

After leaving Rochester...

Experiences from a participant of the ADPCA 2010 Conference*

*Here shared with her respective permission.

I considered sharing this at the last Community Meeting, but it didn't work out that way, which is fine. What was going on at Community Meeting was very important, and I was still working on what to say.

I want to thank everyone for a wonderful week at the ADPCA conference. I was not prepared for the conference, and as I said to someone on the way out, "It's probably a good thing."

I came to the first day very bummed and nursing my wounds from things which my family calls (with respect for the importance of) "the tremendous trivia of life" <sigh> By the end of the first day I was still somewhat bummed, but by Thursday my mood was starting to lift, and I really didn't want my mood to lift because I was enjoying nursing my wounds (I know, there's so many things wrong with that sentence it's hard to know where to begin. But that's where I was when I arrived Wednesday - enjoying nursing my wounds, and as I said at Natalie's workshop, emotionally inflexible). By Thursday I didn't feel bummed anymore - I just couldn't hold on to the bummed feelings - and I tried.) I have not a clue what happened that put me in a good mood - and yet by Thursday my mood had lifted, and I was engaging. By Friday I think I was starting to get hooked. By Saturday I was thinking about how to manage 2011. By Sunday I was also considering the Chicago Open House and a few other such things. We'll see.

Thursday I was very tempted to skip the small groups and Community Meeting, having thought that it "wasn't my thing" after the first meeting, and it was a very long day for me (I can't do 8am-midnight like I used to <sigh>). I asked my small group what they got out of it. I don't remember much of what was said, but I remember being sufficiently intrigued to think I needed to go experience it at least once more. I kept saying that (that I needed to try it once more before deciding to quit CM - and probably SG too) until by the end of the week the meetings were as important to me as the seminars.

Although a newbie, and having no formal training in therapy or even related mental health services, I felt welcomed and comfortable. My beliefs were challenged by the experience, and I found it fascinating. As an added bonus, I was told by several people how much they appreciated my questions. It warmed my heart. (I have been known to ask questions that others find annoying or uncomfortable - If I were a disciple - a highly unlikely occurrence, but nevertheless - I would have been Doubting Thomas. BTW, I think he gets a bum rap, but I am digressing).

I loved the week I spent with everyone, and I learned valuable lessons although I'm not yet sure what (but I'm working on it, and thoroughly enjoying the work) - it seems that somehow I experienced something that my brain can't yet articulate.

Thank you very very much for a wonderful experience. I hope to see you again.

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