

Karis Community
1361 Detroit St.
Denver CO 80206
303.355.5546
www.kariscommunity.org

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KARIS COMMUNITY
1361 DETROIT ST
DENVER CO 80206



Karis Community
A Mental Health Agency of Hope and Healing
Serving the Denver Community Since 1976
www.kariscommunity.org (303) 355-5546



Vol 31 No 1

KARIS CONNECTION

Spring 2016

The Karis Community mission is to provide a transitional community living opportunity for restoring basic life skills and improving the social well-being of individuals recovering from serious and persistent mental illness.

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**The Karis Experience
From the Board of Directors**

Today I received a call that my 99-year-old mother had fallen at the nursing home where she has lived for the last two years.

Falling is the reason she is there.

An aid had neglected to use a gait belt (a gait belt is a device used to help people who have problems with balance move from one place to another).

After I hung up the phone, I thought about Karis: It is a kind of community gait belt, helping members move from one place in life to another.

Everyone I know well, I well know has fallen, one way or another, from time to time. Part of the genius of Karis is that the whole community, individually and collectively, is like a gait belt for one another.

One of my favorite sayings is *We can walk alone when we have to, if we walk together when we can.*

Thank you for your support of Karis in our walking—alone and together.

Richard Evans, Ph.D.
Board President



The Karis Experience Community Members in Their Own Words

Growth By Candice

Being here at Karis has been an experience that has opened my eyes to so much that I needed personally that I would have not seen if I did not get accepted into the Community after the applicant dinner.

Prior to Karis I was living with my parents; afraid to move on my own after all my trauma, involved in intense therapy due to my PTSD from trauma, depression, anxiety, sleep deprivation, germophobia and OCD, and managing six medications since 2012 after my suicide attempt and loss of my children to the state due to my actions.

Since I have been at Karis I have a new diagnosis. I am only dealing with mild Depression and only have one medication at this time. I believe this is due to the community setting that is provided by Karis. The structure that is provided with groups, chores, community meetings, sober living environment and weekly check-ins. I am very appreciative to have the opportunity to work on myself here at Karis.

At first it was very scary because I have never been alone and by myself putting my needs first. I am a mother of five children, a mother of a cancer survivor, and myself a survivor of domestic violence.

For years I hid my mental illness and would never talk about it because I was ashamed and thought everyone would judge me. Now I understand that my mental health is nothing to be ashamed of, and that I can share my insight with others to show that it is hard work but it is possible to live healthy and be a productive member of society.

I am now employed as a receptionist at the Mental Health Center of Denver, and have successfully graduated the Culinary program with 2Succeed, successful in therapy.

I have a restored relationship with my family. Most of all my children have given me a second chance after our intense family therapy and successfully been given custody of them back.

I am thankful for Karis and all it is providing for me. I have learned how to put my needs first and create healthy boundaries with family and my community at Karis. Most of all I have learned how to laugh and cry again. I am so excited to see how much more change is to come during my duration at Karis.

Thank you for all that Karis provides for those, like me with Mental Health Issues.

The Karis Experience Community Members in Their Own Words

Gratefully, Sylvia

In May 2015 it was highly recommended that I make an appointment for an intake and evaluation at the Mental Health Center of Denver. The psychiatrist I interviewed with diagnosed me with Mania, Non-Specific Anxiety, and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, three conditions I was familiar with.

After learning the news of my condition, I spent the first week processing this reality, sharing with others my relief, wonder, bewilderment, fear, and absolute confusion. I did not know what to do with the rest of my life or how to begin doing it, especially alone. For you see I was at the end of me.

My history left a very erratic story, a life constantly sabotaged without ever knowing why. By this time I was extremely vulnerable, exhausted and in need of help. Within one week of my diagnosis, a radical change of lifestyle was recommended, and to find a place to live that is therapeutic, having support, ongoing therapy and with other people doing the same as I, recovering from mental illness.

After sixty years of living with an undiagnosed condition, I was placed in a position of do or die. I chose to do. I was given the name and number of Karis Community. With no idea of what this place was, I placed the call, explained my situation and within one week I became a Community Member at Karis. It was then I began to free fall with faith and hope and begin to experience Grace.

It is here at Karis that I've been able to express myself, be myself and begin to understand myself with transparency. Karis provides me a home where I can breathe. Deep breathe like never before. Karis is unveiling me and rebuilding me. Karis is the ark that floated by and rescued me from life's ocean that I've been swimming in with one arm all my life.

It truly is Grace that is "safely leading me". I have found a safe harbor where I can simply *be*, and feel proud of where I'm at during this time of my life. I am accountable for my recovery and it's done with a staff who are unconditional with their support and guidance.

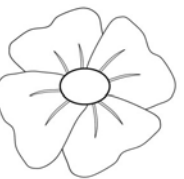
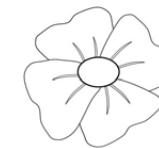
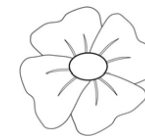
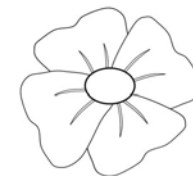
Karis is a community of men and women doing our recovery and life together, yet stand alone proudly with own effort and success. I am now at the beginning of a new, bright, and promising life.

In Loving Memory of Xena 2004-2015



*Dogs have a way of finding the people who need them.
Filling an emptiness we don't even know we have.*

- Thom Jones



Volunteers Wanted!
Help staff a Pepsi booth at the
Capitol Hill People's Fair
June 4th & 5th
or the
Cherry Creek Arts Festival
July 2nd, 3rd & 4th

**Save the Date
for the
2016 Harvest for Hope & Healing
Saturday, October 29th**

This year Karis Community is
celebrating 40 years
of compassion, healing and hope.

Karis Community Contributors

November 1, 2015 - February 29, 2015

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