



BUILDING BRIDGES



A publication of Bridges: Domestic & Sexual Violence Support

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Agency Spotlight

By Jennifer Wylie

Spotlight: Vital Cycles and Bob Faw

In July 2007, a group of individuals began to focus on the core issues of healing from the effects of trauma. The six founding board members, who together have decades of experience with healing from the effects of trauma in their personal journeys, created a peer support self-help community called Vital Cycles.

The purpose of Vital Cycles is to empower those who seek joy in living while healing the emotional impact of trauma. It is designed to be one part of a person's support system on their therapeutic path of healing and thriving.

This language alone is a welcomed departure from more traditional work in the trauma field. The core members of Vital Cycles created this fundamental language, as well as the framework for meetings. Each meeting has a Healing Path which focuses on acknowledging the trauma and moving forward. Examples of Healing topics include: Seeing healing as possible and committing to healing; Developing more safety in our life to enhance our healing; Working to have less pain and more joy in our lives; Using our coping skills to carry on in the face of challenges; and meeting our needs in healthier ways.

A core principle of Vital Cycles is the belief that each individual has within themselves a core capacity to understand and empower their individual healing journey. This is referred to our inner wisdom. Vital Cycles groups' help clients tune into the wisdom and intelligence they already have and learn to develop these for more healing. This

eventually enables clients to create healthier and more independent lives.

Bridges has been very fortunate to have Bob Faw, the President of the Board, and a founding member of Vital Cycles, as a resource to help in the work of domestic and sexual violence. Bob has trained a number of advocates in the Vital Cycles model by co-facilitating our adult survivor of childhood sexual abuse group; he has been a guest facilitator in our Teen Sexual Assault group as well as the group for parents, and he has attended our adult Domestic Violence support group. This hands-on training and support has been invaluable both to advocates and group members.

Bob has also facilitated a number of workshops for Bridges staff and volunteers. A core principle to Vital Cycles and Bob's work is to share our knowledge in the goal of helping others. In this spirit, we would like to share some of the highlights from these workshops.

Solution-Focused Language: Looking towards solutions instead of the problem not only changes our language, but reframes how we look at things. This gets both clients and advocates in a more positive frame of mind and working towards goals and solutions.

Options: Providing options is a core service at Bridges, but in some situations, clients may see no available options. In these cases, advocates can help identify three options and ask the client to identify which option has the best chance of working. The next step is to

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Important Information

Bridges
24-hour support line
603.883.3044

Collect calls are accepted, and 150 languages are available via the Language Line.

211
Just dial 2-1-1
www.211nh.org


National Domestic Violence
Hotline
1.800.799.SAFE
1.800.787.3224 TTY

NH Coalition Against
Domestic & Sexual Violence
www.nhcadsv.org
603.224.8893

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Please join us to see what Bridges: Domestic & Sexual Violence Support does to end violence in our community.
Let friends and colleagues know about our tours and encourage them to bring a friend too!

*You are invited to a
Bridges Hope Tour*

Nashua Office on Tuesday, April 17, 2012 - 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm

Please call Pamela at 603-889-0858 extension 214 or email
development@bridgesnh.org to reserve your space. Group size limited. Lunch/Refreshments served.

**Please join us for our 6th Annual Hope Event on
May 16th, 2012 from 5:30pm until 7:30pm
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Nashua**

Would you like to help with the event? Be a table captain? Please contact Pamela



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Survivor Story

with Justine Stamp

“He Came and Stole Me, Just a Child, a Child I wasn’t Allowed to Be”—Kerry

I was a very happy child. I was the youngest of three children and the only girl. So needless to say I was spoiled. My mother was a single mother so we grew up living in the projects. For me it was more of an adventure because of all the kids in the neighborhood, but my mom always wanted to move. Then my mom and I started to attend a new church where she met whom she thought was the man of her dreams. During the beginning of their relationship he started grooming me by taking me out, buying me toys, taking me to the movies, and just by being nice to me.

The first time he touched me was after one of our outings to Burger King, my favorite place to go, I was wearing my favorite pink dress and my new crown. I didn’t want him to touch me, I tried fighting him off but instead he tore my pink dress because he was also physically abusive to me. Then he told me “that was what dads were supposed to do to their daughters”. I was so little

that I didn’t understand that he was lying, that’s not what daddies are supposed to do, and believed him when he told me to keep it a secret. When we got home he lied to my mother about my dress, and after he left I told her the truth but she didn’t believe me.

He continued to abuse me for so long that I was able to tell when it was going to be a good or a bad day. After it happened he always tried to make it up by buying me something or taking me somewhere.

We lived with him for a while and after a few months he and my mother broke it off, but that didn’t stop the abuse because my mother wanted me to have a father figure in my life. At six, I started going to his home every weekend alone. I felt so alone, no one was listening to me, so I stopped talking for over a year. The abuse continued for another six years until I was 12 years old, after pleading with my mother to not make me go. He continued to try to contact me, by phoning and

coming to our house but I was able keep him at a distance.

During my junior year in high school I was sexually assaulted by another student, my chemistry partner. I stayed out of school for a week and when I returned the Clothesline Project was on display in the cafeteria. I remember reading a t-shirt saying “No Means No End Rape!” I just stared at the t-shirt, in shock, holding my lunch tray full of food until the cafeteria emptied and I was alone with two social workers from the local crisis center.

My therapist found Bridges after my local crisis center closed. I started attending the Adult Survivor of Childhood Sexual Assault group in the Milford office. I attended the group for a few months realizing I wasn’t mentally prepared to deal with my past. I’m now 27 years old, and after five years I found Bridges again. I have been attending the Sexual Assault group in the Nashua office for over a year now and have made lifelong friends while learning to heal and find joy again!

Media Review

Abbie Farenwald

Project Unbreakable

In October 2011 Grace Brown, a 19 yr old photography student from NY, started Project Unbreakable. She started this project to help give sexual abuse survivors an outlet for healing. It began with Grace photographing survivors in NY holding posters with quotes from their attackers. She now tours the country and photographs survivors on “project unbreakable photo days”. Survivors can also submit their photos online through the project’s website.

The YouTube video in which Grace talks about the origination of Project Unbreakable has over 70,000 views, the Facebook page has almost 8,000 fans and the Twitter feed has over 1,300 followers. Although there are still many stigmas and misconceptions surrounding sexual assault, social

media has created opportunities for survivors to speak out and interact with their peers in a way that wasn’t possible even 5 years ago.

The photos and the words that accompany them speak volumes. It is hard to stop clicking page after page. Project Unbreakable is “a way for victims to take the power back of the words that were once used against them.” - Yvonne Moss, rape survivor and advocate

Website: projectunbreakable.tumblr.com/

Facebook: [facebook.com/projectunbreakable](https://www.facebook.com/projectunbreakable)

Twitter: twitter.com/#!/projunbreakable

YouTube: [youtube.com/watch?v=5YN](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YN)

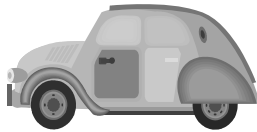
Automobile Donation Program

You can donate your old car, boat, RV, motorcycle, jet ski, and/or snowmobile.....

RUNNING OR NOT; receive a tax deduction and help Bridges raise critical funding to support services to victims/survivors of sexual and domestic violence and stalking.

DONATE A VEHICLE ONLINE NOW!

Just Call: 1-877-CARS-4-US extension 2022



Janice's House Wish List

Right now we are in great need of:

- ~Grocery store gift cards
- ~Shampoo and Conditioner
- ~New Towels
- ~ Cleaning Supplies
- ~New Twin Sheets
- ~Toilet paper

Please join us for a complimentary
Bridges to Hope
 FUNDRAISING COCKTAIL EVENT

Wednesday, May 16, 2012
 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
 The Crowne Plaza Hotel, Nashua

bridges
 domestic & sexual violence support

For more information and to RSVP,
 please contact Pamela at 603-889-0858 ext. 214
 or development@bridgesnh.org

IF UNABLE TO ATTEND, YOUR DONATION WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

Legislative Update

By Ashley Clark

The January 2012 New Hampshire Legislative session has commenced and is now in full swing. There are three bills that are relevant to domestic violence legislation.

HB 158 restricts law enforcement's ability to make an arrest without a warrant in domestic violence cases. The officer would have to witness the abuse with their own eyes, which seriously limits the power they hold, as much abuse takes place behind closed doors and would therefore go unnoticed.

On January 19, the House Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee heard testimony on this bill and several agencies gave testimonies in opposition of this bill. The hearing was then

recessed and will be heard for a vote by the full House in a few weeks.

HB 1608 removes law enforcement's ability to arrest an abuser who violates a restraining order by: failing to relinquish a firearm, by attempting or threatening to use force against the victim and their family, or by damaging the victim's property. Taking away law enforcement's power to arrest those in violation of a restraining order would greatly endanger victims of domestic violence, as that would render the restraining orders useless.

Fortunately, on January 25, this bill was voted Inexpedient to Legislate (ITL) in a 13-0 vote and no further

action will be taken.

Finally, HB 1273 would terminate parental rights of the father in cases where they have pled guilty or were convicted of sexual assault against the birth mother. There are currently similar laws but this would only further protect mothers who have been victims of sexual assault and had a child as a result.

On February 9, this was given an Ought to Pass (OTP) with a 12-2 vote and will also be heard for a vote by the full House in a few weeks.

By: NHCADSV Public Policy Department.

Agency Spotlight continued

focus on that option and ask: "Imagine this option could work; how would it work?" This language shifts the thinking from 'I can't do it' to 'I could do it'.

Resilience: Often clients don't feel able to follow through on options due to the effects of trauma and abuse. Learning how to build emotional resilience is critical to our work at Bridges. Instead of focusing on failures in the past, focus on what you want to do and what you can do in the future. This will help shed past shame and guilt and work towards achieving goals. It will also help clients get in touch with their inner wisdom.

Framework: Vital Cycles not only provides the language, but the necessary framework to assist our clients with moving beyond the trauma. Consider the questions below:

- What trauma have you survived?
- What strengths/insights/support have you gained on your healing path?
- What examples of improvement in your life can you give to show this?
- What are your healing goals and how do you plan to attain them?

The language used in these questions naturally guides us to focus on solutions, which in turn helps us to believe in ourselves.

Bridges is very appreciative of the work Vital Cycles and Bob Faw have done for us and our community. Vital Cycles can also help others in starting a group in their community by providing a core set of recommended concepts and tools, including healing principles and steps. These, along with Community Principles, can be used to support and sustain support groups.

Vital Cycles is a non-profit healing community and fundraising sources include contributions from individuals and groups. Contributions go to support the costs of maintaining Vital Cycles, including the website, the development of literature, sponsoring retreats and other activities. All board members and special advisors serve without pay, and there are no paid professional staff. For more information, please contact Vital Cycles at info@vitalcycles.org or visit their website at www.VitalCycles.org

Thank You for Your Time and Generosity

Mr. Patrick and Mrs. Kimberly Ahearn	Ms. Kimberly A. Geraci	Mr. Bill and Mrs. Trudy Matthews
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 Hearn

In Honor of Christine Houde
 The Ariel Group

In Memory of Janice Chasse
 Mr. Robert and Mrs. Josephine
 Fletcher

Congratulations Trudy and Thank You!

Bridges took the opportunity this year to recognize Trudy Matthews, a most dedicated supporter of Bridges at the Nashua West Rotary Clubs twentieth annual Southern NH Exemplary Workers Recognition Breakfast.

We nominated Trudy for this award because she has tirelessly donated her time to Bridges for six years, on a weekly and sometimes daily basis depending on the needs of the agency.

Trudy started with Bridges as a donor, and quickly became a volunteer. After volunteering for a few years, Trudy became an AmeriCorps court advocate with Bridges out of our Milford office.

During this time, Trudy developed a detailed restraining order brochure for survivors seeking protective orders which has helped many people, and is used in Bridges training program. Trudy worked with many survivors assisting them to obtain restraining orders, coping with the trauma they experi-

enced, in healing and moving forward in their lives. Survivors had many positive things to say about the care and advocacy Trudy provided.

After a one year term in AmeriCorps, Trudy went back to volunteering for the agency. At this point she spent a great deal of timing, energy and talent in helping us to enhance our volunteer program and revamp our volunteer training. This was an intensive process and Trudy was there every step along the way.

During her years with us, Trudy has volunteered on the agency fundraisers and has been instrumental in the planning and success of these events. Trudy continues to volunteer with the agency weekly, facilitating support groups and covering the support line.

We are fortunate to have Trudy as a volunteer!
 A special thank you to Eaton & Berube for sponsoring Trudy.





bridges

domestic & sexual violence support

formerly Rape & Assault Support Services, Inc.

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To eliminate domestic and sexual violence
and provide a safe and empowering environment for victims and survivors

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Thank You.