent affordable housing for individuals and also protect their dignity and privacy interests at the same time. What is clear is that faced at a moral crossroads, Governor Newsom and the Legislature chose a more politically expedient route instead of a benevolent and effective one. (For more information contact the Western Center on Law and Poverty, 916.442.0753)

BAY AREA HEARING VOICES NETWORK





Join BAHVN on Instagram

We are trying to get the word out about BAHVN on Instagram. If you have photos or artwork you would like to share on BAHVN's Instagram account submit them to Kailin Wang, our Instagram Moderator.

Send to bayareahearingvoices@gmail.com. Please include your name, your Instagram handle, and label the subject line, "Instagram submission".

Be Sure to Fill Out Our BAHVN Surveys

Tell us your thoughts about our hearing voices groups. Every four months we do an anonymous survey of the participants in our hearing voices groups about what they like and/or would like to see improved in our on line groups. The survey is here: <https://forms.gle/tcUCKGeJVjoDtTSt5>. Thanks in advance for helping.

HEARING VOICES GROUPS

The Bay Area Hearing Voices Network offers five, online groups Monday-Friday. To enter the online support group meeting go to our website: www.bayareahearingvoices.org and click on the link for the group you want at the bottom of the page.

Monday Meetings:

BAHVN in partnership with Berkeley Mental Health offers separate support groups for adults and family members. The two separate support groups meet Mondays from 6 to 8 pm.

Tuesday Meeting:

BAHVN in partnership with Berkeley Mental Health offers an online adult support group Tuesday evenings from 6 to 8 pm led by trained facilitators with lived experience in the mental health system.

Wednesday Meeting:

BAHVN, in partnership with the [Mental Health Association of San Francisco](http://www.mhassf.org) (MHASF), offers an online adult support group Wednesday evenings from 6-8 pm.

Thursday Meetings:

The HVN-USA Family and Friends Group (friends, lovers, and caretakers) are welcome) meets online for 90 minutes Thursdays 2:30-4:00 pm PST, 5:50-7:00 pm (EST). To join contact cindy@westernmassrlc.org

BAHVN Game Night, Friday Nights, 5-7 pm:

An online weekly night of fun and games. Game play is free of charge to BAHVN adults, TAY, and family members, All attendees are required to open an [account at boardgamearena.com](http://boardgamearena.com), where the game night will be held online. Go to the [BAHVN homepage](http://www.bahvn.org) for a Zoom audio link to Game Night.

The Bay Area Hearing Voices Network is a non-profit 501c3 organization. We seek to expand public awareness, provide community support, and refuge for those who hear voices, see visions, and experience other forms of extraordinary perception. To submit articles contact edherzog48@gmail.com. For more information about us visit our website: bayareahearingvoices.org